



COAB Meeting
Thursday, November 10, 2016
Portland Building, Room B
1120 SW 5th Ave, Portland, OR 97204
5:30-8:30 pm

DRAFT Minutes

Members present:

Philip Wolfe
Tom Steenson
Rochelle Silver
Myrlviani Rivier
Tashia Hager

Meeting commenced: 5:40 PM

Welcome, introductions

Philip introduced Myrlaviani, who explained why the setup was different (talking circle, removing obstructions like desks, wanting to communicate clearly and directly).

Philip presented the memo from the City Attorney to Judge Simon and Dan noted in his introduction that it would be helpful for the COAB to read their mission statement at the beginning of COAB meetings.

Community comments and recommendations

Comments on October 25th Status Conference with Judge Simon

Mary said (regarding Kif Davis's statements at the Status Conference) that as friends, she and Kif need to call each other out when people go too far.

Mike said he thought it was remarkable that the judge listened to what people had to say. If anyone has any interest in saving the COAB, stop harassing people by filming people.

Nancy was in shock at US Marshals entering the court room in plain clothes. They charged into the courtroom and took down someone signing up for public testimony. She asked what their role is.

Philip was impressed with Judge Simon. The judge seemed to really want to hear what people had to say. He wanted to take the pulse of situation to make a fair and just decision. Philip noted the city and community have different ways of expressing frustration.

Kif said maybe people need to realize everyone has different experiences with the police. He described his difficulties with mental health issues and being a victim of police violence. He reiterated that he doesn't trust PPB, COCL, or COAB to fix anything. Ann and Luke affirmed his experiences.

Rochelle and Philip talked about the City's report and some of the suspicions they had concerning the City's ability to be justifiably trusted when it comes to PPB. Philip noted it's a problem the City denies but also says they are working on. He emphasized that the City Council still hasn't filled vacant COAB seats.

Myrlaviani gave props to Lt. Tashia Hager and Mary Claire Buckley of PPB for coming and attending the meeting. She was saddened that the City doesn't seem to have more care, concern and respect for its public servants.

General comments

Katie said one reason the process isn't working is that there's no single point of contact for all things COAB and COCL.

Mary said she really loves Myrlaviani's circle. She said she's more comfortable and people can look each other in the eyes more clearly.

Dan said Portland Copwatch submitted a 9-page analysis of COCL's last report to Judge Simon. He asked COAB to review and submit comments to the powers that be. He said it would be good for the COAB to have questions about the COCL's Outcomes Assessment report for Rosenbaum and Watson at the December COAB meeting. He also said Judge Simon appeared to be showing the City how to listen to the public. He also suggested COAB members going to TAC meetings.

Public versus private meetings

Tom took issue with the City Attorney's decision that BHUAC meetings don't need to be public and why COAB's have to be public. He also reminded the public that COAB approved accountability recommendations. He said it was a mistake in transparency, a City imposed barrier, and that the City says it wants to listen but doesn't actually want to. He urged BHUAC to reconsider the private meeting stance.

Rochelle acknowledged one of the public's biggest issues right now is closed meetings. She said she can understand that sometimes things work better when meetings are closed, but they're losing the trust of the community when they close meetings. The COAB is supposed to be a conduit between the community and the government in rebuilding trust in the Portland Police Bureau. So long as there are any closed meetings, that won't happen.

Ann spoke about her experience on the Behavioral Health Unit Advisory Committee (BHUAC), how it was possible, and how the nature of the meetings being private actually helped to create safety and trust.

Jan (Disability Rights Oregon) said she moved to have the BHUAC meetings be opened but it was voted down, though at least the minutes and agenda became public. She thinks there should be a better transfer of information from BHUAC to COAB.

Myrlaviani suggested using the COAB's Executive or Mental Health Crisis Response Subcommittee to open lines of communication. Tashia said Beth Epps from Cascadia was voted to BHUAC, which works on similar topics as COAB, and she regularly attends COAB meetings. Beth offered to help set up a process to take information

back and forth. Jan suggested the COAB work on trying to make the information as topical and recent s possible.

Luke suggested a COAB-BHU-PAMI public forum.

COAB Letter

Philip asked Tom about the status of a follow-up to letter to the City. He said it's a draft of a letter he thinks COAB should maybe send. It brings up the issue that the City and Chief haven't responded to any COAB recommendations.

MOTION: Tom moved that the COAB move to adopt and send the letter.

Philip seconded the motion.

Discussion:

This discussion included a conversation about PPB policy review and better communications between PPB, COAB and community.

Marie Claire Buckley explained why it takes a long time before PPB can review and incorporate recommendations.

Philip asked for more communication on status of review.

Myrlaviani said her sense was the main issue is communication about policy development. The community wants to be more a part of that process. Perhaps there can be a communications process about policy that includes the community.

Katie said passing any directive takes eleven months; there's only a five-year shelf life of the Settlement Agreement; that seems problematic.

Mary Claire Buckley said because of the example Katie referenced, the PPB has reformatted the process, expanded the team who reviews, meets regularly, and are committed to moving the policy process much quicker in the future.

Tom said COAB represents the community and they worked hard on the recommendations. He asked why COAB is not at the table during policy discussions that effect the community. If people want the community to trust changes, it makes sense to have community involved at that critical stage, because after the DOJ approves it, the City won't want to revisit it.

Myrlaviani said it could be helpful for the COAB to clearly delineate the policy development process between COAB and PPB. She also suggested that the PPB clearly communicate the process on their website and maybe have a link-through to the COAB website — so systems are working together.

Rochelle said the community feels diminished because they aren't at BHUAC meetings, aren't at the policy meetings, not at PPA meetings/contract negotiations. Also, COAB did the work on the policies according to schedule.

Dan offered a friendly amendment:

1. that letter also goes to mayor-elect wheeler.

Friendly Amendment: Tom agreed with that, and added two more friendly amendments.

Tom moved

Myrlaviani seconded

RECOMMENDATION:

1. The letter also goes to Mayor-elect Wheeler.
2. Send letter as is, ask and invite Mayor and Chief and Mayor elect and other people to the next meeting, and ask for written updates and timelines as to what review is being given to COAB recommendations
3. The COAB should be included at the table in discussions related to policy changes related to our recommendations.

VOTE:

YES: Tom, Myrlaviani, Rochelle, Philip, Catherine

MOTION PASSES 5-0

BREAK

After the break, Philip said the people in the room have experience with police, people who have PTSD. He asked the police in the room to keep this in mind when interacting with people, and thanked them for being present.

Community comments and recommendations, continued:

Community Engagement and Policy Development

It was asked what kind of policy recommendations and other ideas does the community have. The hope is that the next iteration of COAB can use this as a format to and for people to conceptualize the work. It should be part of the work of the Accountability Subcommittee. It was asked that community members write what they think should happen and bring them to the next Accountability Subcommittee.

Dan talked about the “byzantine” oversight system.

Restoration Program: discussion facilitated by Myrlaviani Rivier

Myrlaviani said to start thinking about what roles people want to play. She said to please come back and let COAB know how to affect the kind of conversation where change can happen. There’s been concern over how some people have been harmed at COAB meetings. There’s been primary, secondary and vicarious trauma. A restorative practices response team involves peers and professionals. The added component of a restorative practice in COAB meetings communicates, let’s address the harms in the moment so people in meeting don’t continue to be harmed.

Myrlaviani said she'd like to figure out a policy that protects the space as community members work together. The COAB should be a safe space for people no matter what.

Nancy said the problem with City Council is they keep spending money but don't address issues of how that money circulates through the community. They position themselves as policy makers but don't acknowledge the stress put on the community.

Charles said COAB's responsibility of oversight on the SA but exclusion from policy discussions has left lethal holes in the overall oversight of the police and of a holistic why of doing oversight (connecting City with County, etc.). Since CRC gets tasked with special functions where COAB is excluded, there needs to be a place to discuss whether these multiple boards are fractioned.

Myrlaviani, in response to Charles, said she heard him saying a systems analysis is needed. V suggested the need of a Portland Civil Rights Office, maybe that discussion happens in the Accountability (Data Systems, Use of Force and Compliance) Subcommittee with an associated workgroup.

Dan, regarding directives review, said only payed people get to be a part of that process. He said community members and COAB get excluded, even though they put in the bard work. If PPB is given recommendations and they don't like it, it would be helpful for them to explain why.

Ann said that as someone who felt the COAB wasn't handling mental health issues well, she felt comfortable being at the meeting tonight.

Philip said that while waiting for the separation between COCL and COAB to be official, everyone can come together again and make sure to be on the same page before moving forward.

Myrlaviani closed the circle at 8:31 pm.