

# **PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY BOARD**

Virtual Meeting  
Port Angeles, Washington  
June 17, 2020 6:00 pm

## **CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Barnard called the regular meeting of the Public Safety Advisory Board to order at 6:01 p.m.

## **ROLL CALL:**

**Members Present:** Alan Barnard, Evan Brown, Lourene O'Brien, Alan Oman, Kiara Schmitt, ~~Teresa Sesma Meyers~~, Shana Scott,

**Members Absent:** ~~Thomas Mitchell~~, Kathleen Graf, Dr. Zoble

**Staff Present:** Ken Dubuc, Fire Chief; Brian Smith, Police Chief; Catherine Dewey, Secretary

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **Port Angeles Police Department Report:**

- **Excited Delirium Training/Review/Discussion** – Chief had distributed material and quiz to the board members and was looking for their feedback. In custody deaths is all over the news right now and Chief is hoping to raise awareness. Chief Smith reviewed the material and educated the board and attendees on what best practice and training entails.
- **Community Oriented Policing** – Chief Smith spoke about their expanded REDISCOVERY Program and noted that PD has received a grant from the WASPC for \$350,000 which has allowed for program expansion which includes 3 Navigators and a Case Manager. This has a huge impact on the vulnerable population and those on the streets. Port Angeles PD is 1 of 2 who have that program going in WA state.

Chief Smith noted that there have been less overall calls but workload had increased. Karl Hatton has a new title as PD Deputy Director for PENCOM operations. The pre-design for the joint EOC, PENCOM, Westside Fire Department is underway and moving forward at this time.

### **Port Angeles Fire Department Report:**

Chief Dubuc noted that PAFD is extremely busy and that the big difference for them during this time of social distancing is that as an EMS and Fire agency they are running toward those who are sick and unwell. The Department is taking every protective measure as well as monitoring themselves, vehicles and equipment. The safety of the Fire Department employees is his priority right now and they are doing all that they can to stay healthy and safe. Chief believes that we are in this for the long term and that we need to be prepared to continue these practices for a very long time.

Chief noted that the Community Paramedicine program is doing extremely well and they have received funding to hire one more person to assist the Department in supporting that program. Daniel Montana, Community Paramedic, is now allowed to do Covid-19 testing out in the field. Staffing Update - There are 5 new hires slated to begin in the next month.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Carolyn Wilcox, City Resident – Would like to implore the PSAB to meet in July and August and she is very interested in all of these issues. She would like to hear from the Board members on their viewpoints as well as why members joined and if there is an interest in having a Citizens' Review Board as well as how the board represents the diversity of the Port Angeles community. She believes it would be powerful to have someone on the board who has experienced homelessness so that they may share their experiences and perspective.

Ingrid Carmean, City Resident – She has been impressed with the Police Department and Fire Department's involvement with the Community Outreach programs. She has a food pantry in front of her house and is

impressed by how caring this community is with their donations. Ingrid expressed frustration with the removal or stealing of property of those living unsheltered. The destruction of these camp sites at this time is a safety risk and should be strongly discouraged per the CDC. Public Safety should be a primary concern of all cities including Port Angeles, Ingrid agreed with Carolyn that the PSAB should continue to meet over the summer. She also encouraged diversity on the board and to consider including a member of the community who is or has experienced homelessness.

Jessica Elofson, County Resident- She is pleased to hear of the PPE that the Police and Fire Department are making a priority. She is hopeful that with the state of unrest in our country and would like to implore the PSAB to meet through the summer as well as allow more individuals to join the board, specifically people of color such as herself.

Public Comments that were submitted via email are enclosed.

### **GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

Alan Oman – Asked Chief Smith about how they handle individuals being apprehended and claiming that they are having difficulty breathing but may be using that as a tactic. Chief Smith stated that if someone makes that claim PD will believe them and will put them in a position of comfort while they call for EMS.

Lourene O'Brien – She enjoyed the training and learned a lot. She is willing to meet during the summer if it is needed. She also supports opening a position on the board to specifically include a person of color.

Kiara Schmitt – She feels discouraged by the fact that students just feel like this is an extended break and aren't taking this all seriously.

Shana Scott – Spoke directly to those attending that made public comment and fully supports creating a more diverse environment as well as supports meeting over the summer. Shana is proud of our community and how we are all handling this tough time.

Teresa Sesma Meyers – found the excited delirium very interesting and she learned a lot. She believes it is our responsibility to demonstrate what we are doing to manage how the people of the Police Department and to share so that there is total transparency. Chief Smith noted that the PD will be meeting with members of the community to do a community forum on policing.

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

Chairman Barnard adjourned the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

**The next Scheduled meetings is September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

Thank you for your work on public safety. My name is Carolyn Wilcox and with the pandemic, I have had more time to learn about issues that I had not formerly had time to dig into. I implore you to please meet in July and August, otherwise the messaging is that community concerns over public safety are not important to this board. We can not have a robust discussion about public safety concerns in the span of one virtual meeting that was organized rather last-minute. Hundreds of people who are concerned about public safety have expressed their views at Black Lives Matter protests locally. I want to learn more about why you joined this board and if you are interested in learning more about a citizens police review board. If our police department is without reproach, which is entirely possible, then a citizen police review board might be a fun meeting for concerned citizens to attend. I want to hear from board members about whether or not they view the Forks Goons and Fred's Guns militia incident as well as threats to people experiencing homeless as hate crimes. I want to learn about how the board helps strengthen public safety for vulnerable people especially people experiencing homelessness and learn more about how this board represents the diversity of the Port Angeles community. For example, has this board ever included someone who has experienced homelessness? It would be powerful to employ a person who does not have a home to join this board and share their experiences and perspectives.

Chief Smith, I know that grants are often very restrictive but I am curious that with the new \$350,000 allocated, could you please speak with Amy Miller and figure out if the grant has the flexibility (or could in the future) to pay a person experiencing homelessness to attend city meetings? Or maybe, if there might be a way for city workers to voluntarily to put aside a small percentage of their earnings in order to build a fund to pay for people experiencing homelessness to attend community-oriented meetings that pertain to their well being (city council, parks and rec, planning, public safety, and so forth). I think developing a rotating spot on boards (when people are interested & available), treating each board meeting independently and paying for attendance could be a really powerful uplifting experience and benefit all of us. It would benefit the public because the under-represented board member might not have attended the prior meeting and therefore when bringing them up to speed, it would also bring the public up to speed). Maybe the person attending the meeting could have a hotel room paid for and in walking distance to the fire department in order to allow the person to shower and prepare for the meeting as part of the experience.

I intend to fill out the application to join the public safety advisory committee and I intend to follow each meeting. Please include me on any email list if that is possible.

Thank you,

Carolyn

**From:** Richie  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 18, 2020 4:46 PM  
**To:** Brian Smith <[Bsmith@cityofpa.us](mailto:Bsmith@cityofpa.us)>  
**Subject:** Comment: Pubic Safety Advisory Board Meeting yesterday

**\*\*\*EXTERNAL EMAIL\*\*\***

TO whomever it may concern:

I was on the phone during the Advisory Board meeting yesterday and tried to make a comment. I assume due to some technical challenges it was not possible to do so. It seems the public comment process works better and more easily when people are logged in online through the internet. I will be sure to do that next time around.

Anyway - if possible i would like my comments to be part of the record and/or considered.

My name is Richie Ahuja, and I am a resident of the city of Port Angeles. I second the points made by Carolyn and Ingrid. I am grateful for the city's effort to address public safety. Especially in these times, it is paramount to have regular lines of communication between the public, advisory board, and the representatives from the police, fire, and other concerned agencies. That along with better representation and/or participation of the homeless population, local tribes, and POC, is essential for developing and improving programs, policies, and procedures the community can endorse and uphold.

I request the Public Safety Board members heed the call of the people and meet on a monthly basis, thus keeping the lines of communication open with the public and deepening the engagement in ways that are productive.

Warm regards,

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Regards,

Richie

**From:** Carlos  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 17, 2020 3:46 PM  
**To:** Catherine Dewey <[Cdewey@cityofpa.us](mailto:Cdewey@cityofpa.us)>  
**Subject:** Public Comment for Safety Board

**\*\*\*EXTERNAL EMAIL\*\*\***

There are a few comments that come to mind when thinking about Safety in our community.

The entire nation has been addressing the issue of people in power and institutions in power NOT being held accountable for immoral, unethical, gross and criminal behavior. From the #metoo movement to the current Black Lives Matter movement around Police Accountability - Americans everywhere are demanding that the people that are governed by these institutions have a say in the way these institutions are created, shaped, regulated and held accountable. I would like the board to address the Vigilante Situation that has happened in Sequim and Forks. I would like to hear their opinion and where they stand with right wing armed militias patrolling the communities of the Olympic Peninsula.

Specifically I want this board to talk about how in this climate of police accountability being questioned across America, how is it possible that some of our leadership bodies and/or members feel ok in supporting people with even less accountability and oversight to pick up arms and hunt people down (referring to right wing constitutionalists/militia/3percenters/etc....). What specific policy or law gives them the power and privilege to decide who the enemy is?

The highly publicized lynching case of Ahmaud Arbery sheds light on the terror shed onto a community by people playing vigilante. Ahmaud Arbery was murdered by self proclaimed vigilantes, with "bad" information, that ended up killing a member of the community when trying to conduct a citizens arrest. Are we to wait for this to happen here? Can these type of vigilante actions really be sanctioned by anyone? The III% (three percent) group operates here on the peninsula, what are your views on them?

What is the official definition of a gang?

How do these groups differ? Or do we see them as the same.

In conclusion, many of these vigilante groups hide behind a defense of protecting their community because the police force is just not capable of protecting their town. Where is your stance on this? Does local law enforcement think they are ill prepared to protect the community? Do they need help from said vigilantes? Who is the enemy that we need protection from?

Thank you for allowing this conversation to start taking shape in our community.

Much Respect,  
-Carlos

P.S -

This is going to be a long, consistent conversation in order for any progress to be made. Really hope you plan on having more of these meetings throughout the summer, at least monthly.

**From:** Tara

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 17, 2020 5:43 PM

**To:** Catherine Dewey <[Cdewey@cityofpa.us](mailto:Cdewey@cityofpa.us)>

**Subject:** Public Safety

**\*\*\*EXTERNAL EMAIL\*\*\***

Hi Catherine,

My name is Tara Demers and it was brought to my attention recently that the PSAB does not plan to meet in July or August. I am disappointed to learn that considering what's been happening around the country. Public safety is a real and concerning issue. I would very much appreciate the board to convene these next few months (special mtg at least??) to discuss how our city is addressing, and continues to address, public safety. There are many citizens who would like to express their concerns re: public safety, especially for our vulnerable populations. Please be a beacon for that. It's important and it's what being a Public Safety Advisory Board member is all about.