

Police Equity & Use of Force Advisory Group
7:30 – 9:00 pm Thursday, October 22, 2020
Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/95691505142>
MEETING MINUTES

In attendance:

Committee members Richard Kuklewicz (Selectboard Chair), Ariel Elan, Maddox Sprengel, Deborah Frenkel, Richard Hall, Faith English
Town staff: Steve Ellis, Town Administrator
Community member: Matt Lord

Absent: Committee member David Bulley

1. Approve minutes of September 22* joint meeting of both police advisory groups.
 - Tabled vote until next meeting. *Originally listed in error as Sept. 29
2. Advisory Group organization (define desired member roles, approach to agenda setting and meeting administration/facilitation, voting, etc.)
 - Ariel volunteers to facilitate meeting today; opens discussion around how meeting facilitation should happen going forward.
 - Group discussed timing of weekly meetings. Agreed upon Thursdays, 7:15-8:45 PM
 - Organization: suggestion to share facilitation responsibilities.
Rich Kuklewicz makes motion to share group facilitation, Ariel Elan seconded. Faith English -yes, Maddox Sprengel -yes, Richard Hall-yes, Deborah Frenkel-yes
3. Review of Group Charge and Vision for Report to Selectboard

Group Charge: Equity and Use of Force in Policing – “What are the Montague Police Department (MPD) policies and practices relative to equitable policing and use of force, what is the impact of these practices on key subgroups, and how might they improve?”

Ariel: The community engagement group is interested in the same documentation (request for handbooks/manuals from MPD as well as data/subgroups of statistics). Suggest that we brainstorm ways to invite members of the community to share their experiences with MPD as well as additional data/information requests we want to make of MPD.

Questions/comments from the committee:

- Will we have access to incidents of use of force within MPD? Does MPD have access to demographic data regarding arrests?
- Are there certain subgroups we want to identify/speak with regarding their experience with MPD or should we open it to all people?
- If we interview people who have been arrested, we don't want to violate confidentiality of that person's experience since this is open to the public.
- We should ask who at MPD is in charge of writing/enforcing policies (e.g. are there any external parties who are contracted to write policies for MPD).

- Response from Richard Kuklewicz: Lt. Chris Bonnett focuses on practices and policies. He has been updating Montague's policies, and will probably be the key member of the police force for us to interview.
- We will want more data and should brainstorm questions we can pose to MPD. We should spend more time thinking about our focus.
- We need to request the MPD policy handbook.

Richard K: The MPD created a powerpoint presentation with some information relative to policies related to the use of force, as well as arrest data. We will want to compare demographic information of arrests with demographics of the town.

Questions/comments about the materials from the committee:

- Hispanic/Latino is not a category that is included in demographic breakdown.
- MPD follows MA guidelines around force. We might want to look at what the state law says and what is put into practice in Montague.
- We could consider asking the MPD if there is something they can identify that can/should be done differently.
- 8 Can't Wait: This is a set of nationally publicized priorities for evaluating, reforming, and/or transforming policing in communities. There is a range of what recommended policies might look like within individual departments. We should make recommendations within each category.
- 8 Can't Wait: Community member requests that this committee look beyond these recommendations, to consider the broader changes in law enforcement and criminal justice that are being brought forward by national movements for prison abolition and "defunding the police".
- Community member Matt Lord shared data requests he sent to the Montague police a few months ago. He was told that there would be a \$250 fee to provide the records he was asking for. The committee agreed to adopt Matt's questions as part of its information requests to the MPD. The specific questions are in the "Chat" from this meeting, at the end of these Minutes.

4. Discuss Approach to Work and Schedule for Completion

5. Discuss Key Questions, Data, Outreach Strategies

- Rich Hall: would like to speak with Lt. Bonnett about how they do things. Also, as we look at arrest numbers from MPD, questions include: How many are local vs. out-of-town; how many were court-ordered arrests; how many were bench warrants, which can be an arrest for failing to pay a fee, penalty, or settlement in a civil case – not a criminal conviction. We could invite MPD to discuss their experiences with these types of arrests.
- Deborah: sounds like we have a plan to submit questions and requests that we have to Ariel. Once we have our requests to MPD, we are talking about outreach strategies. This sounds vague to me, would like to discuss this further (do we have a budget, are we developing a survey, etc.) Might be better to request data first, give us time to review and then can invite Lt. to discuss
- Community member Matt Lord: suggest requesting union contract as well.

Committee members are favorable to this.

- Might want to ask the chief or lieutenant: “What is the data that can be compiled relatively quickly, e.g covering the last five years [in contrast to Matt’s data requests to MPD that covered 10 years]?”
- Faith: Want to be sure we don’t duplicate efforts with the other committee.
- Maddox: Can we capture stories from people about the impact the MPD has had (either positive or negative)? Need to think about how we are defining “impacts” (bodily harm, physical harm, etc.). Are the positive examples of policing in Montague reflected in policy manuals? Or are these [positive] actions taken by officers based on their own judgment?
 - How can basic needs be met outside of policing? Subgroup: what happens during wellness checks/why crisis services aren’t called instead.
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- Rich K.: Need to understand what the two police advisory groups are each requesting. We are looking at the use of force. There are some moments/human stories in which MPD uses alternative approaches to arrest (e.g. person experiencing homelessness who was sleeping in school building). Suggest we reach out to people who have been arrested (can reference police logs which are public record) to see what their experience was. Subgroup: people with MH issues
- Ariel: Important to ensure that we are reaching certain subgroups that have been disproportionately arrested.
- Faith: POC (people of color) are disproportionately arrested,
- Deborah: Not every act of enforcement is an arrest (e.g not all traffic stops end in arrest and could be traumatizing), we could ask people even who haven’t been arrested to share their experiences
- Steve: Unclear if we could request a randomized report of traffic stops from MPD. Good area to explore.

6. Confirm Any Next Steps or Member Responsibilities

Maddox Sprengel moves that all committee members list their data requests for MPD and send to Ariel, who will submit on behalf of committee. Richard Kuklewicz seconds. Passed unanimously.

Steve Ellis: Next agenda will need to be posted by Tuesday in order for it to be posted, send topics to Wendy and she will share template to post. The town can create pages for our committees, including a resource section where we can post materials.

Ariel will create next agenda.

7. Confirm Next Meeting Date: October 29, 2020 at 7:15. Facilitator volunteer: Ariel

8. Topics Not Anticipated: None

9. Rich Kuklewicz makes motion to adjourn. Ariel second: Maddox Sprengel – yes, Faith English - aye, Rich Hall - aye, Deborah Frenkel - aye

Messages exchanged in the Zoom chat window:

19:35:31 From Matt Lord : I've got some background noise, so I will mute for the time being. Thanks.
19:40:36 From Rich Hall : I've got no sound
19:41:27 From Ariel Shira : Can you not hear us?
19:41:35 From Rich Hall : nope
19:42:47 From rich kuklewicz : you can call in with phone numbers on agenda
19:42:48 From Montague Selectboard to Rich Hall(Privately) : Can you use your phone to call in while participating via video
19:43:15 From Rich Hall to Montague Selectboard(Privately) : ok, can hear now
19:43:41 From Montague Selectboard : rich can hear now
19:43:48 From Ariel Shira : You can use the call-in phone in the Agenda
19:43:48 From rich kuklewicz : great
20:07:32 From Montague Selectboard : It would be appropriate to reference these documents were shared in the minutes and attach them to the minutes
20:07:55 From Matt Lord : yes, please post these publicly on the town site and include the URL in the minutes
20:08:07 From Faith English : Yes, I have them noted in the draft minutes so far
20:08:16 From Matt Lord : also, pls include the chat in the minutes, probably just a footnote
20:08:31 From Faith English : Will do
20:09:49 From Montague Selectboard : Yes Matt. I will try to save the chat. Also - future meetings will only have Everyone as an option for chat. I don't think I can change it now that we've begun.
20:14:23 From Matt Lord : here is the website for 8cantwait.org
20:14:25 From Matt Lord : <https://8cantwait.org/>
20:22:24 From Matt Lord : Please provide the following information.

number of arrests per year for period of 2010-2020

number of reported crimes per year for period 2010-2020

number of reports of crime against a person (violent crime) per year for period of 2010-2020

Number of reports of crime against property per year for period of 2010-2020

Number of reports of drug related crime per year for period of 2010-2020

Number of arrests of drug related crime per year for period of 2010-2020

number of arrests for crime against a person per year for period of 2010-2020

Number of arrests for crime against property per year for period of 2010-2020

All available information on reported injuries/deaths during duty for officers during period of 2010-2020

Number of times an officer withdrew a weapon per year for period of 2010-2020

Number of times an officer fired a weapon per year for period of 2010-2020

Number of times an officer injured another person by firing a weapon per year for period of 2010-2020

Number of times a person

20:24:09 From Montague Selectboard : the last question in sequence appears to have been cut off.

20:34:13 From Matt Lord : deb, maybe make a motion?