

Minutes

Community Advisory Team (CAT21)

May 31, 2017

Members in Attendance

Jim McClellan
Pete Benavage
Anwar Khan
Dawnielle Miller
Chris Harris
Julie Crawford
Howard Woodson
Bill Blackburn

Besu Feleke
Judy Noritake
Dak Hardwick
Ingris Moran
Michael Johnson
Yvonne Callahan
Alexis Stackhouse

Ex officio members in Attendance

Det. Will Oakley
Lt. Ed Milner

Members Absent

Roy Byrd
Inv. Diana Barrett

APD Staff in Attendance

Chief Brown
Deputy Chief Dianne Gittins
Deputy Chief Shahram Fard

Deputy Chief David Huchler
Deputy Chief Chris Wemple
Sergeant Charlette Mitchell

Guests

Cynthia Lum (George Mason)
Liaoyun Wu (George Mason)

Minutes

Agenda Item: Welcome & Introductions

Comments: Chief Brown gave an overview for the conception of CAT21 which included referencing an advisory team he put together as a chief in California. That advisory team gave him insight and perspective into things that are not normally obtained in a vacuum (or within the agency). Chief Brown then referenced the implementation of 21st century policing as it pertained to the Task Force report for the Alexandria Police Department. He stated he visited with 59 of the 102 Civic Associations and in visiting them; it gave him the opportunity to understand many of the City's dynamics.

Agenda Item: CAT 21 Administrative Items

- a) CAT21 Charter
- b) Membership

Chief Brown advised the CAT21 team that they were all chosen because that have the above vision, they are all passionate about the City, they have a sense of fairness, they represent a particular position or community within the City, and they all come from different areas of the City. Chief Brown advised the CAT21 team all of the above are reasons why the team members are going to be valuable in terms of having frank discussions about "how" the Alexandria Police Department does its job.

Chief Brown assured the team that they will be very active and the CAT21 will not be stagnant bureaucratic tool. He proposed that as CAT21 receives more details from him, he will solicit their opinions and suggestions on how to move forward. He will start with an understanding of where the Department is now on many of the recommendations. He stated that the Department doesn't rest on any of those accomplishments and there is always room for improvement.

Chief Brown directed CAT21 members to the attention of "The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing" report. He advised them that there are some incredibly sensitive issues in the report. As a result, he fully expects that there will be frank conversations and it is okay to have those conversations. Those types of conversations give him perspective and help him to understand the passions behind the issues. He anticipates those conversations will help the APD in understanding the issues.

Chief Brown stated that CAT21 is a deliberative body to advise him of different issues to consider when he reshapes different functions of the organization. The meeting is not an open meeting; there are no political appointments, and no elected officials involved in the advisory group. This was purposed so that frank conversations could be had and CAT21 would give him their counsel, advice, and ideas about issues and perspectives the Police Department needs to consider as it moves forward as an agency.

Chief Brown advised that there may be times when an open public comment forum is held, but that will occur after a program is developed and public feedback is sought.

Chief Brown set ground rules for the CAT21 meetings. He stated that the ground rules will be a challenge due to the fact that not every team member feels the same way about everything. The ground rules are:

- 1) Respect each other – the discussion may get heated – so respecting each other is key
- 2) Listen as an ally – especially if one disagrees with the person that is speaking
- 3) Members must understand perspectives
- 4) Disagreement is okay – sometimes disagreement leads to very productive discussion and productive ideas

What the Chief is hoping from the group is to look for constructive ways the Police Department can become better. That is the goal of CAT21 and that is the challenge the Chief is offering to CAT21. Chief Brown then thanked the CAT21 members for attending the meeting. He also let them know he trusts them and it means a lot to him for them to be there.

Chief Brown reviewed the Charter for CAT21 with the members. There are 15 panel members and 3 ex officio members. The ex officio members are:

- 1) Lt. Ed Milner who represents the management (commanders) of the department,
- 2) Det. Wil Oakley & Inv. Diana Barrett who represent the rank & file.

The Charter also indicates that CAT21 is an advisory body to assist the Chief and his staff; it includes an “Annex A” listing the CAT21 members and it includes term limits.

Chief Brown advised the CAT21 members they are a working group and it is important for him to give them information early so they can review it and come to the meetings prepared to discuss the disseminated information and offer their ideas. He made a commitment to the members to send them the agenda and related information early so they have time to review it prior to the next meeting.

A CAT21 member asked a question in regards to FOIA as it pertains to email communications. Chief Brown advised that he has spoken with the City attorney and that CAT21 is a deliberative body and all correspondence for that purpose will be deliberative. However, there will be minutes produced and the minutes will be available for FOIA. The Chief further advised that CAT21’s individual communications between one another are considered to be a deliberative process because they are not shaping policy – they are discussing policy options and procedures for APD and that is considered to be deliberative. That is also why CAT21 is working for the Chief of Police and not an elected head.

A CAT21 member asked a question in regards to “assuming all that goes on in the meetings is confidential and not to be disseminated to non-CAT21 members (friends and neighbors). The Chief asked the CAT21 members not to disseminate the information on its deliberators.

Agenda Item: Resident Survey Results

Comments: Captain Dennis Andreas gave an overview on The National Citizen Survey commissioned by the City of Alexandria as it pertains to APD. A copy of this survey was given to each CAT21 member. The “Safety” section of the survey relates to how APD is viewed by the public. The citizens rated safety as:

- 1) 84% have an overall feeling of safety
- 2) 96% felt safe in their neighborhoods
- 3) 97% felt safe in Old Town
- 4) Citizens gave APD a 86% positive rating
- 5) Citizens gave APD’s crime prevention efforts a 77% positive rating
- 6) 84% of Alexandria citizens indicated they did not report a crime
- 7) 90% of Alexandria citizens indicated they were not the victim of a crime
- 8) APD earned the rating of 78% in regards to collaborating with the community to address crime
- 9) APD earned the rating of 76% in regards to responsiveness to citizens’ concerns
- 10) APD earned the rating of 75 percent in regards to fostering positive relationships with the community members

Note: The percentages are a reflection of general public safety and how the citizens feel about the job APD is doing.

Agenda Item: APD Citizen Complaint History

Comments: Captain Dennis Andreas gave an overview on the complaint history/statistics of APD. This information is also shared with the Human Rights Commission, on APD’s website, and at the Police Citizens’ Academy. He gave the CAT21 members a hand out that encompassed a 4 year review of:

- 1) Total internal investigations
- 2) All sustained complaints (internally reported complaints)
- 3) Formal citizen complaints
- 4) Sustained – conduct toward a citizen
- 5) Police call for service
- 6) Criminal arrests made

Agenda Item: Overview of the 21st Century Police Report

Comments: Chief Brown began a discussion on the “The President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing” report and explained the sections of the report to CAT21. He explained that the report has action items for police agencies to consider. In reviewing those action items, he learned APD is currently performing some of those action items and that APD has already has programs already in place to address many of the action items. He indicated there were other actions items that need to be looked

at as they provide opportunities for APD to improve. Additionally, there are action items that will not be considered at this time due to costs or other related concerns.

Chief Brown reviewed the handout that contains “Recommendations” as they pertain to the 21st Century report. This handout explains initial assessments as to where APD “appears to be” regarding the specific recommendations contained in the report. Chief Brown explained APD currently has actual programs and projects in place that address many of the report’s suggestions. He detailed the section titled “Ongoing Recommendations” advising the team what training has already taken place and what training is upcoming. He talked in detail about the Community Oriented Policing Program and how it will be revised in its duties.

The Chief was asked to provide references related to the recommendation status list he handed out. Chief Brown agreed to do so.

Agenda Item: APD Traffic Enforcement Data

- a) George Mason Report
- b) Data Release

Comments: Chief Brown set the stage for the traffic data presentation by advising CAT21 members that there was a great deal of interest in attempting to ascertain what data APD has with regards to traffic safety due to the fact there were issues with the data and there were questions as to whether or not APD would “massage” the data. Therefore, Chief Cook had an independent source view the data by reaching out to the Center for Evidence Based Crime Policy at George Mason University. This was an independent review.

At this point Chief Brown turned the presentation over to representatives of George Mason University to present their finding. During and at the end of the presentation, there was time allotted for numerous questions and answers.

After the presentation, Chief Brown summed up the presentation and advised how the information would be used.

Agenda Item: Next Steps

- a) Future Meetings
- b) Identification of Community Needs
- c) Prioritization
- d) Future Data Presentations

Comments: Chief Brown explained that this meeting was an introductory meeting. He stated that the Charter explains CAT21 will meet on a regular basis. The second meeting will be scheduled in two months (July 2017). Chief Brown advised that he will disseminate discussed information to the CAT21 members and then asked them to send him specific ideas and suggestions they believe should be discussed/addressed in the next meeting. He will place those ideas and suggestions on the agenda and they will be discussed as a group.

A CAT21 member mentioned there has been a 25 year effort by APD to make APD look like the community it protects. He then asked for a breakdown of the data over the past 20 years showing:

- 1) Gender
- 2) Race
- 3) Ethnicity
- 4) By rank for sworn officers

Chief Brown agreed to provide the data to the CAT21 members

Next Meeting: July 20, 2017 @ 7:00PM
APD meeting room 301B

(Minutes approved by CAT21 members on July 20, 2017)