

Speaker 1:

Hi, good evening. It's six o'clock, I'd like to call to order tonight's special work session or special meeting. It is a listening session. We will start this evening by taking roll call of council members to see who's present. But before we do that, I do note that I see that several people are not muted. Please at this time take a moment to mute your audio. This session is being recorded and we do pick up conversations and background noises in your homes, and for everyone's sake it would be great if everyone would be muted. At this time I'd like to ask for the assistance of Madam clerk in conducting roll call please.

Speaker 2:

Actually, Mayor Johnson clerk kaiser is not here, so I will go ahead and take the role. So we'll start out with council member Albertson?

Albertson:

Here.

Speaker 2:

Council member Feeney?

Feeney:

Here.

Speaker 2:

Council member Iannelli?

Iannelli:

Here.

Speaker 2:

Mayor Johnson?

Johnson:

Here.

Speaker 2:

Council member Pacheco?

Pacheco:

Here.

Speaker 2:

And council member Wiseley?

Wiseley:

Present.

Speaker 1:

All right, thank you. Next up on our agenda, we always start with the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. You are welcome to join us if you'd like to do that. Please unmute and then mute when we're done again.

Speaker 1:

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands. One nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all.

Speaker 1:

All right, thank you and again at this time if everyone could please again mute. A couple of just... I would like to welcome everyone tonight. Thank you for taking the time to join us for this special meeting of city council. It is a continuation or a second part of the July 13, 2020 listening session. The agenda tonight is posted on the city's website and will consist of hearing the public's input regarding policing followed by an opportunity for q&a. This meeting is being conducted by Zoom and it's being recorded. We will be using the same format as we used at the prior listening session. As this is a meeting of city council, the city's charter, the city's policies, the Open Meetings Act and general courtesy will guide it. In tonight's listening session we hope to provide everyone with an opportunity to be heard, while also complying with statutes and rules pertaining to public meetings. For members of the public when you have an [inaudible 00:03:35] to engage in giving your public input. Please keep the comments and dialogue civil and respectful. Use the raise hand function on Zoom and wait to be called.

Speaker 1:

Mute your audio when it is not your turn and there is a one turn per person until all participants have had an opportunity to speak. As discussed at the prior listening session per city policy, citizens must state their name and where they live at the beginning of their opportunity for public input. For counsel, just a reminder that this is a special meeting. One of the main purposes is to listen to community members, however it's certainly reasonable and appropriate to ask clarifying questions to better understand the context of any statement. We will also be guided by the rules that we typically employ. We will also use the hand raise function, wait to speak until called upon and one turn per person until all council members have had an opportunity to ask a question.

Speaker 1:

Recognizing that it is [inaudible 00:04:45] periodically take a break from the screen. We will take a five minute break at the end of the first hour and the 10 minute break after the second hour, and we will follow that pattern until we end this meeting. Just as a reminder the city staff and council may not be able to discuss matters relating to the pending active case regarding the altercation at Pierce Park, or in related internal investigations regarding officer conduct. And with that I would like to open up the floor to our public to give you an opportunity to provide and hear from you and your input regarding policing. And as a reminder to anyone who speaks, we do ask that you first identify yourself and state which community in which you live.

Johnson:

I'm Mayor Johnson, I'm not quite sure if there is already a list of people queued, or if we should just sort of ask for permission to speak as needed.

Speaker 1:

Yep, what we would like you to do is use the hand raised function on Zoom. That way I can call you in order and it also allows me to individually... we can control the mute and unmute at that time. So if speakers would please utilize that function on Zoom, that would be helpful. If you're having difficulty doing that then please write a chat, Mr. Hanifan our city manager will then notify me about where you are in the queue. I do have a hand raised. It is Ms. Sandra Vadlamudi, and please go ahead you have the floor. If you'd like to unmute and then... there you go. Thank you.

Sandra Vadlamudi:

I am reading this statement from a friend Sandy Peterson who also lives in Chelsea. I live in Chelsea and she does as well. She says this has to do with encouraging more supportive action from the police and suggesting more efforts toward de-escalating highly emotionally charged situations. Earlier this summer, a Chelsea team was assaulted by an online onlooker at the BLM demonstration in Pierce Park. I did not attend that Pierce Park event but I did watch the march from my front porch at the Main Street and Pierce street intersection. Across Main Street [inaudible 00:08:08] corner from my house, an angry man began to interact verbally with the marchers. The marchers answered him back and the verbal confrontation continued. A Chelsea policeman placed himself between the angry man and the marchers. He talked to the man and followed him as the man paced back and forth on the sidewalk. I did not hear the word spoken by the man, the marchers or the policeman. I feel that what I did see was an effort by the policeman to keep the two parties separated and to de-escalate the situation. This kind of effort is commendable.

Sandra Vadlamudi:

De-escalation of highly emotionally charged situations isn't easy, but it's valuable in protecting our community. More training along these lines would benefit everyone, police and the community. Thank you.

Speaker 1:

All right, thank you. Leanne [Sido 00:09:20] you are next please.

Leanne Sido:

My name is Leanne Sido, and I've been a resident of Chelsea since '93 and deeply involved as a volunteer for many of those years. I really love the kind... the openness of the people here and the dedication that I've seen put forth from so many youth and adults, from so many walks... regarding community reform in relation to racism and particular these past few months. I am proud to say that I am from Chelsea, not because we're always a community of the best and the brightest. But because we [inaudible 00:10:15] citizenship of people who know that healthy change is something important to actively embrace. Even [inaudible 00:10:25] quite messy. Eggs need to be broken before a fantastic new kind of souffle can be created, and of our long standing one world, one family group as well as the passionate commitment of [inaudible 00:10:42] now we have a healthy dose of [inaudible 00:10:46] going on. These cracks of course can also be seen as metaphorically the places where the [inaudible 00:10:54] for that new growth and possibility of a more just community for all.

Leanne Sido:

It takes a lot of energy to stay committed to the work of change. It's so much easier to just let entropy do its thing and get saying things like, "Our problems aren't really quite so bad." So why rock the boat because change could also [inaudible 00:11:25] unanticipated developments to our charming city as well. I'm taking [inaudible 00:11:35] away from my pastor here in town in order to pursue a degree in clinical social work focusing on treating the many kinds of trauma our young people are facing in society today. For this reason I'm especially in favor of using our mental health millage funds to hire a social worker to support the Chelsea police and fire departments. Our schools and health care systems have become informed, and our law enforcement and protection agencies are also on the front lines of public service. Reach for past trauma or exacerbating current trauma in people's lives needs to be more successfully mitigated if we are to live highest calling as human beings. George Eliot said it well, "What do we live for, if not to make life less difficult for each other."

Leanne Sido:

One of the greatest inspirations of my life is my husband John, who is a former police officer from the Ann Arbor police department. I will close with a quote that when I read it made him and his ability to sit unflinchingly in the messiness of change that is required by all of us, and most humbly by those in his noble profession whose mistakes and foibles are often thrown up so casually in their own shaming and traumatic ways. As we know shaming people is never an effective way [inaudible 00:13:27] Here's the quote. Everyone thinks that courage is about facing death without flinching, all most anyone can do that. Almost anyone can hold their breath and not scream for as long as it takes to die. True courage is facing life without flinching. I don't mean the times when the right path is hard but glorious at the end, about enduring the boredom, the messiness and the inconvenience of doing what is right. [inaudible 00:14:03] Thank you.

Speaker 1:

Thank you Ms. Sido. T and K Plank please.

Theresa Plank:

Hi, my name is Theresa Plank and I live in the city of Chelsea. I would like to take this time to address the statement that was made by the city council members Cheri Albertson, in closing at one of the meetings. She publicly criticized the voice of the youth and the work they are doing. Since she did this using a public platform I would like to make sure that the words are not lasting in your minds. You see I have taken the time to get to know many of the kids she is referring to in her statement. I have taken the time to get to know their families. She suggested the kids leave the city of Chelsea to do some work, and that racism... real racism isn't existent here. Well, I would like to suggest that all of you find out what these kids are actually doing before you take a public platform to criticize them. Here's what I know for a fact that they are doing.

Theresa Plank:

A group of them went to Kansas City last summer for a week to attend a workshop where many of the classes focused on diversity training, low income housing, LGBTQ awareness, depression, suicide. Some of them are youth mentors in Ypsilanti where they meet in person well now virtually with minority kids. Some of the kids in [inaudible 00:15:57] have traveled to Detroit and spent the night sleeping on the floor of a church for days, all while cleaning up the streets, painting beautiful scenes on the boards of the boarded up homes, landscaping those abandoned lots, serving food in shelters, going into the

shelters to help organize their storage spaces. Some of them actually traveled all the way to Chicago, where they again slept for days on the floor of a church while spending their day putting together care packages for the homeless, and then handing those care packages out in the street. They put together meals and they went and handed them out. They actually sat in the public parks where they had conversations with those less fortunate in whom they were serving. Some of them work monthly right here at our own community breakfast.

Theresa Plank:

I could go on and on and I am just one person getting to know the work that our kids do. Imagine what else you could learn about them if you took the time to get to know their our movement. Our kids have been doing a lot of service work outside of Chelsea, and now they are bringing their work back here. Because they realize Chelsea is broken and that their friends less fortunate should not have to leave Chelsea to get an education, or to be treated properly by law enforcement and our city council. Until all kids are safe in Chelsea no kids are actually safe in Chelsea. So in closing I'm going to beg the city council and the Chelsea police department to take a stand in this human rights movement, supports the work our kids are doing, support them publicly. Give them a platform.

Theresa Plank:

Many adults are using that platform to silence and shame them. Give them the platform to continue the good work they are doing. Without them we may not have been aware of the racism and misconduct within our own police department, or the ignorance and white privilege within our city council, or the racism and ignorance of many of our powerful business owners that have been on display this summer. Chelsea is now listening more than ever, and I think it's time we do something about it. Thank you for the time.

Speaker 1:

All right, thank you. Just a reminder tonight that tonight's listening session is to receive public input regarding policing. There certainly will be future opportunities to provide public input on other topics at all of our city council meetings. Julia [Karz 00:18:55] I'm sorry, Ms. Karz I'm having trouble hearing you with your audio. No. Would you like me to come back to you while you work on some of the audio issues?

Julia Karz:

Does that work now?

Speaker 1:

There you go. Perfect. Yep, we can hear you now. Thank you.

Julia Karz:

Thank you. Hi, I'm Julia Karz and I live in the city of Chelsea. I'm 15-years old and a sophomore at Chelsea High School, and there are a few things you should know about me before I begin. I was adopted from China when I was 10 months old, and I have lived in Chelsea my entire life. I'm involved in Girl Scouts, youth group. I love spending time with my friends. I love dogs and my family. I'm involved in sports and extracurriculars, and I do well academically and try to excel in everything I do. I face the same everyday challenges and struggles as most of my high school friends, but here in Chelsea I also have to deal with

something bigger that many of my peers don't have to worry about. This struggle has to do with my race. In addition to everyday problems like stress and anxiety about classes, homework, friend drama and boys. I also have to deal with racial injustices in the form of racial attacks, never ending comments, being excluded and having to be the brunt of definitely not funny jokes from some students, friends, teachers and even other adults. I've decided to share my story because I want to see change. I mean not just in my town, not just in our schools but in every town and every school.

Julia Karz:

I have broken this into three parts. First being a threatening incident that involved the police. Second being examples of hurtful racist comments and jokes that are not jokes, and lastly some thoughts I have about what I wish could be done about racism in our community. Part one, I would like to tell you about an incident that occurred December 2019. I returned home after a long day at school [inaudible 00:21:36] education. I was eating my dinner and doing my homework when my dad came in with the mail from the day. He came in looking confused at first, he was holding a banana that had a happy note safety pin through the peel. See, what I didn't know then is that a banana is used as an ethnic slur for Asian Americans. It means yellow on the outside and white on the inside. This refers to Asian people being raised or living in a community of white culture.

Julia Karz:

At the time I didn't understand this or why my parents called the police when they found the banana in our mailbox. It wasn't until my parents had to explain the banana reference and the meaning of the note to the police officers that I then realized someone had put it in our mailbox to target me because of my race. This is also known as ethnic intimidation. Someone had gone out of their way to make me feel different, like I didn't belong. The note attached had read something along the lines of China chink in master sink. The police contacted the FBI as they were unfamiliar with this type of situation. They used the FBI as a learning resource for them. The police had said I wasn't allowed to tell anyone about the incident while the investigation was active, not even my closest friends. Not being able to talk about it made me feel even more alone. That week I walked through the halls of my school feel like an outsider, searching the faces of my peers, wondering who could have wanted me to feel so hated and isolated, or maybe students weren't responsible?

Julia Karz:

Maybe it had been an adult who's threatening my family and me? Why? What have I ever done to them? Part two. Another thing I struggle with is the constant comments and so called jokes I've received for years now. Some of these come from my friends and others from students and teachers. These comments range anywhere from smart Asian jokes to dog eating jokes. You're pretty for an Asian and more. Sometimes instead of saying you're stupid or you're dumb as an insult, people will yell you were adopted which they might think is the ultimate slam by saying their biological parents didn't want them.

Julia Karz:

Recently, two of my close friends shared with me what a supposed friend had said behind my back. She told them that she would never want to adopt because she didn't want her baby to be Asian. Also, when my name came up in a conversation she said, "Julia but she's Asian, eeew." The same girl had also excluded me from several sleepovers and other social activities, as if my race was a reason that people wouldn't want to be around me. It was so hurtful because all of my friends were invited all of them

except for me. Once again I felt alone in a world with people who could not understand what I was feeling.

Julia Karz:

Part Three, a few days after the ethnic intimidation incident, I was at school and just before last period, a staff member was waiting for me at my desk. The police had reached out to the school and he was checking in with me. He asked to speak with me privately as he led me to a small frosted glass windowed room between two classrooms. Everyone saw him take me from class and then again when I exited the little room. When I returned I was bombarded with questions from my peers. It felt like my insecurities were laid out in front of my classmates which brings me to my first point. I wish confidential meetings with the school staff were more private. The police did eventually find out that it was two boys that live in my neighborhood who left the banana and the note. Their parent were contacted and as far as I know they were only warned not to do it again. It didn't feel fair to me, nothing changed for them. That lesson was really learned. Yet the view I had on my entire world was completely shattered.

Julia Karz:

I wish the police understood the severity of the ethnic slur without my parents having to explain it to them, and that the boys were held accountable for their actions. I wish students, teachers and parents understood the impact of their comments on people with minority struggles. I wish my friends would stick up for me when they hear these comments. I wish we all knew how to recognize this behavior and know when and how to do something about it. I would like to see some change in the way the community treat's everyone and problems of race. I feel like I was so naive growing up in a small city in Chelsea, because I'm only now realizing how myself and others have been treated differently. I've been treated differently because of my race and how so many people make judgments of me and others due to our parents and the color of our skin.

Julia Karz:

I would love it if Chelsea could actually be a place where people can come share their stories and struggles and feel supported, loved and safe. This dream can only become a reality with the help of each and every person in the community. So now I challenge you what will you do to make a difference? Thank you.

Speaker 1:

Thank you Julia for being here tonight and for sharing your story with us. Laura Damschroder.

Laura Damschroder:

Yes. Hi, can you hear me all right?

Speaker 1:

we can.

Laura Damschroder:

Okay, good. My name is Laura Damschroder and I've been a resident of Chelsea for just over two years. I haven't been here as long as many people on the call tonight, but I have grown to love this community and I'm very committed to being a productive and dedicated citizen of this city. I just want to thank you

all members of the council, madam Mayor for listening and most of all I want to thank chief Toth for being here, and listening in the previous session as well, and I want to acknowledge that these are difficult and tumultuous times in many ways. But this is also a time of great potential for positive change.

Laura Damschroder:

I'm no expert in policing but recent tactics in response to the ARCY protest marches have been quite surprising to me. I want to pause here and just say how fortunate we are in Chelsea that we have such a highly engaged, energetic, smart group of youth who are so committed to making Chelsea a better stronger community. Theresa Plank highlighted so much of what they're doing. These protests that are being organized by ARCY are uncomfortable and inconvenient, but they have a message and youth committing all of this time and energy to a cause, we would do well to listen.

Laura Damschroder:

I have witnessed aggressive tactics or a kind of military style tactics by police in Chelsea in response to ARCY protests. For example, seeing officers on the roof of the police station with postures that look like snipers taking pictures of protesters. This was especially surprising and unnerving giving the lack of surveillance for the Patriot Parade that was going on at the same time, who were honking and yelling and slowing traffic on Main Street. These and other tactics that I've witnessed serve to escalate and not de-escalate tensions, and I'm glad to hear of other situations where officers seek to de-escalate situations, but that's not always the case. I'm going to guess that in the case of the protest that officers are within the legal boundaries of behaviors, but that's not the point.

Laura Damschroder:

My point is that these protests have been led by Chelsea youth, with many adults there to support them. These are voices that need to be heard, respected and responded through civil, productive dialogue. Calls to defend police sound radical. It's a soundbite that's caught on as a rallying cry in response to frivolous deaths because of overzealous policing, but we also know that policing is an important service and the men and women in the force are dedicated professionals who take on many risks on our behalf. But this movement is about rebalancing limited funds and attention to benefit the community.

Laura Damschroder:

It's about addressing mental health issues which an earlier speaker brought up, and gaps in housing and social support. Right here in this community we have heard stories in the last listening senate session about people of color being stopped regularly by police. So I want to propose a taskforce comprised of residents including youth and adults, representatives from city council and police officers to take a close and serious look at policing in Chelsea, and together design a plan that will move the Chelsea police department and including integration with mental health services into an approach that the community fully embraces. I would suggest hiring a skilled facilitator who can help navigate polarized opinions.

Laura Damschroder:

We have a chance here and Chelsea to be a model for other cities like us, and we have a remarkable story building here and I just want to call on us all to draw in these strengths and to use this as a starting point for positive change that we can all live with. Thank you.

Speaker 1:

All right, thank you very much. Pam Maturo you now have the floor, you are next in line.

Pam Maturo:

Hi. Thank you for hearing [inaudible 00:32:01]

Speaker 1:

I am sorry Ms. Maturo we're having difficulty hearing you with your audio. Perhaps you want to try turning it on and off and see if we get better reception? [inaudible 00:32:25]

Pam Maturo:

Are you able to hear me now?

Speaker 1:

We are now.

Pam Maturo:

Okay. My name is Pam Maturo and I live in Lima Township. It is everyone's prerogative to ignore facts, but ignoring them in no way renders them untrue. The fact is that racism exists in every facet of our society in the United States. It exists in the way we fund our schools and educate our children. It exists in our zoning laws and the way we house our citizens. It exists in the way we provide medical care and control access to it. It exists in the way we feed our people and the ways in which that food is grown, processed and distributed to our tables. It exists in our criminal justice system, and it exists in our police. To deny this reality is the most detrimental form of racism. Racism does exist in Chelsea. Whether you, your family or anyone you know has experienced it or not, it does exist.

Pam Maturo:

Again, to deny this reality is a form of racism, and is detrimental to the health and well being of our community. The members of Anti-Racist Chelsea Youth or ARCY are profoundly aware of this. Their decision to march in the streets of Chelsea is just one aspect of the racial justice work that they're doing on behalf of our community and I applaud them. Their disruptive marches have left an indelible mark on our members of our community. We're learning more about racism and anti-racism work than perhaps ever before. The disruption is the point. Had they not taken this step, had they not created disturbance and discomfort, we simply would not be having the conversations that we are having today. Talking about racism is hard and it is painful. If you are white, you are racist. I am racist. The only times that I am not racist are when I am anti-racist, and the only times that you are not racist are when you are anti-racist.

Pam Maturo:

Chief Toth you had some choices to make. You had kids marching in the streets, blocking traffic and community members complaining about it. To add to your woes, your department had to respond to an assault during one of those protests, and your officers problematic response created further discord. I'd say you're probably in a pretty tight spot and that is never easy. You had to make some difficult choices. So chief Toth rather than rehash the choices that you did make, let's explore some of the choices that you could have made. You could have recognized the importance of the national discussion on race that

we are having in our country, and that while time consuming and costly the ARCY marches we're bringing that very important just conversation into our very own living rooms, coffee shops, city council and zoning board meetings, school board meetings and classrooms. You could have made the choice to support ARCY and their marches and make a public statement to that effect, recognizing that while costly the benefits of their actions are priceless.

Pam Maturo:

You could have chosen to publicly acknowledge and renounce the actions of your officer and the racist, homophobic and misogynistic content of his public Facebook profile. Knowing that as a result of this officer's conduct and profile women, LGBTQ and BIPOC members of our community may feel less safe, and may be wondering who else amongst those who have sworn to protect share those same views? And how will that affect their well being if they're ever in the position of needing your help?

Pam Maturo:

You could have recognized that because of your comments of the June 20 city council meeting, and because of the Patriot Parade posting threatening memes things and videos online, that the proactive response to request the assistance of medics, safety vehicles, Michigan liberation and the National Lawyers Guild was in fact a reasonable and important measure. You could have chosen not to give citations to the vehicle drivers recognizing their importance to the safety of our youth. You could have noticed that cars were moving into the road where these young people were marching. You could have realized that not one of your officers were addressing this, and you could have expressed gratitude to the medic who had just stepped in front of oncoming traffic to stop them.

Pam Maturo:

You could have decided that just because you can, does not mean that you had to give citations to every single marcher. These are the choices that you did not make. What choices will you be making moving forward? Thank you.

Speaker 1:

All right, thank you Ms. Maturo. Is there anyone else? I don't see any hand up. Miss. Sophie and forgive me if I don't say your name correctly. Bugala. B-U-G-A-L-A.

Sophie Bugala:

Yeah. Hi, my name is Sophie Bugala. Can you hear me?

Speaker 1:

Yes, we can hear you. Thank you for correcting me and your name too, thank you.

Sophie Bugala:

I live in Chelsea and I am with the ARCY, the Anti-Racist Chelsea Youth and though I don't represent all of us and the things I say definitely will not apply to every single one of us, I still believe my perspective is important to share. For the past 10 weeks I've joined friends and family marching for justice. Within that time one of us has been punched, a truck attempted to drive through us and we were harassed again and again by antagonists on the sidewalk and in the streets. I think it is relevant to note that the vast majority of those who stand with the ARCY are either minors or elderly people. We've also

witnessed firsthand the Chelsea Police Department demonstrate a clear lack of initiative when it comes to defending and protecting us. Despite the fact that chief Toth has claimed these are their top priorities. At this point I believe it should be clear to everyone that this claim is false, because "protecting us" is not telling a 16 year old girl that she can expect a lifetime of violence. Protecting us is not standing by when we are harassed by other members of our community. So when our law enforcement officers demonstrated that they would not protect us, we made an attempt to protect ourselves.

Sophie Bugala:

Two Thursdays ago we were joined by street medic. Our march made it to the first traffic light before our medics were stopped. They were pulled over by the police, forced to step out of their cars and issued citations for impeding traffic, despite the fact that one of whom was disabled and the other was at the front of our march clearly not impeding anything. Then once we reached the station we were again met with officers hiding on the roof trying to take pictures of us as we had the two marches prior. Now my friends are being issued citations for walking in the street. The department claims that they are issuing citations in the name of protection, but what I hear in that claim is not a desire to keep their community safe, but rather a desire to keep their community quiet. When I tell you this frustrates me it is not a request for the CPD to block traffic on our behalf, nor is it a call for them to pretend to tune into our open mics for the sole purpose of making the department look good.

Sophie Bugala:

What I'm saying and I hope you hear me when I tell you this, is that it is so disheartening to watch the adults in this community, in my community [inaudible 00:39:59] to neglect to stand up for their youth. We as your youth see the situation as what it truly is, a situation in which once again police officers have taken advantage of the power they are given in order to intimidate us, to suppress us and to silence us. What we are asking is that the CPD allow us to march in peace, without scare tactics or threats of arrest or citations. What I am asking is for my neighbors and my teachers and my community role models to finally support their children, rather than stand by while they are threatened by the very people who are meant to be protecting them. I believe it is my city's responsibility to encourage its youth when they fight for equality and justice, not to swaddle them in ignorance, not to scare them away from civic engagement, but to teach them that it is good and it is right to stand up for people when they are mistreated by their own community.

Sophie Bugala:

This is a plea for Chelsea to finally recognize the disparities between chief Toth words and his officers actions. This is a plea for Chelsea to stand for its youth and for its people of color. Thank you.

Speaker 1:

All right, thank you very much. I appreciate your input. Is there anyone else who would like to talk at this time? Or provide information regarding input on policing in Chelsea? Sorry, it's a little awkward going through the list. Just wanted to make sure that I'm not missing anybody. All right. I just saw a couple of hands go up. Kate McAlpine, please go ahead.

Kate McAlpine:

Hi, I'm Kate McAlpine, I live in the city of Chelsea. I just wanted to make sure that we're not under estimating the threat of white nationalism. It's killed 70% of the people who have died from terrorist

attacks in the last 10 years, and we kind of get used to it and feel comfortable about it because we don't really notice it. But the way that the truck was reported to have gone toward the protesters really worries me, and the fact that that person was not tracked down by the police bothers me. I mean that's how a white nationalist killed people in France, in Charlottesville and in Toronto, different ones but different cases. I worry that it could happen in a place like this. So I think when we talk about protecting the kids who are out protesting, we should take that very seriously because there may be people who want to harm them. That's

Speaker 1:

All right, thank you Ms. McAlpine. All right, Ms. [Ladio 00:43:10] you are next please.

Ladio:

Thank you. I am still going to be leaving it to others to address some of the most recent incidents, but as the weeks have gone by since our last listening session I've heard more stories of bullying in the high school, and seemingly inappropriate traffic stops by the police. But as this is a small town most victims don't want to come forward, but I want to assure you that they are there. The activities of this summer have indeed brought the racism as Pam so clearly mentioned, that exists in this town to the surface. For the police as kind of following up to some of these stories I've heard. Who do you stop late at night and early in the morning? Do you ask everyone you stop if you can search their car? Do you escort everyone you stop who is not a resident out to the freeway and see them off? This has definitely been done to people of color in town.

Ladio:

Again, I would ask counsel to ask the police to keep statistics not on just citations but stops as well. Data is the only way to prove what is or is not happening. Implicit bias training does not mandate that the trainees change but that change has to happen. My vision is that we have a welcoming town where a person of color is not assumed to be from out of town, and that we lose the reputation as a community hostile to people of color because we do have it.

Ladio:

As a follow up as we bring up these issues and I asked these questions and things that have happened in previous sessions, what happens to those? Is there going to be a follow up report that the questions that have been asked will get addressed, and we can ask them all again in question and answer? But I think enough statements have come forward that they should be addressed and brought up. I also want to bring up the idea that there isn't this topic of defunding police, but one of the prime tenants of that is shifting funds, and we do have mental health money that should not go to another armed officer. It should go to a social worker trained in intervention, or a mental health worker who can serve more in this community than just those additional armed police officers. Thank you very much.

Speaker 1:

All right, thank you Ms. Ladio. I have someone by the name of Sharon. If you could identify yourself and the community you live? And then the floor is yours, please. Sharon? I'm sorry you don't have a last name. All right, we will circle back to Sharon if you would like to share something as part of public comment about policing. Is there anybody else who'd like to speak at this time? Please bear with me as I go through the participants to make sure that I'm not missing anybody. All right, I do see a new hand raised. Dave Thompson, please.

Dave Thompson:

I'll keep this brief. I would just like to understand what we're going to do to ensure that ARCY and other citizens of Chelsea can express their free speech safely, and without fear of reprisal in the future. That's it.

Speaker 1:

All right, thank you Mr. Thompson. Is there anyone else before we take a break who would like to provide public input about what they... Comments they have regarding policing and vision for policing? Sharon's iPhone now, go ahead Sharon. You can unmute, identify yourself and you have the floor.

Sharon Cabarrus:

Okay, can you hear me okay?

Speaker 1:

Yes, there is some background noise but we could hear you.

Sharon Cabarrus:

Okay, this is Sharon [Cabarrus 00:48:23] and I live in Lima Township, and you're hearing me now. Okay, because I live in the township and just because of I guess how I've lived the last 17 years, I haven't had a lot of interactions with the city police. Only to maybe return prescription medicine or something like that, the leftovers but I wanted to just share my experience. I attended two of the protests in support of the youth, one following the altercation in the park just to again stand with the youth, and then the last one and I tend to stay in the back and kind of let the youth... again, just kind of want to support the youth and let them lead the way and really proud of their efforts, and their just being so courageous and standing up for equity in our community. I had a great conversation with the medic in the park before we started the March, and I was really impressed with the fact that there are dedicated medics that come out and support protests throughout Michigan which is amazing. They do it, they've been trained, they do it on their own time, they're out every single night and again I was just super impressed.

Sharon Cabarrus:

So I felt pretty safe knowing that they were helping to lead and helping to bring up the rear of the protest, because I have been concerned about the resistance to what the youth are doing in the community. So I did have only an hour to be there but I was bringing up the rear and the youth were leading the way and out of the blue came the police and I was so shocked and intimidated. I couldn't believe how the protest, the whole spirit of it changed in an instant. It was extremely intimidating to have the police kind of seemingly appear out of nowhere and stop the medics, ticket them. Of course, the youth came back to show support for what was going on and it was just really surprising. I did not expect something like that to happen. I felt like the youth were staying in their lane, the one lane going north and doing a good job of keeping together and the medics actually were there really working to keep everybody together and kept telling me to pick up my pace.

Sharon Cabarrus:

So I guess I just want to share that I think what I'm hearing tonight are a lot of great ideas about what's next, and I do think that it is time to listen to what the youth are saying and it's okay to say, "Hey, maybe things haven't gone as we've wanted them to. Now we need to come together as a community because

Chelsea is a truly a great community of offerings. But the racism is definitely prevalent in our schools and in our community." I just think that somebody made the suggestion of a group coming together and involving police, adults in the community and youth, and I think that's a great idea. So I just wanted to share my experience for having no experience really with the police to this sudden situation with the protest, and just being shocked and intimidated, and I can't believe how courageous the youth are and I give them so much credit for speaking up and being so brave. So I just wanted to share that experience.

Speaker 1:

Thank you, Ms. Cabarrus. It looks like we have one more person who had their hand up and then we will take a break. Scott, if you could please identify yourself, unmute and then please proceed with your statements.

Scott Pacheco:

Hi, this is Scott Pacheco. I live in the city of Chelsea. I'm not sure if this is the right time to talk about this because I got here late, but my one concern is with the investigation into police problems and having that in house. I understand that there are police unions, and there're contracts and there's mitigation set up in that, but I think the city actually needs to be in control of investigations into police or some outside agency. Police investigating police, it's the band of brothers. It's part of a system that could be flawed and that's a part that I'm really concerned with. It's been a few months now on this investigation and I'm hopefully we'll hear something tonight about it. But even that if they're investigating their own people it could become a problem, and it also takes the onus off of the police chief and police management if an independent party is investigating these types of concerns. So, that's all I wanted to say. Thank you.

Speaker 1:

All right, thank you Mr. Pacheco. I do not see any other hands raised and it is 6:54. So we will take a break until seven o'clock and then we'll proceed to the q&a portion. Thank you.

Speaker 1:

Okay, thank you. It's seven o'clock. We are coming back from a short break, and we'll go ahead and continue with our listening session. While I didn't see any additional hands raised or people who... or any messages that anyone else had their hand raised. I think I will take one more opportunity, if anyone would like to provide any public input regarding policing in the community, then I will give one more call for participants and if not we'll proceed to the second part, which is the question and answer portion of the evening. For those who are using Zoom and maybe having trouble with a hand raise function, because I can't see all the people at one time please use the chat function if you're able to [inaudible 00:55:47]

Hanifan:

Jennifer Kondak would like to speak great.

Speaker 1:

Great. I will circle back in just one moment. I do want to just ask everyone if you can use the Zoom function or you can use the chat function, that will help me make sure that I don't miss you. I did see

Jennifer with her hand waving, but I'm not always able to see everybody. So Ms. Kondak please go ahead and you have the floor.

Jennifer Kondak:

Thank you so much. I literally just got this, this was just sent to me and... I'm Jennifer Kondak. I live in Dexter township in Chelsea, and this statement that I just again received I'll be reading it full from Anne Valle, V-A-L-L-E who lives on Main Street in downtown Chelsea. I hope it meets the criteria but she says regarding the meeting tonight she was looking for some materials, but couldn't find them and she has a class beginning at Washtenaw Community College and wouldn't be able to attend. So I'm reading this again on her behalf and I'm reading it just cold.

Jennifer Kondak:

As a teacher and administrator in the Chelsea school district for over 20 years, I witnessed the need for us to become more culturally aware students and staff alike. So when I was selected with one of their teachers to participate in a year long program centering on understanding race, I felt honored and privileged to be included. This took place around 2011 and I think that the high school social studies teacher that I was paired with still works for the district. After a week long program we've met monthly at the WISD for a year.

Jennifer Kondak:

This training accompanied an exhibit at the University of Michigan natural history museum entitled, Understanding Race and all districts in the ISD participated. The training changed my life and I could see benefits for our district across all curriculum areas. Unfortunately for us all my excitement about implementing the training was met with little interest on the part of the superintendent and our principal, both who have left the district. Our conversation left me wondering why we had been sent to the program. It seemed that we to teachers had fulfilled the quota that all districts participate in this race training. The subject was [inaudible 00:58:08] but I continued for years to participate in groups in Washtenaw County that encourage conversations on the topic of race. I was sad to learn that many of the participants in these groups feared coming to Chelsea. I could only imagine how the children in the district who are not white persevered on a daily basis.

Jennifer Kondak:

I have read that the district will undergo some training in race sensitivity. This is a good place to start but it should not be a box that is checked off to show that Alas, we now understand. Much of the change that needs to happen is in the heart of what we teach the students. Our children learn little about the brutality of colonization, the truth about slavery, the failure of our reconstruction and the remnants of Jim Crow that still exist. The training we teachers were given included history, science and lived experiences. We interacted and became friends with teachers of different backgrounds, and we brainstormed how to bring these topics to students in lesson form. At the time of this training, I was teaching freshman biology with teacher Robin DeGracia. She gave me the latitude to include some of the subject information in our team taught class. The day that we presented the idea that our skin color was just a mutated trait due to low sun exposure, the class was blown away.

Jennifer Kondak:

Teachers do not have the power to change their curriculum alone, and the change we need to see is curriculum deep. It is hard work and will take leadership that understands that we need to change. Hard

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work and leadership is not lacking in this district, but we need to focus on teaching students the vital information our current curriculum leaves out. Many districts look to Chelsea because we enjoy success in so many areas. Let us lead the way our students deserve it. Thank you.

Speaker 1:

All right, thank you Ms. Kondak. One more hand up. Katie Tinsley, please.

Katie Tinsley:

Hi, my name is Katie Tinsley. I live in New Orleans now but I was raised in Chelsea, went to Chelsea High School and lived there for some years after high school. Now, as someone who doesn't live there I wanted to kind of give an outsider perspective on a place that I still care a lot about and where my family still lives. So in New Orleans here it seems a lot of the times like our problems are unmanageable and overly complex. For example, we've got 30,000 families facing eviction this next month due to the pandemic. So it feels very overwhelming to be here with these problems, and when I look at Chelsea not to say that your problems aren't hard as well, but when I look at Chelsea I really see a unique opportunity for innovative thinking and problem solving. They've got a small tight knit community, a plethora of resources, relatively small population, one high school where most of the students attend, an engaged youth, a low crime rate and I think this is really an amazing opportunity to really re-envision what community safety looks like, and to be a leader in innovative community organization for the region, for the state, for the entire nation.

Katie Tinsley:

As a smaller town you can feel like you have small problems, but it doesn't mean that you can't think really big and to come up with really big or really grand solutions. So I'm really inspired by what the youth have been doing. I'm really inspired seeing so many people on this call who are actively wanting to support the youth and create change in my hometown. So thank you all.

Speaker 1:

All right, thank you Ms. Tinsley. I do not see any other hands up and I have no notations. Mr. Hanifan am I missing anybody?

Hanifan:

I do not see any hands up.

Speaker 1:

Thank you. All right then. I will conclude that portion of the public input portion tonight and we will go ahead and proceed with questions and answers. I am going to ask everyone to use the same format that we've been using with the hand raise, and if you're unable to utilize that function just send a chat and... otherwise please go ahead and try and signal, but it may take a few minutes for us to scroll through everyone to see that. If you're not muted please mute, and we'll go ahead and open up with questions please. Ms. Ladio please.

Ladio:

My question is, I'm curious why the police insist on taking pictures from the roof at that protest. I was a participant, I was doing nothing wrong. I was standing in a parking lot and I'm not sure that it's all that

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legal to be surveilled like that and I wanted to know why and then what was done with all those photographs? Nobody was breaking any laws at that time but there were two policemen on the roof taking pictures. One in uniform, one not.

Ed Toth:

[inaudible 01:04:04] you want me to answer that?

Speaker 1:

You can Chief Toth with notification that we have had a request and to ask for an investigation into police conduct, which council approved to do at the last session.

Ed Toth:

So I guess with that in mind I'll probably refrain until that investigation is over.

Ladio:

Could I know what's being done with my picture?

Speaker 1:

Ms. Ladio at this time there is an active investigation, we'd be happy to follow up with you separately. T and K Plank please.

Theresa Plank:

Yes, my name is Theresa Plank and I live in the city of Chelsea. The question I have is, this is the second listening session. I would like to know what the plans are from the chief and from city council separately how you are planning to address all of the questions and comments that you haven't addressed us on [inaudible 01:05:59] we're and here we're asking questions. What are you doing with that information? What is the plan with that?

Mayor Johnson:

Thank you. At this point, Miss. Plank, it is a community listening session. We're gathering the information at this time. We will have to take it back as you're elected representatives determine what the next steps council would like to take based on that public information. So I don't think we have a clear outlined route at this point. We're just really in the gathering information stage and then council will have to reconvene at that and take into consideration what their next steps are.

Miss. Plank:

Okay, so there hasn't been a plan put in place. Is that what you're saying, to move forward with this information yet? You'll develop that plan next?

Mayor Johnson:

Miss. Plank, that's correct. What the request was initially from council is to first listen to the community and that's really our first step. No further plans have been developed at this time and that would have to be something that is discussed by council. None of us have the individual authority to make those plans independently and we would have to come that as a majority. All right?

Miss. Plank:

Are you going to have an opportunity to answer that because I did ask the police department as well what their plan is with the information. Can he have an opportunity to answer that? Thank you.

Chief Toth:

Yeah, we're listening to whatever... I'm taking some notes and whether it's conditional training and things of that nature and how we can always be better. Each day, like today, we want to be better tomorrow, and it's always a learning experience listening to everyone.

Miss. Plank:

Thank you.

Mayor Johnson:

Marca Everly, please.

Marca Everly:

Good evening. I was wondering if you could catch me up as far as if the ongoing investigation is independent of the police department or they're investigating on their own... A gentleman did bring up that point that we really should have some checks and balances towards inappropriate behavior because we have heard. It would behoove us, but you said that the... Is the council investigating or have we...

Mayor Johnson:

In respect to the question, I think you have multiple questions that you are asking. With respect to the complaint that was filed against the entire Chelsea Police Department, that came before council at our last council meeting, you're certainly welcome to watch that. All of our meetings are recorded, as well as the information that's there. Council did make a request for an outside agency to review that in light of

the fact that it's against the entire police department because that would be inappropriate for that to happen.

Mayor Johnson:

With respect to internal investigations, with one officer, that's normally handled internally and Mr. [Hannefin 00:03:28], could you please walk through, you or Chief Toth, what that process is? Ultimately, the police department is responsible to City Council. We hire the Police Chief, so he is ultimately responsible to us. Mr. Hanifan or Chief Toth?

John Hanifan:

Sure. This is John Hanifan. I can take the general overview of internals and then Chief can talk about maybe the specifics. But there's a complaint brought by the public on an officer of conduct then there's an internal review that's completed typically by the Chief. Usually would start with the Shift Officer, the Sergeant on that shift to do the initial investigation. And then the Chief would make the determination based on the severity of the complaint what discipline would be administered.

John Hanifan:

And then if it gets to the point of beyond cautioning or anything like that, then the city, and that would be me as human resources would look into the complaint and then issue discipline based on the rules in our employee handbook and then per the union contracts. So that's the process in a sense, I don't know if chief Toth wants to add anything to that. That's the general overview of internals. As far as-

Marca Everly:

[crosstalk 00:04:54] I guess the question I mostly have is, if you are a busy human being and you try to read the Chelsea Update, and you try to look at stuff, we still are not getting good... I mean, I don't always get the chance to be able to watch a recorded Zoom that's three hours long. When can we expect some press statements to be made about some of these very serious complaints, because I feel like the community is giving you input saying they're very uncomfortable with some behaviors and we are getting, "Yeah, we're listening back," and I really would like to expect some statements to be made soon.

John Hanifan:

Sure, and that's completely understandable when there's there's allegations or investigations, community demands answers as they should. And silence, it's frustrating for everybody, we know that. So I guess it takes the three that are ongoing. The complaint that was filed against the entire department, we did talk about that our last council meeting. Council did decide to engage a third party law firm to do a review of the department. At the September 21st council meeting council will make a decision on which firm to engage, and then that process will move forward.

John Hanifan:

As far as the internals, with officer conduct and responding to the Pierce Park incident, I know that's still in progress and I'll let Chief Toth speak to that in a second. And for the third with the officer with the Facebook issues with Rick Cornell. Mr. Cornell resigned effective September 1st.

Marca Everly:

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Well, thank you, that's more information than I've had in months. I very much appreciate it.

John Hanifan:

You're welcome.

Mayor Johnson:

Chief, did you want him to comment on part two?

Chief Toth:

Sure. So regarding the criminal investigation involved and the alleged assault, that report, or that report was submitted to the prosecutor's office three weeks ago. That report is 148 pages long, it's very detailed and so it was submitted. So the reality with COVID the prosecutor's office is about three months behind in the reviews. So we just got, I think it was may, we're just getting the may requests back, like right now. So we'll see.

Chief Toth:

The other investigation regarding their original response, as far as officers to the assault that internal is completed, but I do not want to comment on that until I get the results back from the criminal investigation, because the criminal investigation takes precedent over an internal, because it could come back, either warrant authorized warrant denied or further investigation.

Chief Toth:

So if it comes back further investigation, we needed to talk to people, maybe additional people to ask questions differently and so forth. So I want to hold off on those results until we get the criminal investigation determination back.

Mayor Johnson:

All right, thank you. Just a follow-up to Ms. Everly's comment. Certainly we do try to get information out and make it available to the public, and as a shorthand measure of what you want to learn about what happens at city council meetings, there's a couple of different avenues for that. You can always certainly watch meetings. I understand that not everyone has as at time to sit and revisit, especially now that school's getting back and into session.

Mayor Johnson:

But we do post minutes of those meetings and Chelsea Update actually does a really great job of reporting on the council meetings as well. And then you can always reach out to a council member and ask at any point, in addition. Generally press releases aren't issued during active investigations or pending investigations. We did certainly report on those issues. But, please we appreciate that feedback about communication. Thank you. Ms. Pichiko.

Ms. Pichiko:

Thank you. I just wanted to clarify a question that Ms. Plank had asked regarding the plan for addressing the questions from this session, these sessions, these two sessions. I just wanted to add that when the council unanimously approved the summary agenda item on July 6th, that was the first inquiry into how and when the council would be scheduling community listening sessions.

Ms. Pichiko:

There was a part two to that agenda item that was approved. And the part two read, "To schedule a public session or sessions in the form of a town hall or community forum to focus on addressing concerns, brought to light at the community listening session and discuss steps community leaders can take to support positive reform." So at the onset, it was discussed by council that we would be listening and that we would be having continual conversation and forums to address the concerns subsequently.

Mayor Johnson:

Okay, Dave Thompson.

Dave Thompson:

Sure. Thank you. I didn't say previously, I live in downtown Chelsea. I mean a lot of good conversation. I guess, what I'm most concerned about is just to understand in terms of action, what we're going to do in order to ensure that protesters are able to safely exercise their First Amendment rights. We have multiple cases where folks have felt threatened. There's like incredible allegation of assault, maybe vehicular assault, multiple people have testified that they felt intimidated by police presence or policing approach. So I would just like to understand how we're going to change the approach to how we're managing the protests and how we're going to support folks in exercising, their freedom of speech.

Mayor Johnson:

Thank you. We have discussed the free speech issue here at the city council. And I think everyone has stated we support the right to free speech. The concern has always been how to do so lawfully, and there are two means to do that lawfully. There's one, stay on the sidewalk, where that's always a forum for First Amendment rights. We've also said that the park is always available for First Amendment conduct. And then if people would like to utilize the streets, a permit is required.

Mayor Johnson:

We have walked through how to get a permit. The permit process is done through the State of Michigan. It is facilitated by the city. The city has walked people through how to obtain that permit and we'd be happy to. That's for Main Street, if folks would like to use the side streets they certainly can ask city the city to get a permit for that, and we can facilitate closing down those streets.

Mayor Johnson:

Certainly the safety and not having people drive through the marchers has been a stated concern of myself, as well as other council members. It is more effective for us to police it safely, when we have a permit. We can have an identified route, we can close off those streets farther in advance, and we can also strategically place people.

Mayor Johnson:

Certainly one of the tragedies would be of either... I'm a former prosecutor, and I have had cases in the courtrooms where I've had elderly residents drive into pedestrians. I would hate to see that happen, I would hate to see any protestor of any age be harmed by a driver. That is a significant concern for me. So those are some of the ways that we can address some safety issues. Ms. Tinsley.

Kate Tinsley:

Yeah. This is just a quick question, going back a little bit to what, Mr. Hanifan was saying about the third party law firm that was brought in for the police review. I was just wondering, how much that costs and if that is coming out of the city police budget or the general city budget.

John Hanifan:

Yeah. Thank you, Ms. Tinsley. Excellent question. We don't have the cost yet, that's one of the parts of the vetting process and then council will make that approval on September 21st. If I had to, I guess, ballpark what I think it might cost somewhere between \$5000 and \$10,000. And as far as where the cost would come from, police is funded by the general fund, so I'd say general fund will be largely the primary source for that. So it comes ultimately from the general fund. So they're somewhat one in the same.

Mayor Johnson:

Right. Thank you, Sheila Graziano.

Sheila Graziano:

Yeah, I have a question. I was a little bit rattled to hear Julia's speech way back at the beginning of this evening, about the intimidation that she suffered through finding a banana in her mailbox. So I'm really amazed that the offenders who were found and apparently, it was a fact that they did that. Where does that straddle from a prank to ethnic intimidation? Where is the line on that? It does sound like they got off pretty lightly and I feel that Julia has been permanently traumatized by that. I think it came out in her emotions and these things do last a lifetime.

Sheila Graziano:

So the boys obviously got away with it and they're probably giggling about it. Looking at other young White males who do things that are a lot more dangerous than that, a lot more harmful, how did they get off so lightly and what would it have taken to take it to that next level where, "Oh, yeah, this really is racial intimidation and they need to deal with it." And I would think that would be either Mr. Hanifan or chief Toth.

Mayor Johnson:

Thank you Ms. Graziano. I do think I agree with you. That's certainly had an impact on Julia, and I know that the police department took that very seriously. Chief Toth do you want to... It is a closed investigation, so it is something-

Sheila Graziano:

Okay.

Mayor Johnson:

... that you can address at this time. Chief, do you want to talk a little bit about how that was approached?

Chief Toth:

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Sure. Yeah, we took it very seriously, spent a ton of time on that case, identified some suspects and unfortunately it was submitted to the prosecutor and there wasn't enough evidence to get a warrant authorized.

Sheila Graziano:

So, okay, I guess I can accept that, I'm just kind of curious if they had left that with a... I think there was a note attached to it. Did I hear that? Do I recall her saying that?

Chief Toth:

Yes.

Mayor Johnson:

That's correct.

Sheila Graziano:

So would it have taken a seriously more threatening note to draw a little more acute a... I understand that you put a lot of attention into it, and I appreciate that. What would it have taken for the police to be really alarmed that some physical threat was being offered to this young lady?

Chief Toth:

The only thing to speak to was an incident happened at night. We picked it up on a ringed doorbell, you got to be able to identify somebody positive ID, and that's what it comes down to. So, beyond a reasonable doubt is sometimes difficult to prove.

Sheila Graziano:

Hypothetically, and this is strictly hypothetically, if it happened a second time, would that be cause for more alarm?

Chief Toth:

We would still investigate it the same way we did it the first time, submit it to the prosecutor and then obviously do a connection between number one and number two in the report. Include both reports so the prosecutor was aware of both incidents.

Sheila Graziano:

Thank you.

Mayor Johnson:

Just to follow up on that, and just so it's clear the police department did investigate. They submitted their investigation to the prosecuting attorney, which is Washington County Attorney's office in this case. And they made the determined, legal determination of whether they could prove the case beyond a reasonable doubt. So that was the agency that made that determination. They could have sent it back if they felt there was additional investigation that the police department could have conducted in order to prove that case, and they made the decision that it was not something that they could proceed with at that time.

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Mayor Johnson:

Jan Burnett, I understand you have a question please.

Jan Burnett:

Yes, I watched listened to the first listening session, and so I'm familiar with kind of the balance between the kids speaking and adults speaking. Right now, I'm feeling like the weight of the questioning and conversation is among adults. And I'm just wondering how the youth are feeling in terms of wanting to engage in this process or are they just thinking, what was the same old, same old, "Nothing gets done." I do notice a difference in participation. What's your take on that?

Mayor Johnson:

Ms. Burnett, I can't answer that question, other than to say that we have provided an opportunity for anyone who'd like to speak. We have had several members of youth speak tonight. I can't certainly assume anything about anyone's behavior or answer, or really guess why people are not participating.

Jan Burnett:

Well, some of these folks are parents of the kids who've been actively involved. And I'm wondering, are they just hoping that their parents are going to ask the questions or... Can anybody who's a parent of a person who's been participating speak to that? No? Who's a parent? Does anybody want to say?

Mayor Johnson:

All right, Ms. Burnett, it's a little hard for me to answer, to mute or unmute somebody. Perhaps if somebody wants or to speak or answer your question as we go through, maybe that's an opportunity. It is hard to open up that format with 70 people on and try to find any answer to that. So if you'd like, and if somebody wants to speak to that, I'll invite them to do so as part of this format. Does that sound acceptable?

Jan Burnett:

Sure.

Mayor Johnson:

Okay, thanks.

Jan Burnett:

Thank you.

Mayor Johnson:

Scott.

Scott:

All right, I have a two-part question. They were from things that have been brought up already tonight. The first is a follow-up on Ms. Tynsdale's question about the costs and who will pay for it. I work for municipalities and have for the last 23 years of my life. There's budgets and everybody gets paid on the general fund. The police comes from the general fund. Does the police have a line item for lawsuits and

will that costs come out of that line item or will that cost come directly from the general fund and not from the police budget? That's the first part.

Scott:

The second part is Rick Cornell's resigning. Did we have a full investigation into that? And him resigning, will there be something put into his personnel file that shows that information? I personally would not like to see him on another police force. If that person came to my door, I would not open my door for him. I unfortunately went onto his Facebook page that Friday night that it was out, and there were over 200 very, very racist, very, very sexist memes all over his Facebook. And that person does not need to be a police officer.

Scott:

So I would like to know if we had a full investigation and that will go into his personnel file for future job opportunities. I know he's worked for us for 20 years now. I'm not sure if he came from another place or if he'd be able to... if he resigned or if he retired. And if that's the case and if he retired, I'm not sure if we should have allowed him to retire or we should have fired him for his behavior. So, I would like a little bit more information on that also. So thank you, those were my two questions.

Mayor Johnson:

Okay. I think we actually have three questions or more, we'll try to answer them. In the future, I'm going to ask that we please ask one question, allow others to ask a question and then get back into the queue. I think the first question was regarding general fund in the payment. Mr. Hanifan, do you want to talk about that please?

John Hanifan:

Sure. The police department budget doesn't have a specific line item for lawsuits. There's a line item for professional services, which that's the likely budget number that we would use, but there is no specific line item for lawsuits. But second, it's actually the third question, the question about Rick Cornell retiring, being allowed to retire.

John Hanifan:

The last eligible employee for a defined benefit system here in Chelsea for the police department retired in 2015. So Rick Cornell was not part of that system. So it's separation of services, just that he resigned, and whether he chooses to retire or not, that's really, it's personal decision for him.

John Hanifan:

And the third question or the second question, which I'll have Chief Toth answer, which is the question about the investigation and what's the status of that would be given that Cornell resigned.

Chief Toth:

The resignation came while that investigation was in process. It wasn't completed. And so with due process, until you get the total investigation completed, it's a resignation.

Mayor Johnson:

And, I guess additional question, so just to make sure we're trying to answer the question, does that information then go into Mr. Cornell personnel file?

Chief Toth:

There'll be a memo, and basically what it is, is there was a number pulled because every citizen's complaint a number's pulled on it, and then it will have next to it, "Resignation prior to investigation being completed."

Mayor Johnson:

All right, thank you. I think we answered all the questions, if not, please swing back in the queue and we'll follow up. Carolyn Stillwell.

Carolyn Stillwell:

Hi, I'm concerned that the council and police have spent a lot of time talking about the concern for the safety of protesters, but haven't said as much about their plans for safety of people of color in our community, particularly their emotional and physical safety. I was wondering what concrete steps the city and the police are taking to address that.

Mayor Johnson:

Thank you. I think we've taken a number of steps first. The city of Chelsea is one of the first or one of the smaller communities and one of the still, I think, relatively few communities that has extended protection in the areas of human rights, beyond that of the Elliott-Larsen Act of the State of Michigan. So we have broader protections in that at the State of Michigan, so that's process number one.

Mayor Johnson:

Process number two, is we did create a human rights commission where anyone who feels that they've been discriminated against can file a complaint that can go to our human rights commission for investigation. I don't know if you're aware, but in June earlier, the city council did adopt a resolution acknowledging systemic racism and discrimination and the inequality that results from that.

Mayor Johnson:

And then recently, as well on August 17th, we asked the Human Rights Commission to specifically have... While they've been always authorized to do forums of community education, and they're currently have one going currently with the library and Serendipity Books and community reads against racism, we have asked them to come back with community programming options on the issues of racism and bullying in an introductory format.

Mayor Johnson:

With respect to the police department, our police department undergoes regular training regarding cultural bias and awareness on a number of issues. We did talk about some of those and highlighted and outlined them in a summary format in, I believe it was our June 15th meeting. That's an ongoing process of training as well. Chief Toth, do you have anything else to add?

Chief Toth:

The fact is if there's any type of complaint, every complaint is documented and thoroughly investigated regarding any type of bias and allegation or racial issues.

Mayor Johnson:

Thank you, Chief. Just to be clear if there's any allegation with respect to police department, that can either be filed with a police department, or you can bring that to the attention of city council, as we have always said, and are continuing to do. If there is any complaint regarding the actions of our police department, we will investigate them. Sophie.

Sophie:

Hi. Yeah, sorry. As I said before, my name's Sophie Lugalier, and I live in Chelsea. I have an answer to the question that was posed, and also a question to ask. In regard to the question about whether youth are just relying on their parents to participate in this listening session, I think it's important to note that I am a part of the RC, and we are doing a lot of things behind the scenes and including initiating conversations with school administration, communication with lawyers and drafting goals and statements that we put out online. And the majority of that is happening independent of our parents.

Sophie:

I worry that that question could be very belittling to the youth and my friends who are working very hard to fight for equality in our community. I think it's important to note that in a lot of ways, city council meetings might not necessarily be accessible to the youth in my community.

Sophie:

And then the question I had to ask was that, there was a past worry about the money that is being spent in overtime for officers blocking the roads for the RC. And I know that the police have decided to stop blocking the roads for us. And I know that at our last march, our medics were specifically targeted for tickets. And I was wondering if Chief Toth could provide some insight into why they were targeting medics specifically without the people on the street, and whether there's a plan to continue that ticketing in the future. Yeah.

Chief Toth:

Sure, I can take that. So, it is illegal, it's a misdemeanor actually to block the road. There's also other two civil infraction violations, and that's what the tickets, where We decided instead of going with a misdemeanor, which is a crime to do the impeding traffic. There's also pedestrian on a highway while sidewalks are provided. So that's going to continue. So I request that you go on the sidewalk tomorrow or be in the same predicament.

Chief Toth:

Now you talk about medics. So there's something called the [Washner 00:31:33] Medical Control board. The Washner Medical Control Board, and Dr.[Dell Meyer 00:31:38], they determine who medics are and who aren't medics. So the question is the only people that can really block the roadway are law enforcement or crossing guards. So that's it.

Chief Toth:

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Those vehicles that were in the roadway, and a person almost got hit, have no lights on those vehicles, they are not deemed as an emergency vehicle to block traffic. And that's why that action was taken. So no one got hurt. So, that is going to continue to keep everyone safe. And one of the group members said about the vehicle that jumped the curb when people were at the... I think it was 52 and Old 12. We're trying to prevent anybody from getting hurt and that's why we request people to get on the sidewalks.

Chief Toth:

If you'd give me a second, I don't know if you've ever seen this document. The ACLU's got a document out. The ACLU says that you need to get a permit before you... you can't be in the roadway. So, as law enforcement officers, we've all taken an oath, and that oath is to uphold the law, and whether you like the law or not, that's the oath we took. And we take that oath very seriously. And that's why I've got to the point of taking enforcement action. Those that have obtained the tickets, go through the court system and we'll see what the magistrate says regarding the violations, and then we'll make adjustments from there.

Mayor Johnson:

Okay. Thank you, Ms. Pichiko.

Ms. Pichiko:

Thank you. I just want to go back a couple of questions to ask a clarifying question of Chief Toth. The question and conversation regarding Rick Cornell's resignation, Chief Toth stated that, Cornell resigned before the investigation was complete or before there was a full investigation. So my question, just so I am certain of what happened here is, will that investigation be continued? Will that investigation be completed? And at that point, will there be something other than a note saying the investigation wasn't complete when he resigned added to a personnel file? Thank you.

Chief Toth:

Once the person resigns, we close it up. So we're not going to continue with it.

Mayor Johnson:

All right. Kate McAlpine.

Kate McAlpine:

Hi there. So I was just wondering, who else on the police force knew about Rick Cornell's views? Not like I want names, but is there an awareness on the police force that racism is driving the increased killings of Black people by police? I can't imagine if he was posting on his Facebook page that none of his officer buddies knew. Is there an awareness that those views are a danger to members of the community and they're also a liability for the police force. How do you deal with that? Do you have a plan for that going forward to make sure that you don't have officers who are that kind of liability?

Chief Toth:

I could make a quick comment. Like myself, I don't have Facebook, don't have Twitter, don't do any of that. The majority of the members of the department don't have any of those social media sites. So the only thing I can say, when things are brought to our attention, we investigate them thoroughly and corrective action is taken, but most of the officers here are not on a social media platform.

John Hanifan:

Mayor Johnson.

Mayor Johnson:

Yes.

John Hanifan:

Yeah, could I offer a brief comment?

Mayor Johnson:

Yes.

John Hanifan:

This is John Hanifan, city manager. I can tell you that we have social media policies for employees, for board and committee members and council members. I can tell you that our policies have to get better. And beyond the policies, people have to start living that way. Our employees have to start living that way. And there is zero tolerance, as long as I'm the city manager, as long as on my watch, anything like that comes to my light, we will from an employment perspective, go after that person with everything that we have at our disposal, given the constraints of our employee handbook in our union contracts.

John Hanifan:

But let me be absolutely clear about that, conduct that's homophobic, misogynistic, racial, bullying is not tolerated. No, not by anybody, not by the mayor, not by myself. We also have a nobody above the law policy here. I don't Chief Toth mentioned that before. You commit a crime, you get pulled over as an officer, if I'm out having a good time on Friday night and make the unwise choice to drive drunk down Main Street, and I get pulled over, I'm going to jail.

John Hanifan:

So this is across the board. I hope everybody senses the passion in my voice. I haven't spoken much [inaudible 00:37:18] partly being the top human resource lead here, I'm affected by all this. I am. So let me reassure everybody. We have zero tolerance.

Kate McAlpine:

I'm glad to hear that. Misconduct is really difficult to root out. I will say that from having operated in organizations myself, so it's not an easy task, but it's critically important, especially when you have people who are allowed to use force.

Chief Toth:

And may be-

Mayor Johnson:

All right.

Chief Toth:

... if I can say something else. So-

Mayor Johnson:

Sorry.

Chief Toth:

I'm kind of a introverted kind of person, but as the city manager said, we have a policy that says, if I should be driving down the street, I don't have any rank, whether I'm speeding, committing a crime and so forth [inaudible 00:38:13] like everybody else. And so going back maybe eight, nine years ago, one of our officer's children was involved in some illegal activity and we prosecuted that person. One of our own officer's kids like we'd prosecuted anybody else.

Chief Toth:

It keeps being brought up about the police supporting... I didn't take any stance, but we have a policy, it's 1028 Speech, Expression, Social Networking. Law enforcement cannot take a position politically or socially regarding any type of movement. It's against our policy and you'd be either terminated or severely disciplined for doing that. That's why we don't take a position on these different political or social issues. So in all that we take our policies very seriously.

Chief Toth:

Also let's talk about, there was another incident that happened with an officer who no longer is employed here. That case came together by another officer who reported that behavior. So, everybody talks about this internal stuff or the good old boy system here, I can tell you that I'm not perfect, but there are outstanding officers at work here. Outstanding. For an officer to come forward and report another colleague, oftentimes you don't see that very often, but it happens here and it did happen here. So, that's enough from me.

Kate McAlpine:

That's very encouraging to hear.

Mayor Johnson:

Thank you Chief. Thank you John Hanifan. Just to comment on that too, we have always, the city has always stated that we will investigate any conduct and that we don't tolerate misconduct. And the reason for that is it makes us very hard for us to do our job if there is misconduct. We can't move forward as a city and the police department can't do their job either very effectively.

Mayor Johnson:

So we are committed to that, and as I personally have always said, I am willing to hold people accountable for their conduct. If anyone breaks a law, if anyone violates our policies, I believe in holding people accountable for their actions. And a while, I believe in due process, so there will be an investigation. It does take time to do those investigations, but that's certainly something that I personally am committed to. Kate Tinsley.

Kate Tinsley:

Thank you. I have a question, going back to Carolyn's question about what was being done for the safety of BIPOC people in the community. It felt like, Chief Toth's answer was reactionary instead of preventative saying, "We'll investigate. Like if any complaints happen, we'll investigate them." And in that scenario, one, the harm has already been done. So if a complaint's happening, someone has already had something done to them that they would need to complain about.

Kate Tinsley:

It also puts the responsibility of speaking up on the victim, which can be especially difficult when you're expected to report to the same institution that the complaint is against. And so I was wondering if there are more preventative plans in place to make it so these complaints don't come in because these instances don't happen.

Mayor Johnson:

I think what we have talked about before Ms. Tinsley, we have gone through the training that our police department goes through. It's something that we continue to work on with national and best practices and continuously review with an outside agency. We do do some pretty significant training, here at the police department. That doesn't mean that there isn't more to do, and that's something that's in constant review here.

Mayor Johnson:

With respect to reporting, certainly I can understand. I specialized formerly in prosecuting cases of domestic violence, so I'm well aware of the challenges and difficulties of reporting. There are a number of avenues to do that here, rather than going to the police department. You're always welcome to reach out to your local city council member. And we can take that complaint forward certainly too, if there are incidents of racism, there's a separate organization here within the city that's appointed and elected to receive complaints regarding racism as well. So it is always an ongoing process where they were always be ongoing opportunities for improvement. Ms. Albertson, Councilwoman Albertson.

Ms. Albertson:

Yes, thank you, Madam Mayor. If I may bounce back just very briefly to when we were discussing the recent resignation of Mr. Cornell. I think that what might've been missed in our discussion is that many of us are concerned that even though he has resigned, we are concerned perhaps that he may, re-emerge in another police department and continue with that sort of behavior. And I wonder if we could address some assurances to the public in that regard also. Thank you.

Mayor Johnson:

Thank you, Ms. Albertson, that's a great question, and thank you for that clarification. Chief, do you want to talk just a little bit about more, how that process goes when, when an officer, if they seek a referral from the agency, and you noted earlier how that information is included, that there is an active investigation and then a resignation occurred, and that would be included in their personnel file. Can you speak more to that?

Chief Toth:

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Well, in 2017 Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards came up with a process that if someone is looking for a job, they there's a form that has to be filled out by that former officer that then goes into the file. And so then they'd see that documentation and probably ask further about it.

Mayor Johnson:

So for clarification, Chief, the officer who resigned would have to attest to any prior misconduct or any investigations, is that correct?

Chief Toth:

They fill a form out. I can't remember what the form is off the top of my head. They have to sign it. And the background investigator from the new agency would then have access to that file and see what's in there.

Mayor Johnson:

So it's more of a release. They can have a release to go look at their prior employer's personnel file?

Chief Toth:

Correct.

Mayor Johnson:

Okay, thank you.

Chief Toth:

And there's a separation of service form that's completed and put in there.

Ms. Albertson:

Madam Mayor, if I just make continue just very briefly, excuse me for not raising my... I did raise my hand. I'm just wondering if there is something more specific for this particular individual that may prohibit his reemergence into another agency, other than what would be contained in his personnel file. For example, is he qualified at all levels for rehiring, for example? Is he qualified to reapply for employment at another law enforcement agency?

Mayor Johnson:

Is there anything that would prohibit him from applying to a new... Are there any standards that he would have to go, whether it's age or any other reason?

Chief Toth:

I guess I don't want to get into an age thing, but I imagine you can apply. [inaudible 00:46:29] applying.

Ms. Albertson:

Okay, Thank you. Thank you, I think I at least understand what you're trying to say without actually wanting to say something which might be discriminatory. So thank you.

Mayor Johnson:

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All right. All right, Jan, please.

Jan Burnett:

Hi. This comment is meant to the youth who are listening. Sophie, apparently I sounded like I was in some way diminishing your participation. I do not believe that at all. My concern was I noticed a drop-off in attendance by youth, and I do not want them to feel concerned that they're not being heard. Certainly I think the City of Chelsea has demonstrated that there's an effort to hear everybody on this issue. So, the youth listening, I'm sorry.

Mayor Johnson:

All right. Thank you, Ms. Burnett. I think I just asked Jan's iPad unless there's a different Jan in the queue. Just trying to make sure I'm not missing [crosstalk 00:47:54].

Jan Star:

Jan's iPad is here.

Mayor Johnson:

Okay. A Jan different Jan, is that correct?

Jan Star:

Yes.

Mayor Johnson:

Okay, thank you. If you could please identify yourself, that would be helpful.

Jan Star:

My Name is Jan Star and I live in Chelsea. I'd like to ask the chief a couple of questions. The first one is, you've worked with Rick Cornell for almost 20 years. What your opinion of him as a police officer in general?

Chief Toth:

Well, how about this, he doesn't work here anymore and I've been here 14 years. He was here before I got here. So I think I am just going to leave it at that.

Jan Star:

I appreciate that, but I think that's really evading the question. Since the case is closed on officer Cornell, and before you said that you couldn't make comments because it was open, so since it's been closed now, I'd like to know what he was put on administrative leave for. What was the offense?

Chief Toth:

If you've got a second. So, speech expression and social networking violation, code of conduct violation, and I believe those were the two.

Jan Star:

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So what he's referring to when you set that up and when you charged him, were they referring to the Facebook images that other people are concerned about now?

Chief Toth:

That was the background behind the investigation, was the Facebook images. Yes. That's the-

Jan Star:

So that was the initial investigation that you set up because of the Facebook image?

Chief Toth:

Correct.

Mayor Johnson:

I'm going to interrupt here for a moment. We've asked a number of questions, Ms. Star, and it's not intended to... we are going to ask that everyone asks one question and then circle back. I have to give everyone an opportunity. Okay?

Jan Star:

No Problem.

Mayor Johnson:

Just a reminder to everyone, please, please, we've had multiple people ask multiple questions. In fairness to everyone who'd like to speak tonight, we are asking that you please do one question, and then we circle back. It helps maintain an opportunity for everyone to speak, but also make sure that we're not getting into a mode that's... just to keep everything moving along. Mr. Thompson.

Dave Thompson:

Thank you Ma'am. I'm disappointed I missed my chance to ask two questions at once, but I'll settle for one. Chief Toth, you mentioned that there's both... I think you mentioned three different possible violations for impeding traffic. This is maybe kind of pedantic or trivial, but I'm wondering if you'd go into a little bit more detail about the misdemeanor violation, because I haven't heard before of a misdemeanor impeding traffic.

Chief Toth:

Okay. You've got a second. It's a city ordinance is what it is. 18-165, blocking or obstructing passes, ways or traffic. I can read it to you if you want or get you a copy.

Dave Thompson:

Like it or not, I'm pretty familiar with the city ordinances so I can go find it myself. Thank you.

Mayor Johnson:

Yeah, 18-156.

Dave Thompson:

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Got it. Thanks.

Mayor Johnson:

All right, and Carolyn Stillwell.

Carolyn Stillwell:

Hi. Thank you. I live in Chelsea and I wanted actually to address you Mr. Hanifan. I appreciate your passion and your earnestness behind addressing the misconduct of city employees. And my question is who decides what constitutes things like homophobia and racism when they do come to you, and how much input do the LGBT people and people of color in our community have into that decision? Thank you.

John Hanifan:

Yeah. Thank you, Ms. Stillwell. So I guess personally, 25 years of administration and human resource experience, and obviously thoughts and viewpoints have evolved in a positive way over a quarter century of doing this. We do have a human rights commission, which we have a human rights ordinance. We have the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act. So again, I guess I'll put it this way, when you see it, you know it, and if someone has a complaint, if someone has an issue, they should make that complaint. If it's a complaint on a city employee, that's not necessarily, you may think is a criminal issue, then contact me.

John Hanifan:

We also have Title VI that deals with when we do a contracting with federal contracts, and our Title VI policy's on our city website. So it's pretty broad, pretty comprehensive, and as Mayor Johnson said earlier, we do have the Human Rights Ordinance, which was adopted in 2016.

Mayor Johnson:

Linda B.

Linda Ballard:

That's me. My name is Linda Ballard, and I've lived here in Chelsea for 25 years now. I have a question for Chief Toth. You stated that you weren't on social media of any kind, and I find that hard to believe unless you're one of the rare individuals that doesn't engage with social media at all. But you also stated that none of your officers are on Facebook, I believe you said at this point. Can you tell me how you know that?

Chief Toth:

I guess just by conversation. We're a senior department, and I guess people email and so forth, but, I can tell you that from the conversations we've had regarding that investigation, there might be a couple of people that are a bit younger, but there's not anybody that's rightly said that they regularly adhere to Facebook or any of these other types of social media. So for me to definitively say that I know 100% sure, I believe there's a statute that says that I can't ask somebody for their social media passwords, so there's that.

Chief Toth:

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So I haven't asked them specifically because it's against the law to do that, to check it out, but just conversation... This is a small agency, we got 14 people here. 10 full-time, four part-time, as far as the officers, and we pretty much know each other fairly well. The conversation that I've had is no one's spending their time messing around with social media. They've got other priorities.

Linda Ballard:

Mayor Johnson, can I just make another comment on that. I'm not going to ask another question I promise. But Chief Toth, it sounds like you might not know that you don't have to have passwords to be able to see what people are posting on Facebook. You can do that just by looking at their accounts, looking at the Facebook. So I just wanted to make you aware of that. Thank you.

Mayor Johnson:

All right. Thank you, Ms. Ballard. Charles wisely.

Charles Wisely:

Hi, Charles wisely, I'm a Chelsea resident, and a non Facebook, non Twitter individual. There's lots of us out here. I'm curious if you know how many complaints the human resources [inaudible 00:55:40] sorry, the Human Rights Committee has received this year or last year regarding all of these things. I'd imagine they'd been [inaudible 00:55:50].

Mayor Johnson:

Thank you, to my knowledge we have received zero complaints. Mr. Hanifan, I didn't attend the last meeting, but you were present, have any additional complaints come in?

John Hanifan:

No, they have not.

Speaker 22:

I attended the last meeting, there were none that were spoken of-

Mayor Johnson:

Thank you.

Speaker 22:

... and have attended almost every meeting for two years.

Mayor Johnson:

Thank you. To my knowledge, we have received one complaint regarding the entire duration of the Human Rights Commission, and it-

Speaker 22:

[crosstalk 00:56:25].

Mayor Johnson:

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All right, thank you. I am going to just call on people who have not had an opportunity to speak at this point, as what you start... At the beginning of the council session. I did ask that we would take one turn for a person until all participants have had an opportunity to speak. There are several people in the queue who've not had an opportunity, so I will proceed with those folks next. Mr. Stamper.

Mr. Stamper:

Hi, it's Mr. Stamper. Can you hear me okay?

Mayor Johnson:

We can, thank you.

Mr. Stamper:

Thank you. I live in Ypsilanti currently, but I lived in Chelsea for about 30 years, and my question is for Chief Toth. He just recently mentioned that there is a zero tolant... excuse me, a zero tolerance policy for officers that take a side on social media. And he said that they would be fired if that was the case. And Officer Cornell had shared memes about kneeling on people's necks and shared memes about turning off his body cam while going on calls. And I was wondering why that didn't constitute a firing and the more of an administrative leave. Thank you.

Mayor Johnson:

Thank you. I actually think that comment was more... I think you're referencing, Mr. Hanifan's comment, regarding his approach as a city manager. Mr. Hanifan do you want to address that? And then we can swing back to Chief Toth.

John Hanifan:

Anytime there is a... whether it's a police officer or employees employed by the city, who's was not a member of the police department, if there's allegations that are brought, first they have to be brought forth, and then there's a investigation and review and there's three possible outcomes. The employee's reprimanded, the employees fired, or the employee is cleared. I guess there's four, an employee can also resign too.

Mayor Johnson:

All right. Thank you, Chief Toth, did you have anything to add to that?

Chief Toth:

It's like, in the criminal cases or internal investigation, something called due process. And until that due process has been totally completed in an investigation, then it's not done. And in this case we did not have the full due process did not get completed. The resignation took place prior to that, and that's why the case is closed.

Mayor Johnson:

All right, thank you. I understand Kaylee Plank is next in the queue.

Kaylee PLank:

Yeah, I'm Kaylee Plank. I live in Chelsea. This question's for officer Toth. I was just wondering your reasons why you don't have social media in any way, because, if there is this, I don't know, like ordinance or law, I don't know what it's called or something to... You need to monitor your employees and that they should be responsible for what they post on social media. Why is it that you don't have social media so that you can monitor them? So that was my question.

Chief Toth:

No problem. It's just, I choose not to do that. A personal thing. And just by reviewing or hearing the types of things have been going on in social media, amongst members of our community, I'll just tell you personally, it's embarrassing. We're saying things about others that may not necessarily be true. They're hurtful, and this goes on all sides. And that's one of the reasons I don't participate in any of that. And two is, I guess I look at... I better pull that to myself.

Chief Toth:

It causes trouble for people. It's hurtful, statements are made, people can have half truths on them and people are believing they are truthful. And you talk about things that are life lasting. Those things are life lasting. Having raised a couple of kids and again, computers, there wasn't any computers when I grew up, they were just coming out. And so, you talked about bullying on the computer, a lot of that goes on. There are suicides that take place amongst youth because of being bullied, and so I just choose not to engage in any of that.

Kaylee PLank:

Mm-hmm (affirmative). I'm so sorry. One more thing. So how're your colleagues then being monitored on their social media, if you personally don't have it?

Mayor Johnson:

I'm going to take that question Toth. With respect to that question, this city as a whole is going to be reviewing its social media policy coming up. That's going to be my request, that we revisit that in, certainly tighten that up in terms of review. And that's more of a broad personnel question than I think to CPD directly. I think we also have to be cognizant of the fact that there are different laws and that would have to be reviewed with respect to First Amendment and employees, and there are different levels of that with respect to your position within the city as well.

Mayor Johnson:

So those are all things that will have to be reviewed, and I anticipate that we'll be doing that this fall. All right. Is there anyone who has not had an opportunity to ask a question that would like to do so. I apologize I did go to round two on a few people before making sure that everyone had an opportunity to ask a question, before I go back to people who've already had an opportunity.

Verbain Aaliyah:

I have a question.

Mayor Johnson:

Okay. Are you in the queue right now, I'm not sure who's speaking.

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Verbain Aaliyah:

My name is Verbain I'm not in the queue, I just heard the last call for questions.

Mayor Johnson:

Okay. If you could identify yourself and it's not the last call, I just wanted to make sure I didn't miss anyone before I went to round two for people. But if you could go ahead and identify yourself and where you're from, that'd be great.

Verbain Aaliyah:

My name is Verbain Aaliyah. I live in Detroit, but I want to ask, Toth, do you... Well, I want to ask one thing and say something too. One is, do you support the movement in defense of Black lives? That's my question. And then I want to inform you if you haven't already heard it enough, but your department is targeting anti-racist Chelsea youth. So I guess if you could state if you're in support of the movement in defensive Black lives.

Verbain Aaliyah:

I mean, there's an uprising going on all over this country and in Michigan, too, and in Chelsea and your department is targeting the people who are standing up for Black lives and against police terror, that has been historical and current against Black and Brown people since police began in this country. Are you in support of the movement in defense of Black lives?

Chief Toth:

As I indicated, we cannot take a position based on our policy, but as a general term, we defend all people's rights and freedoms with First Amendment rights, as long as they're done legally by our United States Constitution.

Mayor Johnson:

All right. I will go on to those who have already had an opportunity to ask a question. Just for reminder please use the hand raise function if you're able to do that, or if you're not able to do that, please use the chat function, and as option, then try and wave in your screen. I'm not able to see everyone at the same time, so I don't want to miss anybody. With that just also please a reminder, it's a Q and A portion, so please try to limit your questions to one and then get back into queue so that everyone has an opportunity. Carolyn Stillwell, please.

Carolyn Stillwell:

Thank you. I was concerned when I heard that the Human Rights Commission had only had one complaint in the past year, and yet the community is reporting that problems are pretty widespread. That indicates to me that the commission is ineffective. What steps will be taken to change that?

Mayor Johnson:

I can't make that assumption that it's ineffective or why there are no complaints received? I can't answer that question. I don't know if it's people aren't aware that the Human Rights exist. I can not answer that question. We have talked more about the Human Rights Commission, it's certainly something that we talk about at most of our city council meetings. Miss [Ree Enelie 01:06:02] is the liaison to the Human Rights Commission and will give a report at every committee. Certainly it's been

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covered as well by the Chelsea Update in their meetings. So I can't answer that question in terms of whether-

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Speaker 1:

There's an effectiveness or there's not a reporting or why there are no reports. I don't think any of us have good information regarding that. Are there any other questions at this time?

Speaker 1:

All right, Jan, we're going to come back to you. You've asked a question. There are a couple of people who still haven't asked a question that I see in the queue. Ms. Maturo?

Ms. Maturo:

Yes. As many people pick and choose MLK quotes to support their racist agenda, I think it's also important to offer full context to the ACLU statements that Mr. Toth, Chief Toth, excuse me, offered earlier, and to quote, "While certain permit procedures require submitting an application well in advance of the planned event, police can not use those procedures to prevent a protest in response to breaking news events." Thank you.

Ms. King:

Right on.

Speaker 1:

Thank you. And I would encourage anyone who would like to see the statement in full. You can certainly take a search of ACLU, Michigan, and read the entire comment and legal analysis, if anyone would like to do that. There is a page or two on that. Ms. King?

Ms. King:

Thank you. When, Chief Toth, what was the deciding factor that you used to issue citations versus a warning to the July 30th event? There were citations issued and I just wondered had you considered issuing warnings rather, because citation is pretty severe.

Chief Toth:

Sure. I think it was, I'm trying to get my exact date, sometime, I think it was maybe July 15th. I can't remember the exact date, but sometime in earlier July, I indicated that there was going to be enforcement action taken. [inaudible 00:02:56] continued to be in the street. And so I made that well aware to everyone that that was going to happen. And so that's what we did.

Speaker 1:

Thank you. And just for those who would like to go and refer to that, that conversation about a permit being needed started back in July six, and Chief Toth's statement that enforcement would occur for anyone who was impeding traffic took place on July 20th.

Speaker 1:

All right, Alex Schlaff S C H... I apologize if I'm not seeing it. It's S C H L A F F?

Alex Schlaff:

Schlaff, it's a hard one.

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Speaker 1:

Thank you. I apologize.

Alex Schlaff:

No problem. I'm not much of a public speaker, so bear with me, but I did want to make a comment in regards to not many people reporting to the Human Rights Commission. I know personally some families in Chelsea that are afraid to come forward because we have other citizens writing, "Chelsea is nice" and "Be nice" over paintings on the pavement for Black Lives Matter.

Speaker 1:

All right. Thank you. I appreciate that commentary and insight. Going back to people who have had comments, Jan, did you have a comment you wanted to share, or a question? I'm sorry.

Jan:

I do have a question. I have another question for Chief Toth about [inaudible 00:04:46] Cornell. And I'm hearing everything that everybody's saying and I know everybody is really, really upset about the Facebook posts. I'm wondering if you saw any behavior in him, as an officer, that relates to any of the things he's being accused of by the public?

Chief Toth:

The only thing I can say, I did not see that, but again, once it was brought to my attention, I began to investigate it myself. And so it was brought to light. So that's kind of how it came together. I actually had to have my spouse open up the Facebook so I could get in there and look at it, because you have to have some type of account of some sort. So I had it temporarily and then closed it. So anyhow, I did not see that.

Jan:

I'm sorry, you didn't see what? I'm sorry, you didn't see what?

Speaker 1:

Chief, you're muted. I'm sorry. You're muted right now.

Chief Toth:

Oh okay. Yeah. I did not see any type of that kind of behavior at all.

Jan:

Okay. While he was on duty. While he was an officer.

Chief Toth:

Correct.

Jan:

Okay. Thank you.

Speaker 1:

We have a question from Kate McCalpin.

Kate McCalpin:

So I already asked a question, is it okay if I go again, at this point?

Speaker 1:

Yes, please.

Kate McCalpin:

Okay. So what someone said about fear and reporting, that is a real serious barrier. And I'm wondering, how do you protect people and make sure that they're safe to report officers both when they're inside the department and when they're a member of the public? Oftentimes if you can't remain anonymous for a while and you have a fear that the person you're reporting would potentially physically harm you, it's really hard to come forward. So how do you protect people?

Speaker 8:

[inaudible 00:07:15], spending our time messing around on social media. We've got other priorities.

Speaker 1:

Chief? Do you want to answer that question? I am also picking up some background noise from somebody that may be interfering with other people's abilities to listen. So if you can please mute, just as a reminder, this is being recorded. So if there is a private conversation, you may not want to have it as part of this format. Chief?

Chief Toth:

Yep. No problem. So you could send a letter in, an anonymous letter. I may have to have some contact information, because what happens is, is if you give me some information to go on, I can try to find it on my own, but it may come to a point where we're going to have to have regular contact to go over how you came about it. And then maybe I can do it without your assistance. But sometimes it takes the person to get involved. And that's how the system works, unfortunately. We could keep you anonymous to a point, but it'll come to a point back to due process again. That's just part of the system. But you could start with a letter. I need to have some contact information. I keep that anonymous between me and that person, whoever sent me the letter, and see if I would be able to come up with enough information that would lead to a potential policy violation, because it's kind of hard to tell how it worked, but I would just need some contact information to get ahold of you if I need it.

Speaker 1:

And that's with respect, Chief, I think there is sort of a two-part question there, and forgive me if I don't have this right, but one was sort of internal, how do you do that? And, if I hear you right, Chief, saying you can send an anonymous letter that will flag a potential issue, but that alone sometimes is not enough to get the information needed to proceed with an investigation. And then there's a part two, as I understand it correct, that when there is a non-internal, non-police issue, but more of a member of the public issue, how do you go about protecting the person who reported a potential criminal violation?

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Chief Toth:

Yeah. So there's systems in place, whether it's a non-criminal type thing. If it's non-criminal, personal protection orders is a route.

Kate McCalpin:

No, you gave me the answer for if a member of the public has trouble or has something they want to report. But what about if it's of another officer? How do you keep the investigation from... Do they have to come forward with an accusation or can it be done quietly so that they aren't potentially ostracized by the officer's friends for...

Speaker 1:

So is the concern retaliation?

Kate McCalpin:

It is retaliation. It's really hard to guard against that, but how do you safeguard?

Chief Toth:

So are you speaking about an officer reporting another officer, or are you talking about a citizen reporting an officer?

Kate McCalpin:

An officer reporting another officer, because the officers are most likely to know each other best. And so to safeguard the public, the officers need to be protected when they come forward too.

Chief Toth:

Yeah. So I can just tell you, as I mentioned earlier, there was a significant investigation, a serious investigation where it was reported by an officer. And you got to remember that this is not a monster size department. These officers depend on each other on calls for service. So if some person is not holding their weight, I can tell you, I've always had the adage that I am there to make sure that everybody is doing their job correctly. And what I mean by that is if someone's late to work every day or often, not handling their calls like they're supposed to, but then there's another employee that is, I'm there to defend the employee that's doing the job correctly.

Chief Toth:

And I can speak from 37 years on the job. There's no one more who wants to rid bad officers than good officers. That's a fact. I hear a lot of things about the police officers, but I guess in 37 years, and I've worked at say one, two, three, four departments, I guess I've never seen someone that would let the slacker slash person who's violating the law go, because you're putting your own life in danger, if you're letting someone like that be employed at the same place you are.

Speaker 1:

Did we answer your question? We kind of went through a few iterations.

Kate McCalpin:

Not really, because that dependency cuts both ways. Because if you're the person who's saying, "Look, this guy has said some racist things to me and I can't prove it, but I need you to see if other officers have heard the same." And the other officers rally around the one who made the remarks, then they might not have your back. And so what do you do? How do you manage that so that people are safe to come forward?

Chief Toth:

It gets back to, if an officer brings an allegation about another officer forward, we're going to investigate that. And like anything else, someone who has a certain set of behaviors, those behaviors will be observed, because they're not going to really change. Whether it's, you might have some information three months ago, so you start a file. Then you get some more information. And as you build it, then that's when your case comes together. The pieces of the puzzle will come together. And that's when you're able to put the case together. And you talk to the person who's reported it and find out, "Where's your comfort zone with this?" For me to say I can a hundred percent protect somebody when there's an investigation, an internal investigation, because sooner or later, the statements are going to get out as to who reported it. That's just, again, back to the system, the due process, it's going to come out.

Kate McCalpin:

If they can stay anonymous for a time until you discover that other officers can report the same behavior?

Chief Toth:

Well, I can't 100% say that, because it gets sooner or later, the information has got to come out in a disciplinary hearing, because that's part of the due process. You're going to have a statement, and you're probably going to have to come forward with what it was and when it was said and who said it. So it's like in a criminal investigation. As a victim, you're going to have to come forward.

Kate McCalpin:

Sure. Definitely once the case is built, but while the case is being built, the person who just had the one-on-one experience and doesn't know whether you're going to be able to build the case, or if they get outed for having spoken up, they could get retaliation from the other person, if that person can't be disciplined. Do you understand what I'm saying?

Chief Toth:

I do understand that. And it's like anything else, you kind of don't know where the case or the internal investigation goes until you get deep into it. We do our best to try to keep that anonymous, but sooner or later, if there's going to be a discipline, a person's going to have to step forward.

Kate McCalpin:

Okay. Fair enough.

Speaker 1:

All right. Emily Olson. You can state your name, because it's not always the person's name who's on the computer, state your name and where you live, please. And then please proceed with your question.

Emily Olson:

Thank you. I am Emily Olson. I live in Lima Township, Chelsea schools, and I am the person on the name. My daughter helped to switch that over. I have a question actually, in regard to the Human Rights Commission. As it relates to policing, it was my understanding, having attended several of those city council meetings when the Human Rights Commission was first formed, that that would be a place for people to lodge a complaint so that they could maintain anonymity and perhaps circumvent law enforcement. Do I have that understanding correct? And a second part to that, since we are experiencing such social unrest right now, as it pertains to race, is there an effort being made to bring more people of color into leadership in this community? Because as I see the pictures, and obviously not everybody has their pictures up, we are a majority white community, and the voices that are being heard by and large are from the white majority. And so I would love to see more diversity in leadership and what is being done to promote that? Both in law enforcement and in Human Rights Commission?

Speaker 1:

Chief, do you want to talk about the diversity question that was raised regarding the police department?

Chief Toth:

Okay. So we have two Native Americans that work at the police department currently, but as far as any application, there's never been any African-Americans who have applied for the police department. We'd welcome that. It's one of these departments that there's not very many openings. We regularly recruit at the Police Academy, over here at Washtenaw Community College. When the Academy is going on to get people to apply, and I speak for myself and other chiefs and sheriff in the County, that's a regular process that we go through just trying to get people to apply. That's the biggest thing is people to apply. And it's something that, hey, minorities really need to get in law enforcement, in my opinion. Put an application in. Whether it's here, Sheriff's office, Ann Arbor, any department in this County, put your application in. We welcome those applications.

Speaker 1:

And I would say, as Chief Toth has talked about a little bit before, there is some additional challenges for smaller communities, in terms of there is not as much room for advancement. So for employees or police officers who would like to move up the chain, we don't have as much opportunities for those, because we're a smaller department. And similarly, as Chief Toth noticed noted previously, we don't pay as well as some of larger communities. Those are some of the limitations that we have, in terms of hiring. With respect to diversity and council or in city boards, that's also something we welcome. We actually changed our procedure for appointments. Anyone who we post the openings 30 days prior to the termination of any appointment before the term ends, it's an open application process. And then we review those to make sure you meet the qualifications, which are residency in the city of Chelsea, primarily, and some very basic ones that are outlined, in either our rules or our charter. And then those are submitted to council for appointment.

Speaker 1:

That's our process for appointments. With respect to the Human Rights Commission question, the way that occurs, if any, and this is in section 33.9 of the human rights... It's actually called the non-discrimination ordinance. And in that ordinance, the Human Rights Commission is created. The complaint procedure is under section 33.9. If any individual has a complaint alleging a violation of the human rights or the non-discrimination ordinance, he or she has 180 days from the date of the

individual knowledge of the alleged discriminatory action, or from when they should have known about the alleged discriminatory action, to file a complaint with the city's Human Rights Commission.

Speaker 1:

It needs to be in writing. It can be filed in person by email or by mail. The complaint must contain information about the alleged discrimination, such as the name, address, phone number of the complainant, and location, date, and description of the alleged violation of the non-discrimination ordinance. Upon receipt, the Human Rights Commission will review the complaint and immediately forward a copy to the city attorney who will investigate the allegations therein and prosecute the claim, if warranted. And that's the process for a violation of the non-discrimination ordinance, which is separate, it's civil. So it's not current criminal, in that particular case. So that would be done separately and not by the police department.

Speaker 1:

All right. We have a question from as Ezra.

Ezra:

Hi, this is a question for Chief Toth. Okay. So a good officer by the standards of the department and the standards of the law can still be racist. I don't understand what you mean when you say that a bad officer will be found out or that you'll be able to catch him. An officer who slacks on his job will be caught, but a white officer will not be able to detect racism because he hasn't experienced it. Many concerns raised by the public concern the way police reporting works. Why should we have to report police corruption to the corrupt police department? And do you plan to adjust the inherently flawed system in which racist police officers are rewarded for bad behavior? When I say that I'm referring to things that have happened in Ann Arbor with Aura Rosser, where a black woman was killed and the person who killed her was promoted and given a pay raise.

Chief Toth:

Yeah, I can't speak to what's going on in Ann Arbor. I can speak to what's going on in this department. And so most people don't know much about me, okay? I'm an inner city kid. I'm a Cleveland, Ohio guy. I was in inner city till I was probably seven, eight. My dad moved us out to the suburbs. So I can tell you about inner city living, if you ever want to give me a call and talk about that. I've got a pretty good handle on the officers in the department, and I guess I've never seen anything overtly, there can be things that are hidden. I get that.

Chief Toth:

The only way we really can figure things out is if they get reported. We have to get the information first. Whether it's anonymous, in person, or however you want to do it, but we have to get the information first before we can move forward. That's part of... Back to that due process. And there's a process have to go through, because we could do things that weren't proper. And if it's internal investigations, when it gets to what's called a grievance hearing or an arbitration, we'll lose it. And if we're doing these investigations, they have to be done correctly so that we win the case. And that goes for criminal investigations as they are with internal investigations.

Ezra:

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I'm sorry about what makes you think growing up in the inner city makes you qualified to judge racism and how bad it is and what a consequence should be for an officer? I really don't see the correlation.

Chief Toth:

Well, the correlation can be is when you grow up in an environment where you see things happen, then you have an idea of what... And this was back in the '60s. So I do have a fairly good idea.

Ezra:

Okay. But do you-

Speaker 1:

I'm sorry, just a reminder, we are asking that you ask one question and then you return back into the queue. Okay? We want to make sure that everyone has an opportunity. You're certainly welcome to ask all the questions that you'd like. We just ask that you ask one at a time.

Ezra:

I just feel that my question wasn't answered.

Speaker 1:

Well, it was a follow-up question. I'm going to ask that you hold that and return back to the queue and we'll return to it. Okay? Thank you. Alison Pollard?

Allison Pollard:

Hey, I'm Allison Pollard, Chelsea resident, and I have a quick comment, and then, unfortunately, a follow up question about Rich Cornell. The quick comment is just if we wanted to hire diverse candidates in the city of Chelsea, police department, schools, or whatever, we're going to have to go seek them out. They're not going to reply automatically to a posting. There's places you can recruit, post, or whatever, if you're looking for a more diverse workforce, and I think that that's what we should be doing.

Allison Pollard:

The question on Cornell is, I just, I share the feeling with many others that he, because he doesn't have this in his record, he's just going to end up at another police force. He's got 20 years with Chelsea. That's good experience to take somewhere else. And I hate to be confrontational, but I'm just wondering why it took so long to investigate if it was his social media account. Because many of us, within a day of knowing who the officer was, got on his account, you don't have to have your own Facebook account, because all his means were public at that time. So I'm very disappointed that it took so long to investigate. And now he was able to resign with basically a pretty clean record.

Chief Toth:

I can speak to that. So we had three investigations going on at the same time, plus other criminal activity that's going on in town. So this isn't all we do. We deal with sexual assaults, assault and batteries, stolen car here and there, carrying concealed weapons, I think during this time we had individuals that came from another location west of here, were armed at one of our gas stations. So this is not the only thing we've got going on. And I said, we're a small agency. So that's why it took longer, because we have a lot of other things going on than this.

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Allison Pollard:

It took 30 seconds to get onto his Facebook account, just so you know.

Speaker 1:

I think there's another portion I think we need to be cognizant about is that everyone who is employed here, and especially police officers, they are entitled to due process. And as Chief Toth noted earlier, there is a disciplinary process that goes through that as well. So you do want to make sure that you gather the information and you do do an complete investigation for that process. With respect to that, I do know this is a good opportunity to take a break. I was not paying attention to the time, and we are way past an opportunity for break. So we're going to take that and we will come back in 10 minutes, at 9:46. Thank you. 8:56, my correction. Thanks.

Mary Johnson:

All right. Thank you. It is now 8:56. We've just concluded our 10 minute break. And before we get started, I do just want to kind of go over the rules and expectations for the question to answer, especially for those who may not have joined us at the beginning, we are asking that everyone, please keep their dialogue, civil and respectful. There is a difference, certainly between asking a question and going beyond that, as someone who is a former prosecutor attorney, I want to make sure that we keep the questions civil and that we don't engage in behavior beyond that. And then please use the hand raise function on zoom and wait to be called on, mute your audio when it is not your turn one turn per person until all participants have had an opportunity to speak. So I will be calling on those people who are in the queue first, who have not yet asked a question.

Mary Johnson:

I want to make sure that every person has an individual opportunity to ask a question before others go on their second or third round. And then finally as discussed at the prayer listening session. And earlier tonight, citizens, please state your name and where you live as before you ask your question. And then finally, when it is your turn, please keep it to one question and not a series of questions. Again, that goes back to providing others with an opportunity to be heard with that. I will start with Alex more, please, please state your name and where you live, please.

Alex Katie Moore:

Hi, my name is Katie Moore. I'm a member of RC. I live in Chelsea. I have a question for Chief Tony actually. So just like considering the fact that most medical professionals have to have like 2 years or 4 years of experience, usually after college even before they are even like a scalpel or another like potentially harmful device, I guess. I just wanted to know how much time police officers are trained before they have a gun in their hands and are like sent off into the streets?

Chief Tony:

Sure. So depending on the Academy you go to anywhere from, I think it's 17 weeks is the minimal up to 26 weeks of Academy training. Once you get out of the Academy and you get hired by an agency, there's another 14 weeks, what's called a field training officer program. And once you get done with that, then you're on probation for a year. So that's kind of the basic training that takes place and while you're in the FTO program, field training program, and you're on probation, there's multiple in-house trainings or other trainings that you go to. It could be online training you participate in, I think we've covered it. The 3 session we had there's 3 every month, there are 3 trainings that we do online. Plus there's in-person training prior to COVID obviously that we attended.

Mary Johnson:

Chief can you just talk a little bit about who sets those standards for B you know, the certification for becoming an officer?

Chief Tony:

Right? So each state has their own standard in Michigan. There's something called the Michigan commission on law enforcement standards. There's a book that's, it's a 300 and some pages book. And it talks about all these different, I guess, criteria or sections. It could be the legal piece or the law, bribing, cultural awareness, unconscious bias training. So it's a litany of different subject matter. And again, once

you get that all done, but then you go into the field training program because each department is a little bit different, small agency, like this is definitely different than a large agency, like grand Rapids. You look at the demographics of the town. Do you have community policing is a traditional policing and so forth. So it just kind of depends on, and that's why oftentimes as the mayor indicated, this is a department that doesn't have a lot of upward mobility and all sorts of commodity Academy.

Chief Tony:

Most people, they want to go to a large agency where they can work different units. It could be patrol detectives K9, could be a dive team or special operations team. So is this kind of its officer preference? Now there're some officers that like the small town that I grew up in a town, they want to police their own area, but there is a significant amount of training. And Michigan is one of the higher trained States as far as that Michigan commission on law enforcement standards. I think it's like 800 hours, 850 hours of training that you learn in the Academy.

Mary Johnson:

And just to add on to that, if you're interested in learning more about what the licensing standards are for the Michigan law enforcement officers, you can go to M Cole's home and it will walk you through all the policies and procedures and standards and reviews and tests that those officers in training or I have to take. I would also further note that those standards are set by the state of Michigan and the governor of Michigan has heads a commission on law enforcement standards. And I know that they're consistently inactively reviewing those standards as well.(silence) All right. Is there anyone who has not asked a question that would like to do so tonight? Because I do see a number of questions in the queue but there are from people who have asked a question. So I just want to make sure that everyone has an opportunity before we return back to those speakers. Mr. Iannelli, I'm sorry. You are muted.

Mr.Iannelli:

There we go. Thank you. Mayor Johnson, chief Tony, if you can update the community on the bias training that the department went through over the last couple of years, what that involved. So we all have an understanding of that.

Mary Johnson:

Chief. You are muted. If you could unmute, please.

Chief Tony:

Sorry about that, everyone. So I think it was started in either 2017 or 18 and council member Pacheco attended one of them that was cultural awareness, unconscious bias training. We did a followup to that in February of 20 was leading with emotional intelligence. And basically the training is kind of introspective it's about yourself, you kind of the only people who can answer a lot of these questions is yourself. And the way the presenter puts the training on is there're different scenarios. And it's, it's kind of, it's an introspective. You, you, you only really can answer the questions as is yourself and how you are as a person. It's the same training. I think the fire department started doing here, I think last week, but it's outstanding training and everyone here attended it, whether you're officer dispatch. So,that was training.

Mary Johnson:

Thank you Chief Tony, and I did confirm with Chief Abeanie that they are utilizing the same trainer. For those of you participate in those sessions over at the fire authority that they're using the same trainer that the Chelsea police department use. Just to revisit to your question, Mr. Iannelli and we talked about this earlier in June, we pulled, I asked chief to talk to Paul several years back. I think we went back 4 years and he talked about this when we did a review of our training and overview of the police department. So going back down in 2016, we have the topics had the training sessions that went through in terms of bias and awareness training. There was cultural awareness training in 2016, anti-biased training for law. They had training on emotional and psychological disorders and another separate training for, in terms of responding to people with mental health issues, 2017 and 18, they had a training and what was then referred to as LGBT eye issues and cultural, responding to mental health illness with compassion, racial profiling awareness part one, 8 crimes training, cultural diversity, generational differences training.

Mary Johnson:

And these are just a couple of them that more speak to the cultural awareness issues. A 2018, 2019, they had hate crime training, implicit bias, interacting with mentally ill, racial profiling, cultural awareness. For some reason, I'm missing my 2019 2020 sheet. But in 2022, 2021 schedule, they have ethics and law enforcement responding to people with mental illness, understanding anxiety disorders, OCD, and PTSD, understanding autism spectrum, anti-biased training for law enforcement. So those are some of the training that they received [crosstalk 00:09:59] Friday of other training that they offer service received. But those are just highlighting a couple of the ones in the last several years.

Chief Tony:

Mayor of forgotten, just interject a second. So someone did an FYI on our training records and so clerk trust or put this thing together. It was over a thousand pages. So we went to call that individual who requested this, and then they decided that they didn't want those records. So over the history of, of the agency, since I've been here, we've got over a thousand pages of training records for all the officers. Our training is significant as far as each month, 3 classes every month.

Mary Johnson:

All right, Ms. Maturer, where back to circling back to people, who've had questions. So thank you for your patience. I appreciate that. You certainly have the floor.

Pam Maturer:

Thank you. My name is Pam Maturer I live in Lemmon township, [inaudible 00:11:02] I'd like to circle back to you stating that you had spent 14 years on the force with Mr. Rick Cornell and that during that time you had not seen any behavior that would warrant concern. And then I'd like to move forward to a statement that you made suggesting that if there were racist behaviors, misogynistic behaviors, homophobic behaviors on the part of one of your officers, you would certainly be able to identify that I am looking at a series of screenshots that are incredibly disturbing from officer Cornell's Facebook page. I won't relay them to you but they are incredibly disturbing.

Pam Maturer:

And I appreciate all of the training that you have done. And it sounds like you've checked the boxes and I'm pretty grateful for that. Cause it sounds like there's quite a lot of training going on. The issue at hand is not checking boxes. It is continual work on the part of communicating with and understanding the

mindset of your officers and continuous anti-biased work and introspection is necessary in my opinion. And I'm wondering moving forward, have you got any thoughts about how you might address the fact that it is really incredibly difficult to uncover the kind of covert racism that often occurs within our community and how deeply damaging that is to the members of our community? Thank you.

Chief Tony:

As I indicated, we always struck flips. We always try to get better each day. So if there's some other training that's out there that I'm not aware of, I'm all ears and we always try to get better. So, if you can recommend something that's beyond the current training we've had that we talked about more than happy to listen up.

Mary Johnson:

And, and as mentioned earlier, we, I anticipate that We'll be reviewing our social media policies as well. Ms. Gladiel.

ms Gladwel Sadie:

Thank you. I, and it's just kind of a followup question and not to pile on with officer Cornell, but if this, that his attitudes didn't happen overnight, and if they went undetected for so long, I'm concerned about the impression that visitors cause the only way we're going to get some diversity and mixture is that people come in and find our community and officer or Chief Tony. Are you aware of the reputation that Chelsea has among other folks in Washtenaw County in terms of not being a friendly place to visit for people of color? And I'm not trying to set you up, but I really honestly want to know whether you realize that's how things are thought of.

Chief Tony:

The only thing I can say is I got to go based on the complaints that have been filed or someone who's called me and told me about something and I'd have to look through all the complaints. I think there was one issue back, maybe 2011. So again, it's almost like if I need to know about a problem before I can address it and solve it. So I'am a [inaudible 00:14:53] information.

ms Gladwel Sadie:

If visitors come through, they're not going to know we're double back to go formally file a complaint. And it's the folks who, the visitors who come through were young kids who were visiting friends and things. We can try and get complaints filed, but it's, I suggested, maybe just keeping record but it's there and we've got to find some way to get that attitude changed and we'll never get the diversity, even in the force we want. So thank you. I'll step back.

Mary Johnson:

It does appear to me that Ms. Sadie, you have information maybe that doesn't have. And as, as the chief indicated earlier, you can share that information with him and he would be, he is open and willing to look at that information. So even if it's certainly you have an opportunity to flag those concerns and share them with Chief Tony, I would encourage you to do so. I'm not sure who's calling in from TNK plank, but you are up next, please.

Teresia:

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Hello. I'm Teresa playing. Can I live in Chelsea? I have a question regarding the citations. This conversation tonight has made me a little concerned about the citations that were given and if they really, if they were given at an inappropriate time, since they are in regards to the protest on July 31st and our police department is under investigation for their conduct during that protest on July 31st, it seems to me that we shouldn't be paying these citations and maybe the police department should consider setting.

Speaker 1:

The citations aside or putting them on hold until the investigation into the police department is finished for that specific incident. It just doesn't seem quite right to me that we have citations out there that were given by the police department. So is that something, Chief, that the police department would consider, knowing that you are under investigation right now?

Chief Tothe:

Once citations are issued, the only people that can adjudicate that is the magistrate. So you could bring that up. If you know someone who's got a ticket, you bring that up during the hearing.

Speaker 1:

Thank you.

Speaker 3:

All right, Scott?

Scott:

All right. You can hear me?

Speaker 3:

Yes, sir.

Scott:

All right. Not to be the resigned horse or anything, but Chief Tothe, you had stated you were never made aware of any bad behavior by Officer Cornell prior to this event. And then once you heard about it you went through the process and I commend you on all of that. I listened to the last listening session and a speaker had brought up that they had reported conduct from Officer Cornell that was about some racist vandalism on some yard signs. I'm not sure, I mean it was about some comments that he made that would have made you probably dig deeper into his character at that point. But I'm not sure, because you were only on the force 14 years and he was 20 years, was that concern said to you or said to the prior chief of police?

Chief Tothe:

We've spoke about Officer Cornell, I think, enough. And he's resigned his position. That's it.

Scott:

So that was brought up to you?

Chief Tothe:

I'm not familiar with what you're talking about to be honest with you.

Speaker 3:

All right. The next question comes from Sophie.

Sophie:

Hi. I apologize for speaking for the third time and I also apologize for coming back to the Rick Cornell situation but I think it's very important to address because it sets a precedent for how stuff is treated in the future and it should be flushed out thoroughly before we just dismiss it and move on. I set to say that I don't know very much about the way things operate inside a department. I don't know very much about police and I'm assuming you, Chief Tothe know more and I'm asking if there is a precedent either in the CPD or in other departments for investigating officers who may possibly have racial bias from an outside standpoint? Because I know with the Rick Cornell case, that his racist Facebook posts and behavior went unnoticed until ... I may be wrong, but from what I know it went unnoticed until someone from outside the department brought it up. And I'm wondering if there's any precedent for a system that may be put into place in which there are occasional check-ins on officers from an outside standpoint? Because obviously you, Chief Tothe, you don't have Facebook so I'm wondering if there is anything we can instate that would protect people in the future? Because I believe those kind of biases, even if they're unnoticed, they can be potentially harmful.

Chief Tothe:

I think as the mayor indicated, we're going to review those social media policies in the fall and make some improvements. Because we always can be better. No one's perfect, you can always be better.

Speaker 3:

I'll just say it too, as part of our roles as citizens, if you see something or observe something that you think is inappropriate, I think we all have an obligation and duty to report any misconduct that you see. That's part of being a member of community. I will say when that information was brought to the city's attention, it was sent to me. I sent it on to the police department and the next day an internal investigation was opened. So that's really an important engagement but we will be reviewing our social media policies and certainly we will be doing that. When there is conduct as part of your employment, that's something that we can observe and witness and then we also do, to a certain degree, rely on community members as well.

Speaker 3:

Ezra, you are up next. If you could please identify yourself and where you reside, that would be helpful.

Ezra:

Yeah, I'm Ezra, I live in Chelsea. I'm wondering is there going to be any effort to make it easier for community members to reach out to, to report things about the police department without having to report it to the same police department that is being reported for corruption? I feel like that's kind of ironic so is there going to be some sort of other way to report things that isn't-

Speaker 3:

Sure. You are always welcome to make a report to city council. We employ the police department. That's always an option, as I've mentioned several times in the past. All of our contact information is on the Chelsea city website. As I mentioned just previously, an email was sent to me and I initiated the contact with Chief Tothe who then opened a complaint. Likewise the complaint that we're investigating, and I want to be clear, it's a complaint that was made and it was not for corruption. That's different than there was a complaint for the tactics used. So I want to be clear about that as well. Those are very two

different things. And that investigation, actually that complaint came to Chief Tothe. What Chief Tothe did is then he opened up a complaint file and then presented that information to Mr. Hannifan who then brought it to city council. So I want to be clear about what the processes are and that there's always an opportunity. And as city council has said, we will investigate any complaint. So I want to be very clear about that, that there is always an opportunity to file it either internally with the police department, Chief Tothe is obligated to open a complaint file on that and then the city will make determinations about the appropriate next steps.

Speaker 3:

Mr. Hannifan, did you have anything to add to that? I think I've lost him.

Mr. Hannifan:

Sorry. It's tough to man the controls for yourself. I think you covered it pretty well and I think that if folks have concerns about the police department or employees, or frankly even council members, there is a reporting mechanism. They can reach out to any or all of us.

Ezra:

Okay. Thank you for your answers.

Speaker 3:

Sophie?

Sophie:

Sorry. I didn't realize I was muted.

Speaker 3:

That's okay.

Sophie:

I think I misspoke in my previous question so I wanted to clarify what I was saying. I believe that ... What I was asking, I guess, is if there was precedent in either the CPD or other departments for periodic, I apologize, investigations into whether officers may have bias. Because I believe there's a chance that an officer may be racially biased or, as we see with Rick Cornell, that went unnoticed by the department until it was called out by outside people on his Facebook posts. I was wondering, other than training because I believe in a lot of ways training might not be able to fix that. What I'm asking is if there's any way in the past that people have been checked in on to make sure they don't have racial biases. If that makes sense.

Chief Tothe:

I guess I can answer that somewhat. When you have a small agency and you hear locker room talk, you pick up on some things that would be inappropriate and you take immediate action on those. But to actually get into someone's mind about it, that's a difficult thing to do. But your comments and other people's comments have got me thinking about are there other options, are there things out there, tools that are available that I'm not aware of? And when we get done with this I'm going to do some research on this subject matter and try to figure it out.

Sophie:

Thank you.

Speaker 3:

Christin Elis, I don't think we've heard from you tonight. You are next, please.

Christin Ellis:

All right. So kind of circling back to Chief Tothe's comments much earlier about social media and not being on it. But you clearly stated that you have become aware of what's going on in the city right now with a lot of tension and people bad mouthing each other online. I was just wondering if you're looking into some of that? Most importantly, I would say, some of the Chelsea businesses, and in particular, one owner of a business, Michelle Balacca, I'm not sure how to pronounce her last name, but just her going to people's houses and threatening them, giving them these letters. I didn't get any of these things, however I've just been made aware of it and it just truly disgusts me. And I was just wondering, it sounds a little hypocritical that you hadn't heard anything about what was going on in the police department and stuff however now you're hearing, I guess maybe because tensions are so high and things are going on in our town. But how you're being made aware of these things and what complaints are being filed. There's a lot there but I ...

Speaker 3:

I'm sorry, could you circle back a little bit? I'm not clear about what your question is. So I just wanted to make sure we're trying to responding to it.

Christin Ellis:

I guess more what the department is doing in terms of social media and things that are being said on there and bullying on there. And then taking it one step further where there are people now that are business owners that are going to other people's houses and bullying them there and threatening and being on private property and if there's anything happening with that.

Chief Tothe:

There's a statute, it's 450.something something-X. It's the bullying statute. So if you threaten anybody on the internet it's a crime and it can be up to a felony. So if you know that's happened, take screen shots of those statements, bring them in and we'll investigate those. That is a crime to do that. If you're talking about someone's paper service, it's okay. If you're going to serve papers on someone they can come on your property, knock on the door and hand you the papers. So it's not a crime to do that. Now if it gets to threatening and so forth that's a little bit different. But if someone's just serving papers, there's no crime with just serving someone some type of document, some legal document. That I'm aware of, anyhow.

Christin Ellis:

And the thing that you're referring to earlier about the city being mean to each other and hearing stuff from both sides, what you said earlier, is that all stuff that you're hearing from social media but you're not personally on it but you just, this is just word of mouth from people?

Speaker 3:

I can answer that as well. I will tell you, Ms. Ellis, that I have been screen shotted from multiple different people, things that they have taken on social media. Our police department doesn't actively monitor social media but when people feel that there is a criminal violation, they will report that to the police department and I think that's how it becomes aware to the police department that people make an active complaint.

Chief Tothe:

That's correct. We've had a couple that have brought information to us, we've looked it up. In one case I've actually called the prosecutor myself, went over the scenario, went over what's going on because you've got a balance between the first amendment rights and actually the threats. So it's kind of a gray area. But if you have a complaint bring it, we will review it and we can submit it to the prosecutor for review regarding that statute about bullying.

Christin Ellis:

Okay. Thank you.

Speaker 3:

Alexis?

Alexis:

Yep. Hi.

Speaker 3:

I'm sorry, Alexis you're having some audio difficulty. Can I suggest that you turn it on and off and we'll try again?

Alexis:

Is it working now?

Speaker 3:

A little bit better but maybe try again. Alexis did you want to try again? Or if that's not working you can send the chat to Mr. Hannifan and he can ask the question for you if we're still having some technical difficulties.

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Speaker 1:

All right. We'll circle back.

Speaker 2:

[inaudible 00:00:07] and they can have some faith in our police department going forward.

Edwards Toth:

Actually, we've been doing that for the 14 years I've been here, whether it's working football games, at driver's ed training, I've got one of our officers helps with driver's ed, at the schools, Guiding Good Choices, spoke there, reading at the elementary school, but actually it was back at [inaudible 00:00:36], so it's been a while since I did that, being part of the SRSly group for the last, I think it's been around for 13 years, I believe. I've been part of that. So we've been doing that. And then I actually, I think on the 13th, tried to... Well, I was asked to go stand out there and engage the group. And I'm going to tell you, it wasn't pretty. I guess it wasn't pretty. We'll just leave it at that. The vulgarity coming out of these individuals' mouths. It wasn't good. So I'm all ears. Any student who wants to meet with me anytime, I'd be more than happy to meet with them and talk about whatever the topic would be. Anytime.

Speaker 2:

So outside of an organized event or just something that these kids put on, is what I'm saying. Put your boots on the ground and just walk. Even walking the sidewalks and talking to them. And I can understand your turnoff from vulgarities directed towards you and not feeling like you could make a difference at that point. But putting the police officers up on roofs looking like snipers, I just felt like I would have been very intimidated as an adult, let alone these kids. And I respect the amount of overtime that went in to paying these officers to be there, but I just feel like even walking the streets and high-fiving these kids and just saying, "I'm glad you guys have a voice, but let's use it wisely and let's use it politely and I respect you kids, so please respect me."

Speaker 1:

Chief, I'm sorry, but you are muted again.

Edwards Toth:

[inaudible 00:02:37] apologize. I guess if you could set the meeting up, I'd sit down with them.

Speaker 2:

I would be happy to.

Edwards Toth:

Okay. Let's see if we can make that happen.

Speaker 2:

Thank you.

Speaker 1:

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I just want to follow up on that. We have had open invitation to anyone who wants speak with us to do so. I know that I've certainly issued that invitation and Chief Toth has as well.

Speaker 1:

Mr. Stamper?

Ryan Stamper:

Hi. Ryan from Ypsilanti. To circle back to Kristen and Dave's questions, excuse me, about Michele Balaka. She's coming to people's houses and serving them cease and desist letters and being somewhat threatening, saying that she's going to bring people back if people don't behave the way she want them to. But I think our issue is that she's saying this and then she's saying that the police are advising her to show up at people's private residences. And I'm just wondering if that's actually the case and if there is any follow-up for lying about maybe what the police may be saying, what police were saying to her. Thank you.

Edwards Toth:

I don't want to talk on hearsay. I heard that papers were being served by different people in the community, but I have not personally been contacted by anybody about serving papers. Usually the county has a civil process server who serves those papers, but I know an individual can serve personal protection orders or actually they can get us another party to serve the personal protection orders for them, or I guess people can serve their own papers if they'd like. But I've not been contacted by anybody about serving papers.

Ryan Stamper:

So I guess for clarification, you're saying that you're not telling people to go to people's houses to confront them?

Edwards Toth:

I'm not telling them to do that.

Ryan Stamper:

All right. That's not a stance of the police station either, correct?

Edwards Toth:

[inaudible 00:05:07] just speak for myself, but what happens is we help people serve protection orders, because there's a cost to serving personal protection orders. So if there's someone that maybe doesn't have the funds to have the county serve it, we have served personal protection orders for people in the past. So we do it, but we are not in the civil papers service business.

Ryan Stamper:

Thank you. I appreciate that.

Speaker 1:

Alexis, you were having some difficulties earlier. Did you want to go ahead? I know I said I'd circle back with you.

Speaker 1:

Hello? No, I'm sorry. We cannot hear you. Just a reminder, there is an opportunity, if you want to try to send your question by chat to Mr. Hanifan. He can then put that question in the queue as an option. But we are still having difficulty understanding what you're trying to say. Carolyn Stillwell, please.

Carolyn Stillwell:

Thank you. I'm referring to the idea of having a conversation between the police and RCU. And I just wanted to make a recommendation of using a trained facilitator for those discussions. There is the resource of the Dispute Resolution Center in Ann Arbor that serves all of Washtenaw County. And full disclosure, I work for them, but I would not be the facilitator since I am not neutral. But you should reach out to them for that.

Speaker 1:

All right. Thank you. [inaudible 00:06:58] Plank, if you could please identify yourself and you have the floor.

Speaker 6:

Yes. I want to comment, Chief Toth, on how you had just recently stated that, I think it, was Ryan was discussing Michele Balaka going to people's homes, [inaudible 00:07:24] and that you hadn't been made aware of that and certainly you'd do something if you knew that was happening. I, myself actually, was threatened by Michele Balaka. She did come to my home. She knocked on my door and she gave me a cease and desist. It was something she got off the internet I'm sure and it doesn't have any legal backbone. However, her behavior was a little concerning, because she was at my house, threatening me. And she has exhibited this behavior to a number of people in our community. So [inaudible 00:08:10] the striking thing that she said, which made me call the police, was that if I didn't respond within a matter of time that she would take further action.

Speaker 6:

And she does own a children's play place, the TreeHouse in Chelsea, where kids go to and youth are employed. So this disturbed me greatly. So I called the police department myself and I did speak to a police officer. And the police officer did say he would follow up. And he did call me back. And he said that he had had conversation with Michele Balaka and that if she were to come on my property again, then I should call the police department. So I just want to let you know that I hear that you're saying you weren't aware. So I don't know how the department keeps track of these incidents, but I think that maybe that's something else we should look into, because I did make a call myself on this event. This is my only opportunity here to get this out, so it's got to get out. So thanks for your time.

Edwards Toth:

Thank you for making me aware of that. For me to say I know every single call that comes in, every single day, I don't know every single call that comes in every single day. But anytime someone feels threatened on their property, that someone's on their property, you call 911 and we'll send someone over and try to figure out exactly what's going on. And as I said, if you do know somebody and they're

coming on your property and you've got an issue with them, you just don't answer the door and dial 911.

Speaker 1:

All right. Does anyone else have any other questions... Yep. I'm sorry. Mr. Hanifan?

John Hanifan:

Yeah. I've got Alexis [inaudible 00:10:01] question. So I'm going to read that. "I wanted to circle back to what Sophie had said earlier in regards to making sure the training hit home per se for every officer at CPD. On July 17th, Officer [inaudible 00:10:15] informed myself and two others that the mascot of BLM is a gorilla. It's extremely concerning he made this comment with such training." So I'm not sure that's a question, but that was her statement.

Speaker 1:

Okay. Thank you. Duly noted. Thank you. With respect to the questions, Mr. Pacheco, do you have a question regarding police policing?

Mr. Pacheco:

I just wanted to say that I also called Michele Balaka thing and the police responded. I didn't open the door. I didn't know the woman and she didn't file me any papers. She wanted to complain about some of my stances on the police and fire signs in businesses. I just had some stances on businesses acting on political agendas and those things. So she wanted to talk about that. But they did a great job. They came to my house. They came back the next day, the next morning. And they asked for some pictures and I sent them to them. And then they called me back the next day and said that they talked to her and she wouldn't be coming back to my house. So that was nice. And to call them if I have any further problems. So I want to thank you and I think they handled that well.

Speaker 1:

Thank you. I don't see any other hands up at this time or any other indicators that people would like to speak at this time. So I do just want to put out one last call for somebody who has been waiting for questions. The opportunity is to ask a question to the police department about policing. And I do want to make sure that we're not necessarily asking about individual cases, but more general questions about policing rather than maybe outstanding questions that maybe need to be directed to the police department to make reports separately. Mr. Stamper?

Speaker 1:

Mr. Stamper, did you have a question?

Ryan Stamper:

Yes, I did. This is Ryan from Chelsea. I have another question. Officer, or excuse me, Chief Toth had mentioned that he was only aware of one racial incident or one racial complaint made. I believe that was his statement or that's the impression I was given, but I'm also aware of several instances in the school of racial problems where children were expelled or punished for that. And I was wondering if the police department had any connection to the school or were made aware when racial incidents occurred.

Edwards Toth:

Guess if you gave me the timeframe. Right off the top of my head, I can't think of any time that we've been called to the school for an issue like that. That's not saying it hasn't happened, but nothing's coming to my mind right now about any kind of racial issue at the school. We've had issues with threats of a domestic terrorism at the school. We've investigated bullying and things like that, but nothing that dealt with a racial threats or something.

Ryan Stamper:

If I could clarify, is there a connection that the Chelsea Police Department has with the school? Is the school obligated to report racial incidences to the police department?

Edwards Toth:

I guess depending if it meets the criminal element, then it would be, but if it doesn't, they'd handle that internally. So it has to be a crime actually. So depending on what exactly happened would determine if they had mandatory reporting or not. Child abuse and things like that are mandatory reporting. So it would depend on the exact circumstances.

Ryan Stamper:

So if I could just further elaborate, it would be up to citizens to try to change those rules within the school system too that they would have to report racial incidences?

Speaker 1:

Generally, mandatory reporting is done at the state level, who is a mandatory reporter. But also in terms of that... So yes, you should reach out to the school as to what they're required for mandatory reporting. And then if you would like to expand that, you should ask them directly whether they have any internal policies regarding mandatory reporting, and then separately there's state standards for reporting as well. So you can also contact your state legislator who would have some influence about what those mandatory reporting requirements are.

Ryan Stamper:

I appreciate both of your answers. Thank you,

Speaker 1:

Jan, if you could please state your name and where you live.

Jan Starr:

Jan Starr. I live in Chelsea. Since Chief Toth has mentioned several times that he's not on social media, that he doesn't have social media accounts, I just wanted to make sure that you know, Chief, that there's a huge division of people in Chelsea. One side is the support police and fire signs. The other side is the ARCY [inaudible 00:16:36] movement, the protest. That is creating a huge division in our city. And I not sure if you know that or you know how serious it is, but that's one of the things about people going door to door to try to convince people to be on their side or another side. It's really bad on social media right now. And I'm assuming that it's bad... I know it's bad in the streets also. So-

Speaker 1:

Just wanted to let you know that.

Edward Toth:

Yeah. And also you got to understand too that law enforcement is a neutral party. Each group wants the police to be on their side, but we have to present ourselves as neutral. So if we come to one person's house [inaudible 00:00:17] certain amount of beliefs, we go to the other person's house that have different beliefs, you have to have the faith in us that we're going to investigate that fairly. And so when you have a neutral position, that's construed as we're not proud of what you're doing here or proud of what you're doing there. That's our policy and that's how we have to conduct our business.

Speaker 1:

I really appreciate that. I just would like more people to know that.

Edward Toth:

Yeah. And I'm trying to figure out how to get out that information now because there's a lot of unknowns. The normal citizen really doesn't know all the police practices, the science that goes behind why officers do certain things that they do and under stressful conditions, the training that officers go through, the officers that have to give death notifications at family houses. Over my career, about 20 of them. And how that adversely affects the officers and what help they need for these things. And like anything else, the police are humans just like everyone else. They make mistakes. My job is when mistakes are made that there's corrective behavior actions that are taken to mitigate that from ever happening. Like everybody else, I make mistakes myself, but listening tonight, this is enlightening. I take this stuff serious. I don't know everything about this job, but if nothing else, I'm going to do some further investigation on how we can become better as a police department to serve all members of this community.

Speaker 1:

I appreciate that a lot. I just want to make sure that you know that the tone right now, your tone, is very divided.

Edward Toth:

Good. Thank you.

Speaker 1:

You're welcome.

Melissa Johnson:

All right. We have three more questions and then we're nearing on 9 o'clock. So we'll certainly take those three questions. Anna, we have not heard from you tonight, so you have the floor. If you could please identify yourself and where you live, please.

Anna Carter:

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Hi. My name is Anna Carter. I live in Chelsea. I was just wondering regarding the protest tomorrow, are you planning to be on the corners and rooftops to issue citations? Or will you be expressing solidarity?

Edward Toth:

We're going to take the same approach we have for the last [inaudible 00:02:55] weeks. So we're asking everybody to get on the sidewalks please, so everyone's safe.

Melissa Johnson:

Kristen Ellis please.

Kristen Ellis:

Yes. So I don't know if I said this before, but I live in the City of Chelsea. Kristin Ellis. Going back to the division, I think this all, it is really bad right now, for sure. And that's kind of what I was trying to get at earlier. And I think a lot of it has to go with the support of the [inaudible 00:03:33] group and in a way, the kids feeling intimidated with the police on top of the roofs and just not really feeling supported in that. And then in the next breath, we have this other group coming, waving American flags and saying their support for the police. And so it creates a lot of tension and it makes, I think, us and the kids feel not supported, because in a way this other group is using this platform of supporting the police and having their signs everywhere with their American flags and stuff.

Kristen Ellis:

And it's more of a bullying, intimidation type thing for this group. And I think that this all just needs to stop. Hopefully, it can soon. I don't know how that's going to happen, but definitely just getting out there and maybe trying a different approach with the kids. And many have stated getting down there on their level and just being around them and not making them as intimidated as they have been, more comforted. Because I don't feel like there is that presence either with the parades or whatever. I don't even know what you would call that other group just honking and blaring horns and stuff. But we respect you all. We think the police department is wonderful too. I just feel like they're causing a lot of [inaudible 00:05:28], for sure.

Melissa Johnson:

All right. Thank you. I think certainly everyone can take the opportunity to review their actions and make sure that we're all acting on our best behaviors and also making sure that, I think, to take a deep breath before we post anything or make any decisions and make sure that we review, that we have good factual information and that we think about the model that we want to set for our community. And for me, that's always civil dialogue and respect for intellectual debate. And I think we always strive to do that here at city council. We always have an opportunity for public input and we actively have sought out our community's input to do that.

Melissa Johnson:

And as I always want to remind everyone, we have, at every city council meeting, the opportunity for public engagement. I have met personally with every single person who was asked to meet with me. I do try to respond to all questions and emails. And I think it's really important to keep that open dialogue certainly, and that we certainly try to do that here at the city level. But I also think it's important for each member of our community to remember that when you post or how you engage, you're setting a

tone and setting the model for people in your community as well. So I would ask that everybody make sure that you're using your best judgment and that you're proud of the statements that you're posting or your actions. All right. I think we have one more question that was submitted by chat. We'll go with that. And then Mr. Wiseley, I see your hand is up as well. And then we'll conclude for the evening. Mr. Hanifan.

John Hanifan:

Yeah. Thanks, Mayor Johnson. This comes from Sally, I think it's [inaudible 00:07:44]. Chief Toth's statement relating to being a neutral party, she wants clarification given that the officer's on July 31st took footage only [inaudible 00:07:55] of the RCU and did not get any documentation relating to counter protestors on the road, including trucks slowing to a near stop, clearly impeding traffic. "This doesn't appear impartial to me. Please help me to understand."

Edward Toth:

I'd speak to that a minute. So there's a reason why we're on the rooftop. So I just leave it at that. There was a significant amount of videos taken of all parties involved. So I can just say that's the facts.

Melissa Johnson:

All right. Thank you. And then we have a question from Mr. Wiseley.

Charles Wiseley:

Hi, Chief. How you doing?

Edward Toth:

Good, sir.

Charles Wiseley:

I'm curious. A lot of people are upset about the rooftop aspect. If people walk down the sidewalk, are you going to need to do that?

Edward Toth:

No, I'm not.

Melissa Johnson:

All right. That was our last question for the evening. I do see two more hands up that are repeat questions. We'll go ahead and ask these questions as long... And then we're going to end for the evening. I want to make sure, just ask that if it is a repeat question or if we've already asked and answered the question, please be mindful of that. Ezra?

Ezra:

Hi. So a few minutes earlier in the call, Officer Toth stated that the police department is a neutral party. I want to know if there were any citations issued to the other side on the July 31st protest. Me and multiple others who were part of the Black Lives Matter protest got citations, but the people who were

blaring air horns, occupying roads and speeding through town with their loud horns and flags, I'd like to know if they got citations.

Edward Toth:

Sure. No problem. No, they didn't get any citations. So they did not impede traffic, which is coming to a complete stop and causing traffic to back up. That's an impeding traffic. So someone blowing the horn, so this was brought up before. So as COVID hit, we had several graduation parties, teachers' retirement parties where horns were being blown and traffic violations taking place. So it'd be difficult to enforce any of that. And blowing a horn, depending on how long you're doing it, could be construed as a noise complaint, but this was not beyond the noise complaint ordinance. So simple answer is no, the other parties were not issued any citations, but there was no violations observed.

Melissa Johnson:

And the last question then this evening is from Sophie. Please.

Sophie:

Hi. Sorry for speaking again. So I'm... Yes.

Melissa Johnson:

I'm sorry. I just want to let you know there's no reason to apologize for speaking. I just wanted to make sure that we had an opportunity that everyone got heard before we go to the second. So please don't apologize. You are welcome to ask your question.

Sophie:

Okay. Thank you. I may have misheard, but Chief Toth, did you say that should we walk on the sidewalk, you would not have need to take pictures of us? Is that what you said?

Edward Toth:

That is correct. If you are on the sidewalk, you probably not going to see many officers.

Sophie:

Okay. My question was, is it against the law for us to occupy the police station parking lot? Because as far as I know, we were taking pictures of while we were occupying the lot. And I was wondering whether that would be considered illegal or impeding traffic or for whatever reason you would need to take pictures of us.

Edward Toth:

Oh. But there is a violation where you're preventing the ingress or egress to the station. You're blocking the sidewalk and the driveway. So that would be a violation. Although those citations weren't issued. But it's not illegal to occupy the station. That's fine in the parking lot.

Sophie:

Okay. Thank you.

Melissa Johnson:

And then I have another hand up for somebody who hasn't spoken tonight. This will be the last question. It's the last question raised. Sarah, if you could please identify yourself and where you live.

Sarah :

Hi. Thanks. It's Sarah [inaudible 00:12:58]. I live in Dexter township. My question was kind of a follow-up to Sophia's question. It was just I was confused about the question that Mr. Wiseley asked about if people walked on the sidewalks, you wouldn't need to take photos, but by the time they arrive at the police department, you're already on the roof taking photos of them and they're in the police department parking lot. So I'm not sure how that's relevant or how those two correlate. Thank you.

Edward Toth:

I guess I can answer that is you're at the park, everybody gets on the sidewalk and stays on the sidewalk all the way to the police station, have a sit-in at the police station and head back to the park, pictures aren't going to be taken.

Sarah :

But if you've started taking pictures of them while they're at the police station, how do you know who's been on the sidewalks and who's been on the streets prior to that? So then are you taking pictures of them the entire way, the entire way back? And if so, that's the correlation I don't understand.

Edward Toth:

How about this? If people are in the street... And I'll just do a hypothetical. People are in the street, you may walk up on the sidewalk and down on the street, back to the park on the street. So we have to be able to identify people based on everyone, and that's how we connect everything. So if people stay on the sidewalk, you have nothing to worry about as far as photos.

Sarah :

So you're taking pictures them during the actual march while they're walking on the streets, as well as, the sidewalks too? Anybody who's on the sidewalks, you're also taking pictures of them, as well as, the streets before they get to the police station?

Edward Toth:

Yes.

Sarah :

Thank you.

Melissa Johnson:

All right. And that I don't see any other questions for the evening. So I do want to thank everyone for their time tonight and for their participation. There were some great questions tonight and some great input. So we appreciate that. And at this time, with the agreement of city council, we will go ahead and adjourn. If I can have a motion to adjourn.

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Cheri Albertson:

Make that motion, Madam Mayor, to adjourn.

Melissa Johnson:

Thank you. We have a motion by Ms. Albertson. Is there a second?

Jane Pacheco:

Pacheco second.

Melissa Johnson:

Thank you. We have a motion and a second from Ms. Pacheco. Yeah. I will go ahead and take roll call on the vote. Mr. Hanifan has indicated that he's lost audio.

John Hanifan:

I'm back.

Melissa Johnson:

Oh! There you are.

John Hanifan:

Sorry.

Melissa Johnson:

If you could take the roll call, please. All those in favor of adjourning.

John Hanifan:

Sure. Ms. Albertson?

Cheri Albertson:

[inaudible 00:15:56].

John Hanifan:

Mr. Feeney?

Peter Feeney:

Aye.

John Hanifan:

Mr. Iannelli?

Tony Iannelli:

Aye.

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John Hanifan:

Mayor Johnson?

Melissa Johnson:

Aye.

John Hanifan:

Ms. Pacheco?

Jane Pacheco:

Aye.

John Hanifan:

Mr. Wiseley.

Charles Wiseley:

Aye.

Melissa Johnson:

All right. Thank you. And this concludes this special listening session, special meeting of city council. Thank you very much. We're adjourned.