



Agenda Item Summary

Meeting of: June 6, 2022

Agenda Item Title: Community Public Safety Task Force Recommendations - Final

Submitted by: Kristin van Reesema - Community Public Safety Task Force

Rob Long - Community Public Safety Task Force

Approved for submittal: n/a

Interim City Manager

Explanation of Agenda Item:

On December 13, 2021 City Council created the Community Public Safety Task Force. The purpose of the Community Public Safety Task Force was to develop recommendations for City Council consideration in regard to prioritizing recommendations outlined in the Bobcat Police Operational Audit.

At the May 16, 2022 regular City Council meeting the Community Public Safety Task Force presented a draft recommendation report. Council discussed the draft report and gave feedback to the task force. Attached is the revised report, along with the original task force purpose and goals.

In summary the task force recommendations are as follows, in this order:

- 1) Council shall create a Public Safety Strategic Planning Group (SPG) to do the longer-term work recommended in the full Community Public Safety Task Force final report. The current Task Force shall stay in effect until the Strategic Planning Group is in place (July/Aug 2022). The SPG shall consist of the new Chief of Police, a City Council representative, and 5 community members.*
- 2) The Strategic Planning Group shall research and hire a Subject Matter Expert (SME) to facilitate the strategic planning process, as well as research potential grant funding. This work can be done in lead up to the new Chief of Police start date. The strategic planning process would not start until the new Chief is onboarded, estimated early Fall 2022, as the new Chief will be integrally involved in the planning process. The strategic planning process is estimated to cost \$25,000 and is to be included in budgeted expenses for the upcoming fiscal year.
- 3) The Strategic Planning process shall incorporate and assess all the report recommendations including the recommendation to create a Citizen's Oversight Board and implementing recommendations to the high-risk policies outlined in the Bobcat Operation Audit.

*The current Task Force will assemble a reading and resources list for the new SPG.

Fiscal or Resource Considerations: YES __ NO

Does this agenda item require the expenditure of funds? YES __ NO

If YES, are funds budgeted? YES __ NO __

Are staff or other resources required? YES __ NO

Advisory Board/Commission/Committee Action/Recommendation:

Motion to accept the Community Public Safety Task Force final report dated June 1, 2022.

Staff Comments:

City Manager Comments/Recommendation:

City Manager Recommended Form of Motion:

Names and addresses of those to be notified:

City Council

Attachments:

Community Public Safety Task Force Recommendations Summary and Final Report

All Agenda Item Summaries and any attachments are due in the City Clerk's Office by 4:00 p.m. on the Wednesday prior to the City Council meeting. If the Wednesday prior to the City Council meeting is a holiday, then the submission deadline is 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday.

Chelsea Community Public Safety Task Force
Recommendations Summary
6/1/2022

The Task Force makes the following recommendations:

Create a Strategic Planning Group. This group could encompass a city council member, the Chief of Police or their representative, and five citizens. A youth liaison should be considered to ensure their voice is represented. The first task would be to hire a facilitator and develop an overall timeline to create the strategic plan. Estimated amount of time for this work would be approximately a year.

Part of the strategic plan will be to consider the following:

- A Citizen's Oversight Board created by City Charter Amendment (if possible) to work closely with the police department in addressing the ten initiatives identified by the Task Force.
- Hiring a subject matter expert to assist in the implementation of the recommendations for the high-risk police policies, in the prioritized order identified by the Task Force.

Strategic Planning Process Recommendation

One of the goals outlined by the City Council and given to the Community Public Safety Task Force was to investigate and make recommendations regarding what a strategic planning process could look like in the City of Chelsea. In the short timeframe given to this Task Force, a complete review of all options did not seem feasible, so a subcommittee was formed to at least make recommendations as to whether such a Strategic Plan should be undertaken, and to at least provide a broad outline for the process. In addition, the subcommittee was tasked with making recommendations for possible subject area experts who might help to guide the city in the process of creating a strategic plan, along with a recommendation of budget monies to be allocated for the upcoming fiscal year to facilitate the process.

It is the belief of this subcommittee that the city should undertake to identify the overall priorities for a strategic plan to be developed. Those priorities were somewhat broadly outlined by the Bobcat report to be:

1. Ensure that the mission and vision of the Chelsea Police Department (CPD) is in alignment with that of the City's.
2. Hiring of a subject-matter expert to help with an examination of all current policies of the CPD with significant emphasis on those high-risk policies enumerated in the report. The examination should result in changes to policies to "reflect and meet the unique needs of the Department and the community" as recommended by the report.
3. Review of overall police operational functions with city leaders and community stakeholders to identify ways to improve CPD operations.

It is recognized that it is not likely that all of these activities will be able to be accomplished within the upcoming fiscal year; therefore it is recommended that the strategic plan be crafted in such a way that it segments the goals into pieces to be undertaken over a period of time to be determined through the planning process. By doing so, a long-term process and budget can be formed, with priorities set for the initial and subsequent phases.

In order to create an effective strategic plan, it will be necessary to undertake an assessment of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the department with a broad range of stakeholders including neighboring communities/townships, internal staff and the school district footprint. This will allow the city to identify current and future needs. Linking the strategic plan to the annual planning and budget cycles will be important.

It is the strong recommendation of this subcommittee that the city should undertake to engage a subject-matter expert to assist with the creation of the strategic plan. Potential sources of expertise for helping with the building of the strategic plan include (but are not limited to):

1. Kevin Karpiak, SMART
2. Diane Mukkala, Saline Leadership Institute
3. Others?

Based on conversation with EMU Professor Kevin Karpiak, a suggested budget for engaging a group such as theirs to assist in the process of creating the strategic plan would be approximately \$25,000. It is possible that grant money may be available to help with these costs from the Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan's Community Policing Innovations Initiative.

The subcommittee recommends creation of a Strategic Planning Group. This group could encompass a city council member, the Chief of Police or their representative, and five citizens. A youth liaison should be included to ensure their voice is represented. The first task would be to hire a facilitator and develop an overall timeline to create the strategic plan. Estimated amount of time for this work would be approximately a year.

Citizens Oversight Board Recommendation

The ARCY (Anti-Racist Chelsea Youth) protests of 2020, the various Chelsea Police Department (CPD) responses, the local social media atmosphere and the two City Council sponsored Listening Sessions all served to illustrate genuine perceptible disparities between the 'kind' of police department some citizens of Chelsea believed they had and the police culture that exists. Further, CPD conduct in its issuance of citations related to the protests further exacerbated its bruised image and fueled an emergent community distrust of the CPD amongst some citizens, especially the youth.

From the City Council's Listening Sessions, it was apparent that citizens possessed uneven knowledge of Chelsea policing policies, procedures and general aspects of the criminal justice system. The Bobcat Consulting report noted that the CPD should improve its communication with citizens and develop transparency regarding its policies, procedures and complaint/investigation status. This work of improved communication is the responsibility of the CPD, the City Council, and Chelsea citizens.

The goal of this subcommittee was to research and review Community Oversight Boards in like-sized communities. Subcommittee convener Rob Long, in a personal conversation with Eastern Michigan University professor Kevin Karpiak, learned that small cities like Chelsea rarely have their own police department. Typically small towns policing services are contracted with county Sheriff Departments and occasionally with the departments of larger adjacent cities. A city the size of Chelsea is an anomaly in regards to having its own police department. Furthermore a small town with a police advisory or oversight board is extremely rare. Professor Karpiak's statements and observations were confirmed in 'white papers' and reports from the US Department of Justice's Community Orientated Policing Services (COPS) and International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP).

Given the paucity of comparative data available for police oversight or advisory committees/boards in small towns the size of Chelsea, the subcommittee decided to examine and 'mine' information on advisory/oversight committees/boards from a range of mid-sized and smaller cities that have instituted police oversight – (see Chart 1 below). These Advisory/Oversight Boards come under the Community Policing philosophy, also known as Community Oriented policing. The strength of the Community Policing framework is that a citizen led team works in conjunction with the Police Chief to develop three foci – 1) Police Department organization and procedural transformation, 2) Community Partnerships, and 3) Problem Solving for emerging or existing public safety issues. Community Policing emphasizes collaboration and accountability between citizens, community groups, and police departments such that everyone understands that public safety is not the work of law enforcement personnel alone.

It is the recommendation of the Community Public Safety Task Force that the City Council recommend/create, preferably by City Charter Amendment, a Citizens Oversight Board. This Board would consist of three to five citizens appointed by City Council to serve not more than two consecutive terms of three years each, the Police Chief (non-voting), one City Council member (non-voting) and a youth liaison should be included to ensure their voice is represented. The benefit of creation by city charter amendment is an insulating one. It 'protects' the existence of a Citizens Oversight Board from political ideological swings and reserves to citizens its existence.

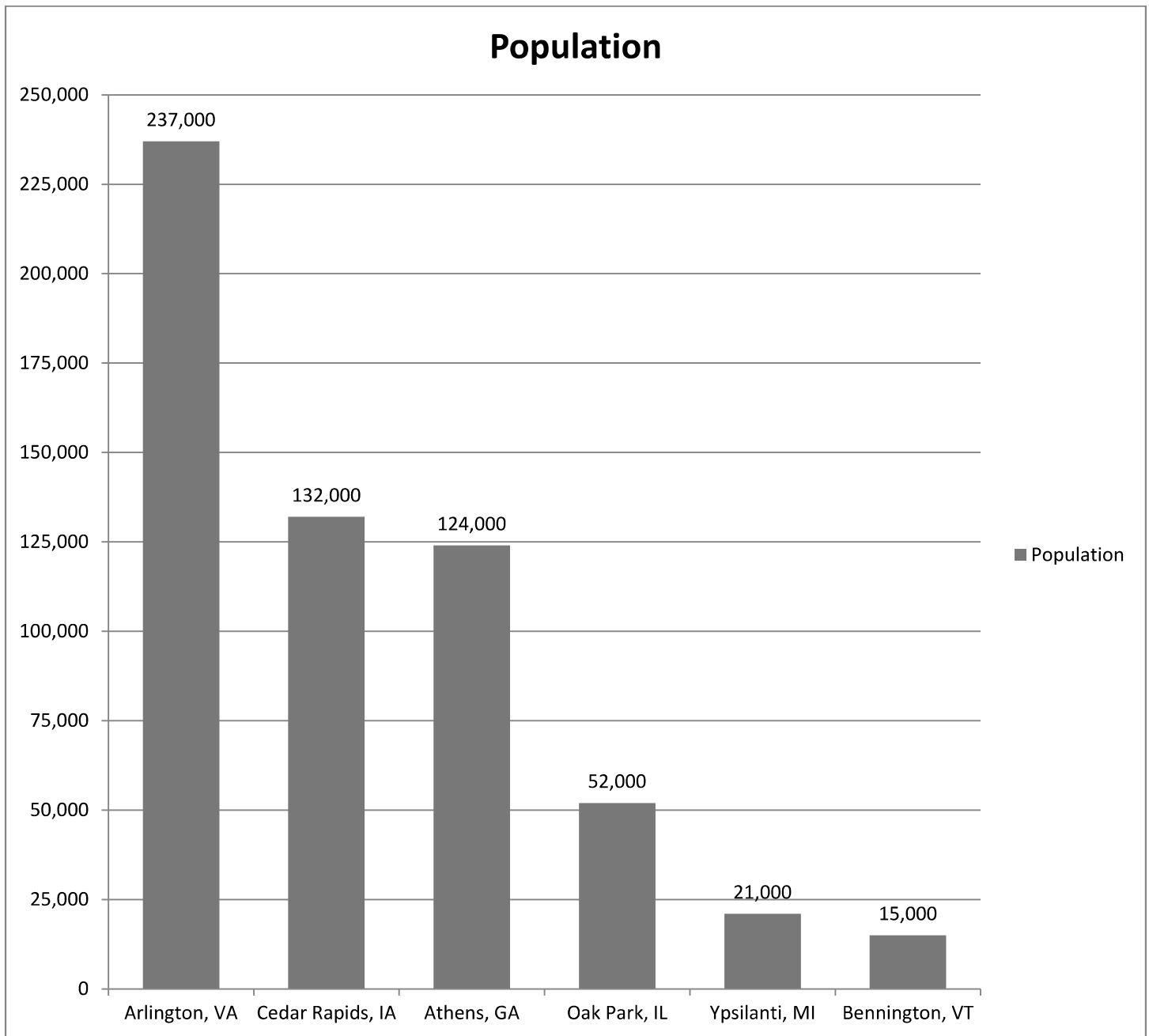
Working in conjunction with the Police Chief, the citizen led board's recommended work for the next one to three years would include:

- Address the High Risk Policies concerns noted in the Bobcat Consulting report on the prioritized basis outlined in the Community Public Safety Task Force Policy Prioritization document;
- Create a schedule for on-going review of all CPD policies by the Citizens Oversight Board in conjunction with a subject matter expert on policing policies and the Chief of Police;
- Create an unambiguous process for submission of complaints against CPD or its personnel. That process shall include timely interim updates the status of the complaint. Further, the citizen members of the Board shall have access to all elements and discovery that constitute the investigation of a complaint by, or of CPD or its designates, and all knowledge of said elements and discovery shall be held confidentially and for the purposes of monitoring compliance with investigation policies;
- Develop a new CPD social media presence to: increase CPD visibility amongst social media consumers, serve a public notice avenue to highlight and advertise public safety information as well as resources; announce public forums in which CPD is sponsoring or contributing; and other community orientated programs involving CPD. The social media site is to be monitored and updated regularly and linked from the present CPD website. Finally this social media site is not envisioned as a location to submit emergency requests or report criminal activity;
- Plan and initiate Community Partnerships that include regular communication events and listening sessions between community stakeholders and CPD;
- Outline in detail the cooperation and collaboration plans between local, county, and state emergency response organizations. Such plans shall be featured on the CPD social media site and its webpage;
- Investigate the viability and benefits of an unarmed response unit; its deployment criteria and a plan for instituting this unit within CPD or in conjunction with medical and social service communities in Chelsea;
- Examine the present CPD police activity data capture software system to determine if it adequately captures the necessary information to permit the examination of criminal activity and trends, patrol responses, and progress on policing goals – i.e. anti-bias policing. If not, then a recommendation for a more robust data capture system should be made;
- Develop an annual performance review protocol for the position of Chief of Police that includes the City Manager and the Citizens Oversight Board;
- The Citizens Oversight Board shall have input into future Leadership profile for the position of Chief of Police.

The Task Force recommends hiring a subject matter expert to assist in the implementation of the recommendations for the policies in this prioritization exercise in conjunction with a citizen led oversight board and the Chief of Police. Also a subject matter expert on police policies would work with a citizen led oversight board and the Chief of Police to institute a schedule for periodic review of all police policies and participate in those policy reviews.

The 'Bobcat Policy Prioritization Exercise' is attached as Appendix A.

Chart 1
Comparison of Population of Cities Having a Police Advisory/Oversight Committee



Appendix A

Bobcat Policy Prioritization Exercise

This Task Force is directed to recommend to City Council a prioritized list of the twenty-one high risk police policies found within the Bobcat Report. To that end, we begin this discernment process by organizing the policies into three categories: ***Critical, Important and Desirable***. Each category is to have seven and only seven policies within it. A policy is assigned only once and only to one of the three categories.

The criteria for placement of a policy should consider the information within the Bobcat Report, the voice of the Chelsea community as expressed in the two listening sessions along with the Q & A following each listening session, perspectives on Community Policing found in recommended reading materials from NACOLE, COPS, Dept. of Justice reports and other peer reviewed sources and finally, your own thinking and reflections as to the 'weight' of a policy.

Some cautions to observe as you begin your policy assignments

- Work independently. The City Council entrusts each of us to be a valuable voice in our assigned tasks.
- Don't let the Bobcat "recommendation(s)" influence how you 'weigh' a policy. The suggested roadmap to resolution shouldn't factor in how you discern the priority of a policy.
- Set aside any considerations of expense or cost to bring a policy into "generally accepted police practices". We are to focus on the priority of a policy, not affordability.
- Resist prioritizing a policy based on an estimate of time to enact corrective measures suggested in the "recommendation(s)". We shouldn't focus on 'quick returns' but the value of improving top priority policies.
- The priority of a policy should not be influenced by the real or imagined 'difficulty' in achieving a clear and effective policy.
- Accept the fact that each of us will be working from an 'information gap' in our work to prioritize these twenty one policies. We have various and perhaps limited understandings of Community Policing and police work in general (the Chief and officer excepted). However, our work is not to become subject matter experts but well-informed participants.

Returning to the three categories, some additional descriptors for each category may assist you in thinking about the categories and which policies should be in them.

Critical – Non-negotiable, must be dealt with ASAP. Represent an unacceptable risk to persons and the community.

Important – Vital and essential to achieving policing improvements and performance both internal to CPD and externally with the general public.

Desirable – To achieve a well-trained and professional police force having a culture that is respected, transparent, in touch with the "pulse of the community" and innovative in developing both response and prevention initiatives.

Finally, consider organizing your prioritization of policies into three columns on a sheet of paper and writing the policy number identified in the Bobcat Report under the respective column headings of Critical, Important and Desirable. Recommend you do this prioritization more than once.

Your rankings are confidential. Your name is not associated with your choices.