

MEMORANDUM

**Community Advisory on Public Safety (CAPS) Commission
Thursday, December 19, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. – McCloskey Conference Room (#135),
401 N. Morton Street, Bloomington, Indiana**

The Regular Session meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m.

Commission members present in person: Erin McNeil, Robert Freeman-Day, Kamala Brown-Sparks, Jason Michalek, Zero Rose, Sharon Wainshilbaum (arrived 4:08 p.m.)

Commission members absent: Tyler Shaffer, Todd Mullins

City staff present: Clerk Nicole Bolden

Members of public present: Khari Mkola (Adrian Thomas)

Cm. Michalek moved to approve the agenda. Motion passed by roll call vote (5-0, Wainshilbaum not yet present).

Reports

Co-chairs

- Cm Michalek gave a brief report on the number of commissioners present on the Commission now that Jenna Buckner was removed, reminded commissioners of the rule to not miss more than two meetings in a row, and brought up the idea of the usefulness of committees

Other members

- Cm Wainshilbaum reported that the tour of the Stride center will be January 9, 2025, at 4 p.m.
- Cm Rose reported that the Environmental Resilience Institute was meeting in February for a conference and discussed environmental initiatives and issues impacting the community.

Committees

- None

Staff

- None

Public

- Khari Mkola (Adrian Thomas) gave comments about the Indiana State Police presence and other police without their lights on. Comments also included comments about Bloomington Housing Authority trash pickup. Comments cited apparent legal authority and legal action being taken.

New Business

Discussion of Bylaws

- Cm Michalek asked if commissioners had a chance to look over the Bylaws
- Cm Rose stated that these were things prepared before but had never been voted on or codified as official bylaws of the Commission. Cm Rose suggested getting them instituted and then amending them later.
- Cm Freeman-Day pointed out some of the proposed bylaws that would need changed.
- Cm McNeil stated that the changes would not need to be amendments because the proposed bylaws had never been adopted by the Commission.
- Cm Rose proposed having another draft incorporating those changes.
- Cm Michalek noted a change needing to be made to the chair and vice chair to co-chairs to eliminate the hierarchy.
- Cm McNeil suggested that the commissioners individually make suggested changes to the proposed bylaws document before the next meeting and then come back and vote on the changes at the January meeting.
- Clerk Bolden suggested checking with the staff liaison about any proposed changes that would be contrary to or already accounted for in the Bloomington Municipal Code section governing the Commission. This suggestion was specific to the number of members on the Commission, which is dictated in the BMC.
- Cm McNeil suggested refraining from voting on the proposed bylaws and taking the next month to fix the documents before bringing it back to the table for a vote.
- Clerk Bolden gave the BMC citation 2.12.120 that governs the CAPS Commission.
- Cm Wainshilbaum asked if there was something in the municipal code that referred to the CAPS Commission.
- Clerk Bolden stated that all City commissions are referenced in local and/or state code. Clerk Bolden explained that the Commission was formed within the last 4 years and stated that the code section governing it outlays its vision, purpose, and what it is supposed to do, as well as the terms of commissioner appointments and priority of who gets to serve. Clerk Bolden stated that if the Commission wanted to recommend changes to its municipal code section that the staff liaison could take those proposals to Council, depending on council staff workload.
- Cm McNeil stated that they would clean up the bylaws and table it for a later meeting, and then hopefully pass it then.

Collaboration with City Boards and Officials

- Cm Michalek prefaced this item by explaining the Commission's past efforts with outreach to other City boards and commissions during the Hamilton administration. Cm Michalek stated that when CAPS reached out to different boards and commissions that there were different ways the request was handled.
- Clerk Bolden stated that a new staff member is located in the Clerk's office to specifically work with boards and commissions, the Deputy Clerk of Communications and Outreach Jennifer Crossley, to work with boards and

commissions on issues like these. Clerk Bolden suggested the CAPS Commission set up a meeting with Jennifer Crossley in order to facilitate communications about standardizing communications between and across City boards and commissions.

- Cm Michalek agreed with the suggestion to reach out to Jennifer Crossley
- Cm Rose asked about the restrictions or differences between how other City boards and commissions treat these requests to collaborate.
- Cm Michalek stated that it depends on the nature of the work that the CAPS Commission is doing and engaging with other City and boards and commissions for.
- Cm Rose expected pushback about sending things to other City boards and commissions to not overwhelm those bodies.
- Cm Michalek asked who would want to do the outreach. Cm McNeil agreed to do that.
- Cm Rose stated that they are also on the Sustainability commission and wants to share anything that may relate mission or the activities of the other.
- Cm Rose suggested establishing a working group or committee working toward a possible collaborative project or report.
- Cm. Michalek explained the purpose of special committees.
- Cm McNeil asked about what would be done as part of outreach. Cm Michalek gave an example of what one of the former special committees did, which was standardize questions to be asked across City boards, have volunteers do outreach with those boards, and then report back.

Outreach and Community Engagement

- Cm Michalek also explained the outreach process done in the past for community engagement, which also included asking a standardized set of questions to marginalized groups.
- Cm Brown-Sparks explained that the set of questions was pre-approved for each agency or organization, with specific information for those groups that related to their organizations.
- Cm Michalek explained that it was not a flat script but it was tailored or targeted outreach.
- Cm Brown-Sparks explained that the purpose of standardization was so that the information conveyed was what the Commission as a whole had agreed to convey on behalf of the full Commission, and so that no one commissioner could substitute their personal opinions or beliefs for that of the Commission.
- Cm Michalek suggested coming up with a set up questions and brainstorming them in a working document.
- Cm McNeil asked about the term outreach in general.
- Cm Michalek said the outreach would be more targeted than general outreach and gave an example about the community kitchen or the experience of no-lights police cars the public commenter brought up.
- Cm Freeman-Day emphasized to distinguish/define the groups for targeted outreach, for instance talking to BPD versus IUPD.

- Cm Michalek discussed the makeup of the Outreach Committee and stated that this may be a good way of operating by taking an item like police outreach to this committee, establish how that outreach should be done, and bringing it back to the full Commission.
- Cm Michalek explained the role of the previous Research Committee.
- Cm Michalek explained how to join committees.
- Cm McNeil asked about how committees operate.
- Cm Michalek explained that the Commission assigns work to its committees which then becomes that committee's work.
- Cm Rose asked about creating a special committee for environmental research efforts.
- Cm Michalek said it would be a good idea and explained how committee work gets incorporated into the annual report each year.

Housing Advocacy Concerns Discussion

- Cm Michalek opened the discussion with the news about the abatement issue in the news regarding Joe Davis. Cm Michalek brought up the issue of mental health in relation to housing, specifically that the abatement issue was about hoarding which is based in OCD, a mental health issue.
- Cm Rose stated that sometimes the person can get connected at Centerstone before the issue reaches abatement but was unsure if that was ever tried with Joe Davis.
- Cm Freeman-Day mentioned that Community Justice and Mediation Center (CJAM) involvement would be useful.
- Cm Rose stated that donating the items to the Habitat restore would have been better than throwing them away.
- Cm Freeman-Day stated that a lot of the abatement movement was coming from the Board of Public Works and that it felt like a lot of power for just a few people to have.
- Cm Rose stated that a commissioner on the Commission of Sustainability stated that some of that language could technically outlaw composting.
- Cm Michalek brought up procedural equity so that it is not just pick and choose. Cm Michalek brought up the public commenter in relation to why he was targeted for selective enforcement and that Joe Davis is a case highlighting procedural equity. Cm Michalek suggested advocating for resources so that if someone ends up in a situation like this where they need help to be able to take care of things that it is apparent what kind of resources they have.
- Cm Freeman-Day brought up the idea of project management or other mediating body to come in and assist.
- Cm Rose stated that it seems like there needs to be clarification in some of the code because of the leeway and discretion given in some cases. In Joe Davis's case, he is a builder and that is not just somebody's pile of stuff. Cm Rose also stated that it is also predicated on having enough money to have one or multiple storage units. Some ambiguous language can be interpreted differently, like the word garbage. A pile of hats on the property may or may not be garbage.

- Cm Michalek talked about some of the original outreach done that was about the word safety and how people defined that word. Cm Michalek noted not to confuse safety with comfort. A pile of hats may be unpleasing but is not a safety hazard. An example of actual safety hazard is a hoarding cats situation in which they defecate in the house.
- Cm Rose explained from an alternative solution meditational viewpoint that it would have cost less for the city for Mr. Davis to build a fence so the neighbors would not have to look at the items. If you don't want to see it, turn your head mentality. Make it art, put up a fence and hang up your hubcaps and call it art.
- Cm Michalek proposed continuing talking about housing advocacy issues.
- Cm Rose explained that someone in this situation could be at risk of homelessness due to fines and legal process that can affect mortgage payments or could be reason for eviction if you are a renter. Cm Rose talked about a situation where an elderly person had to go to court for an eviction and get services triaged through the courts when it should not have gone through the courts in the first place. Cm Rose talked about the stigma of eviction on your record when it comes to finding housing. Cm Rose explained that HAND does all kinds of good things and has good programs but there are also unintended consequences.
- Cm Michalek encouraged CAPS to focus on procedural equity and how can CAPS advocate for housing and actual language changes as far as making recommendations to the City. Cm Michalek stated that at one point CAPS had a committee focused on housing.
- Cm Rose expressed interest in starting a housing committee. Cm Rose moved and it was seconded to form a housing committee. Motion passed by roll call vote 6-0.

Meeting adjourned at 5:29 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Ash Kulak, staff liaison.