

Coalition for Police Accountability Newsletter

Dec 31, 2019

<https://www.coalitionforpoliceaccountability.com>

@oakcopoversight

2019 - Year In Review

This past year, our Coalition engaged in extensive outreach efforts aimed at bringing the voices of those most impacted by OPD to the attention of the Police Commission, strengthening the Commission's ability to enact

effective reform and increasing community awareness of the Commission.

Hearing on OPD and the Unhoused



In February the Coalition organized, in collaboration with the Police Commission, a hearing on the unhoused communities' experience of Oakland Police Department policies and practices. Over 150 people attended the event at Taylor Memorial church in West Oakland and dozens of unhoused Oakland residents shared their experiences and observations. In the words of Commission Chair Regina Jackson: *"As members of the public most affected, your testimony is crucial. We want to hear from you and know what recommendations you would have for us. Following this hearing, the Police Commission will review the testimony...as a first step in drafting new policy and will be the foundation for any new policy changes proposed."* Following the hearing, a report drawn from the day's testimonies and interviews was

prepared for Commissioners by students at UC Berkeley's Goldman School. The full report link is here:

<https://tinyurl.com/vyigkpu>

Non-Police 911 Response Initiative

In response to testimony at the unhoused hearing, the Coalition for Police Accountability, along with Oakland City Council President Rebecca Kaplan, the Oakland Police Commission, Urban Strategies, Faith in Action East Bay and Councilmember Noel Gallo, co-hosted a community forum on June 26th to explore a successful model of a non-police response to nearly 20% of 911 calls in Eugene, Oregon.



Two members of the group providing this alternative response were present at the event at St Columba Catholic Church to describe how the program operates and to answer questions. More than 165 community members attended. Based on this presentation of a working 911 alternative response model, Council President Kaplan funded Urban Strategies to develop an implementation report for a non-police 911 response to address the unique needs and resources of Oakland.

Measure LL Amendments to Strengthen the Police Commission

The Coalition hosted a general membership meeting on September 11, open to the public, to discuss proposed changes to the original Measure LL. A CPA sub-committee had worked diligently to draft changes to the language of the original LL charter.

Based on two years of engagement with the Commission by coalition members and the public, CPA had identified three primary objectives: End mayoral appointments in favor of all future appointments being made by the community Selection Panel. Establish independent hiring and oversight of Police Commission staff and legal counsel, and ensure that the Commission has adequate staff. Give the Commission and it's Community Police Review Agency independent access to OPD files and reports for use in investigations.

After the open discussion, a revised version of the new charter amendments was endorsed by an overwhelming majority of Coalition organizations and members. The

amendments are currently being considered by City Council for the November 2020 ballot.

Dia de Los Muertos Listening Session

Latino Task Force and the Coalition for Police Accountability collaborated on a listening session about community interactions with OPD at the Nov. 2, Dia de los Muertos celebration in the Fruitvale. Latino Task Force recruited bi-lingual students who conducted over 70 interviews with passers-by during the day. The effort to engage community members in these conversations was well-received. Commissioners Jose Dorado and Henry Gage were present during the day, representing the Commission. Particular concerns that were prevalent in the conversations were issues around use of force and police non-response to citizens' calls.



Respondents who were from council districts 5 and 7 had no confidence in OPD because of past racial profiling (32%), they had either witnessed or experienced problematic use of force by OPD (19%) and got slow or no response (40%) when calling OPD. This is alarming because these districts have some of the highest police patrols but OPD cannot or will not respond to residents' phone calls. Many respondents also mentioned the need for unarmed mental health responders (14%) and police training in de-escalation skills (16%).

The interviews were collated into data that was presented to the full Police Commission.

All Of Us Or None Listening Session

On December 7th, All Of Us Or None hosted an informal listening session for formerly incarcerated persons with Commissioner Henry Gage and Alternate Commissioner David Jordan. The session was moderated by Community Selection Panel Chair John Jones, and Coalition for Police Accountability assisted in planning and outreach.



In addition to experiences related to use of force, extensive testimony was gathered for the Commission regarding the difficulties people who have been incarcerated face in all of their interactions with law enforcement.

Commissioner Henry Gage observed in concluding remarks: "We have a large opportunity in front of us. None more so than conversations like this. We need to do a better job, hearing from members of our community. Like the name of this group. If we can't all get justice, none of us will. This will destroy our democracy. So I'm very grateful for this conversation. I hope it

continues. I'm grateful for the feedback. We need more of it."

The session also highlighted the new restrictive stop-and-search OPD order for people on probation and parole, as well as the Commission being open to people who are formerly incarcerated to serve as Commissioners. The complete report on the December 7th session is available here:

<https://tinyurl.com/tqnekhI>

2019 ACHIEVEMENTS OF OAKLAND'S POLICE COMMISSION

Despite continuing obstruction of the Commission's independence by City Hall, the Oakland Police Commission took significant steps forward this past year to establish themselves as a strong oversight body.



1) The Commission enacted a general order for the Oakland Police Department (OPD) that restricts police stop-and-search of persons on probation and parole, ending the practice on the basis of being under supervision for non-violent felonies.

2) Commissioners recommended to the city council the creation of a fully staffed and trained non-police response alternative for 911 calls involving mental health, substance abuse, unhoused issues and other non-criminal or non-violent situations. The city council authorized and funded a pilot study.

3) Commissioners rejected the OPD request to purchase an additional Bearcat military vehicle (an armored vehicle that was used as a shooting platform in the killing of Joshua Pawlik as he was waking from sleep). The Commission is also in the process of approving an ordinance for City Council that will give the Commission full oversight of all requests to acquire military-grade equipment by OPD.



KPIX 5
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Oakland's Police Commission voted unanimously Thursday night to reject a report exonerating four Oakland police officers in the shooting of an armed homeless man in West Oakland in March 2018.



4) A Police Commission Disciplinary Committee fired the four officers involved in the Pawlik shooting (which the police union responded to by suing the Commissioners).

5) Commissioners began the process of a complete overhaul of OPD's "Use of Force" General Order, beginning with compliance to the recently passed AB 392 revision of California's state law regulating use of lethal force by law enforcement. The Commission's current proposal, due to be adopted in January, laudably includes key additional language that was in the original bill as proposed by its author Assembly Member Dr Shirley Weber but lost in amendments, going beyond the minimum law as signed by the Governor.

Coalition Filed NSA Intervention Motion - Currently Under Appeal

The Coalition filed a motion to Intervene in the Negotiated Settlement Agreement, *Delphine Allen, et.al. vs. City of Oakland*, in May of 2019. We gave many reasons for our motion to become a party to the case, but all of them came back to the basic fact that the NSA, which was intended to last no more than five years, has gone on for 16 years and appears set to go on indefinitely.

The Oakland Police Department is actually going backward in terms of compliance, and the Plaintiffs' counsel, while very well meaning, have not been able to make the OPD comply.

We at CPA believe we can bring community the voice necessary to hold the OPD and the City of Oakland accountable. Federal Judge Orrick, who oversees the NSA, did not agree and denied our motion on May 29, 2109. We appealed to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and are currently waiting for a hearing date.

Oakland civil rights attorney Pamela Price did the lion's share of the legal work, assisted by CPA steering committee member Larry White, both serving as volunteers.



You Can Apply For The Police Commission! Applications are open year-round.

Police Commission meetings – 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month
@ 6:30 @ City Hall ,
Council Chambers, Ogawa Plaza, also broadcast on KTOP
(Comcast channel 10)

CPA meetings – 3rd Wednesdays of every month @ 7 pm @
CHORI

You are invited to CPA meetings and to join or renew membership
(\$25 annual)

<https://www.facebook.com/CoalitionforPoliceAccountability/>



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rashidah@coalitionforpoliceaccountability.com

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Coalition for Police Accountability · 3920 Lyon Ave · Oakland, CA 94601 · USA

