

Agenda Item: Discussion Item or Resolution

Title: Consideration of Recommendations from the Ad Hoc Working Group for Police and Community

MOTION Options:

Council may wish to

- a) Move to Consider Resolution 2022-20 Pertaining to the Recommendations from the Ad Hoc Working Group for Police and Community and authorize the Mayor and Clerk to sign.
OR
- b) Move the WGPC recommendations individually for discussion and direct staff to bring back a resolution at the next meeting that reflects the governing body's policy intentions.

Staff Discussion:

On **February 8, 2022** the WGPC presented six recommendations to the City Council in a public meeting. All members of the working group were voting members as per the authorizing resolution, except for those serving in a liaison role. Each of the six recommendations were discussed and voted upon individually by the members of the WGPC.

The Working Group recommendations fell into three general categories as assigned to the group within the authorizing resolution:

- a. response to mental health calls-for-service (Recommendations 1 & 2)
- b. resident engagement (Recommendations 3, 4 & 5)
- c. complaint procedures (Recommendation 6)

Draft Resolution 2022-20 acknowledges these three general categories to allow for City Council to determine by amendment what, if any, specific language the body would like included within the three categories.

RESPONSE TO MENTAL HEALTH CALLS-FOR-SERVICE (MHCFS)

WGPC Recommendation One: "The City Council should implement a response model by mental health professionals for the Laramie Police Department with the ability to consult with the Albany County Mental Health Board on this endeavor. The City should support a collaborative effort with the County on mental health response."

- The City has collaborated with the County as an active member of the Albany County Mental Health Board since its inception in 2017. The City of Laramie Police Department is the City’s primary representative, along with County officials and private and non-profit partners, all of whom are engaged collaboratively across the spectrum of mental health responses and services throughout the broader community.
- In 2021 the Mental Health Board formed an Alternative Response Subcommittee, of which the Chief of Police is a member. This subcommittee is actively considering alternative response options which may include co-responder or “in place of” responses.
- As the Subcommittee is made up of mental health professionals, academic professionals, behavioral health personnel, and mental health advocates it would be premature to implement the WGPC’s recommendation at this time.

➤ **If this WGPC matter is accepted, Staff recommend City Council refer to the Mental Health Board for consideration within the context of their work.**

WGPC Recommendation Two: “The City Council should prioritize work on mental health response opportunities for the Laramie Police Department and these efforts should involve data collection and program evaluation as allowed by law. The City Council should explore partnering with the University of Wyoming on data collection and program evaluation.”

- At this time, data collection is underway with a survey of LPD sworn personnel in December 2021 to evaluate their perceptions of existing mental health services and response capability in Laramie. The survey was developed by the UW professor who sits on the Alternative Response Subcommittee and specializes in response to police mental health calls for service.
- Also at this time, the Alternative Response Subcommittee is collecting data currently from University of Colorado Health network to evaluate possible cost and effectiveness of alternative response models. Ft. Collins PD collaborates with UC Health in a co-responder model and, as Iverson Memorial Hospital is part of UC Health network, we may be able to leverage this data as we consider local alternative response options.

➤ **Staff have no recommendation for City Council with respect to this WGPC matter at this time. Staff work will continue to participate in and support community-based data collection and program evaluation efforts already underway.**

RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT

Recommendation Three: “The City Council and City Manager’s Office should consult with NACOLE to investigate the creation of a Civilian Oversight Board that could function under Wyoming state statute and International City Managers Association guidelines.”

- There are numerous organizations that have conducted meaningful research regarding citizen oversight in addition to NACOLE and ICMA, such as the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the National Institute of Justice to name a few.

- There are fewer than 200 documented civilian oversight boards in the US and over 18,000 police agencies nationwide. Civilian oversight boards are almost always put into place when a police agency is part of a Federal civil rights investigation due to a documented pattern and practice of internal civil rights violations.
- There is no research that points to the effectiveness of oversight boards.
- If a citizen oversight board is intended to have involvement in personnel matters, it will not, under Wyoming law, have the power to control, hire, fire, or discipline members of LPD, nor have access to personnel records.
 - **If this WGPC matter is accepted, Staff recommend City Council allow for all reputable sources of information to be considered and acknowledge openly the relevant legal limitations.**

Recommendation Four: “The City Council should investigate the creation of a police and community committee to serve as a volunteer group to build more effective partnerships between the Laramie Police Department and the community, specifically looking at increasing transparency of Department’s activities. Membership on the committee would include formerly incarcerated individuals and individuals from underserved or otherwise disadvantaged groups within the city. The City Council should collect data to evaluate any program instituted under this recommendation.”

- City of Laramie Police Department is involved actively with many community and stakeholder groups and committees, including but not limited to SAFE Project, COPSSA, Laramie Town & Gown Association, A-Team, UW CARES, LCCC CARES, Probation & Parole, DFS, Drug Court, Child Protection Team, and Adult Protective Services.
- Internal to the City, the Police Department engages with the Civil Service Commission regarding civil service personnel protections and procedures for sworn law enforcement staff. With respect to operational issues, Police Department engages with the LARC Advisory Committee and Traffic Commission.
 - **Staff have no recommendation with regard to this WGPC matter. Staff will continue to support and collaborate with all community agencies.**

Recommendation Five: “The City Council should investigate the creation of a citizen academy. The City Council should collect data to evaluate any program instituted under this recommendation.”

- Laramie Police Department and City Manager support the creation of a citizen academy. Since the mid-1990s, LPD has wanted to create such a program but ongoing staffing constraints, budgetary limitations, and turnover within the Police & Community Services Division have continually limited Staff’s ability to move forward.
- Reductions in State-shared revenue required the City to relinquish the Department of Justice COPS staffing grant a few years ago and, since that time, there has not been capacity to fill the Crime Prevention Officer position. The estimated cost of the position is \$82,000 per annum. If filled, this position could create the program, however, there would still be insufficient staffing

to adequately deliver the program in terms of creating and presenting teaching modules, backgrounds on participant, scheduling, logistics, etc.

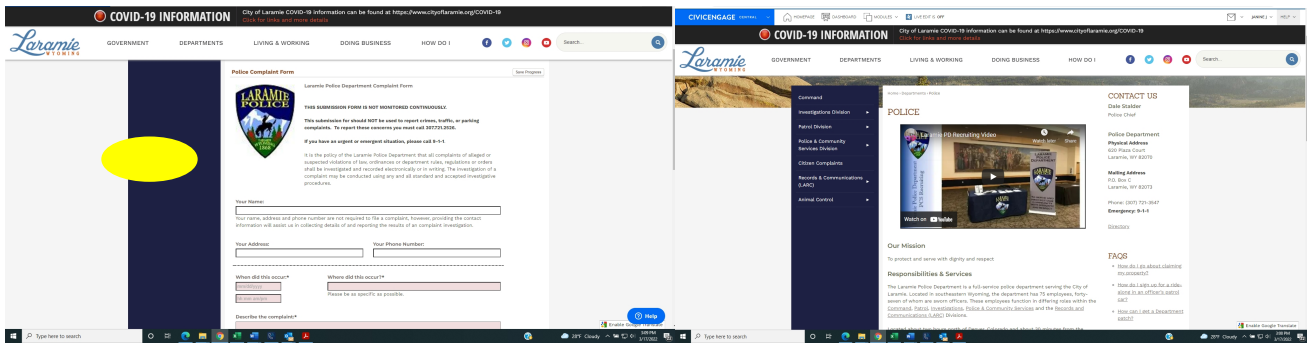
- Research is limited regarding effectiveness of citizen academies.
 - **If this WGPC matter is accepted, Staff recommend City Council make it contingent upon budgetary authorization for additional personnel and stability in major revenue receipts (e.g., 5th Cent General Purpose Tax, State direct distribution). Evaluation of citizen academy effectiveness and outcomes can be performed by Staff but may not be meaningful or statistically valid.**

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

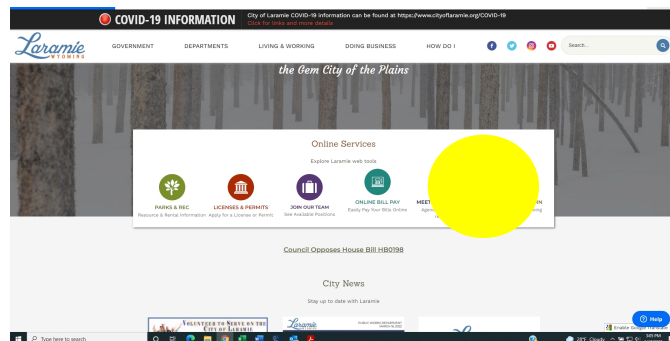
Recommendation Six: “The City Council should investigate a complain process that allows citizens to file complaints outside of the Laramie Police Department.”

- Citizens may submit completely anonymous complaints on the City of Laramie website in two locations:

Under the Police Department section/webpage (<https://cityoflaramie.org/729/Resources-for-the-Community>)



Or, to the City Manager through the “Report a Concern” link (<https://cityoflaramie.org/>)



- Also, citizens can and do make complaints through the City Manager’s Office either in person, by telephone, or email. These complaints can be made anonymously. The City Manager works with the Police Chief for investigation, with follow-up by the City Manager regarding outcomes.

- Complaint investigations can be personnel matters.

➤ **Staff have no recommendation with regard to this WGPC matter.**

Background Information:

On **June 30, 2020**, Council adopted Resolution 2020-38 setting forth objectives with respect to policing services and community relations, In follow-up, on **February 23, 2021**, City Manager, City Attorney and Police Chief provided a research brief to City Council on the use of citizen oversight boards including best practices, strengths and weaknesses of prevalent models, along with a case study and citations to original sources, so that interested persons might explore those materials (<https://www.cityoflaramie.org/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/02232021-1287?html=true>). City Manager further recommended that a knowledgeable panel of residents be convened to provide recommendations to city leadership. A resolution to establish an ad hoc *Working Group for Police & Community (WGPC)* was considered and ultimately adopted by City Council following three public hearings on **March 16, March 30, and April 7, 2021**. Applications were accepted from interested individuals and, on **May 18th, 2021** the City Council appointed members to serve on the WGPC.

The *Working Group for Police & Community* met on fifteen occasions from **June - December 2021**. WGPC hosted three public hearings in accordance with the authorizing resolution. All meetings were independently facilitated by the professional team trained in mediation and arbitration. In total, WGPC met for roughly 30 hours over the course of five months to consider Laramie’s policing practices/policies, legal framework, service statistics and to receive comment from members of the public. The WGPC’s complete body of work is available on the city website (<https://cityoflaramie.org/agendacenter> ☞ *Ad Hoc Working Group for Police & Community*).

On **February 8, 2022** the WGPC presented six recommendations to the City Council in a public meeting. All members of the working group were voting members as per the authorizing resolution, except for those serving in a liaison role. Each of the six recommendations were discussed and voted upon individually by the members of the WGPC.

Responsible Staff:

City Manager’s Office, LPD, City Attorney’s Office

Attachments:

WGPC Recommendations
Draft Resolution 2022-20