



Approved

**CITY OF YPSILANTI
POLICE ADVISORY COMMISSION
TOWN HALL
THURSDAY, JANUARY 24, 2019
7:00 P.M.
YPSILANTI SENIOR CENTER**

I. WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 7:11 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL:

COMMISSIONERS:

Andy Fanta	Present
Heather Freeling	Present
Kathleen McCormick	Present
Susan Melke	Present
Herman Humes	Present
Gail Wolkoff	Present

STAFF LIASION:

Police Chief Tony DeGuisti	Present
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MODERATOR:

Anne Brown

Mayor Bashert thanked the Commission for the invitation to attend this Town Hall. She stated this Commission is appointed by City Council, each commissioner takes an oath of office and the position is unpaid. This is one of the city's newest commissions developed in response to the Black Lives Matter movement and acts as advisory body to City Council.

III. FORMAT

Commission Chair Andy Fanta explained the format of the Town Hall.

The Commission introduced themselves, and provide a synopsis of their background.

IV. QUESTION AND ANSWER - COMMENTS

A member of the audience expressed concern regarding recent activity at the transit center, and asked what is being done to find a solution. Chief DeGiusti explained this type of activity is not new to the transit center. Several community groups are collaborating to resolve the situation. However, there is potential the activity would just move to another location. The audience member stated it is important to find out the neighborhood the kids are coming from, and make contact with their parents. Commissioner Wolkoff stated basic communication is needed. The member of the audience asked for the Chief to make an

address on social media. Moderator Anne Brown stated pastors have been asking for a social media presence.

A member of the audience asked if the Commission has considered requesting subpoena powers. Chief DeGiusti responded it would be a personnel issue, and there are state and federal guidelines. Commissioner Wolkoff added this is a new commission and if she stays on the commission she would like its role to expand. Commissioner Humes stated he needs more information about community needs, before requesting an expansion of commission roles. Commissioner McCormick stated this commission was created to act at an advisory capacity to Council. Commissioner Fanta stated he is not certain why this commission would require subpoena power. The ordinance adopted that created this commission outlines its purpose. He sees nothing but a positive benefit from trying to raise visibility in the community. Council Member Nicole Brown stated she was on Council when this commission was created. Union contracts would not allow this commission to have subpoena power. Council has subpoena power, and depending on negotiations there might be potential amendments to the ordinance.

Council Member Brown asked what the commission would like to do. Commissioner McCormick responded she understands there is a shortage of officers in the Police Department. Commissioner Fanta echoed budgetary concerns.

Commissioner Fanta asked for an explanation of a police ride along. Chief DeGiusti responded 70% of an officers job is service related, the other 30% is law enforcement. He clarified a police officer acts as a 'social worker' on wheels. Mr. Fanta explained during his ride along he witnessed a mental health situation.

Moderator Anne Brown asked for the top three calls the Police Department receives. Chief DeGiusti responded theft from a car, mental health issues, and violent crime. Ms. Brown asked about the mental health crisis center. Chief DeGiusti replied the facility would be located at Towne Center.

Commissioner Fanta clarified he does not think local youth are up to no good, they just have more time on their hands. He explained there is empirical evidence that youth of color have the police called on them more than white youths.

Commissioner Wolkoff stated she respects there is a need for more officers, and these officers need training for mental health crisis training. However, there needs to be a network in place, solutions to needs are splintered and there is a need for greater connectivity.

Moderator Brown asked how the department feels about having only twenty-six officers. Chief DeGiusti replied there are two to three cars on the street at all times. Commissioner McCormick stated much of her family were police officers. When they were police officers times were different, and when a youth got into trouble they were not arrested. They were brought to their parents to be punished.

A member of the audience asked if there are six to seven officers on each shift. Chief DeGiusti replied there are three cars on the road. Moderator Brown asked how the limited staff affects the officers. An audience member asked if EMU Police assist. Chief DeGiusti replied EMU Police do not take calls but they do provide backup.

Council Member Wilcoxon stated Council is in the goal setting process, and is aware of staffing shortages at all levels.

Commissioner Freeling stated she worked as a Police Officer in Las Vegas and there were hundreds of Police Officers. She cannot imagine being an officer with only twenty-five others on staff.

Moderator Brown asked for clarification of the police complaint form. Chief DeGiusti responded the complaint process is very robust. There are many avenues to submit the form, and it can be done anonymously. He wants a complaint to be submitted if there is an issue so he can address the problem.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

VI. CONCLUDING REMARKS

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.