



Approved

**CITY OF YPSILANTI
POLICE-COMMUNITY RELATIONS/BLACK LIVES MATTER
JOINT TASK FORCE MINUTES
MONDAY, JULY 11, 2016 - 7:00 P.M.
YPSILANTI HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM
2095 PACKARD STREET, YPSILANTI, MI 48197**

I. CALL TO ORDER –

The meeting was called to order at 7:12 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL –

TASK FORCE

Council Member Nicole Brown, Chair	Present
HRC Commissioner Jennifer Symanns	Present
Council Member Anne Brown	Present
HRC Commissioner John Shuler, Co-Chair	Present
Council Member Brian Robb	Present
HRC Commissioner Theresa Saunders	Present

III. INVOCATION –

Council Member Nicole Brown asked all to stand for a moment of silence.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE –

"I pledge allegiance to the flag, of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

V. AGENDA APPROVAL –

Council Member Anne Brown moved, seconded by Commissioner Shuler to approve the agenda.

On a voice vote, the motion carried, and the agenda was approved as submitted.

VI. MINUTES

— June 13, 2016

Council Member Anne Brown moved, seconded by Council Member Symanns.

On a voice vote, the motion carried, and the minutes were approved as submitted.

VII. OVERVIEW/BACKGROUND –

- Task Force Committee

Council Member Nicole Brown stated the term “Black Lives Matter” does not mean other lives do not matter, it means that black lives have been, and continue to be oppressed. Ms. Nicole Brown said African Americans are 30% more likely to be pulled over and shot two times as much as white individuals. Ms. Nicole Brown said African and Hispanics consist of half of the prison population in the United States. Ms. Nicole Brown said the City’s interest in this meeting and process has been remarkable. Ms. Nicole Brown stated the Task Force was formed in September of 2015 and is comprised of members from the Human Relations Commission and City Council. Ms. Nicole Brown said the Task Force created a more simple citizens complaint form which is to more easily submit. Ms. Nicole Brown said with extensive citizen input a list of trainings officers would need in order to do their jobs effectively. Ms. Nicole Brown said the Task Force submitted a memo to the Police Chief who has already been working on updates to officer training. Ms. Nicole Brown said the Task Force has been researching best practices in communities that use citizen review boards and an update will be provided later in the meeting.

- Law Enforcement

Police Chief DeGiusti stated he is very appreciative of all the participation. Chief DeGiusti said he has been asked to discuss three things; Washtenaw Safety Alliance, body cameras, and training. Chief DeGiusti said in November 2013 the Eastern Washtenaw County Safety Alliance began in its most basic form. Chief DeGiusti said at that time a young EMU student was murdered and as a result the Sheriff’s Department, EMU Police, the City of Ypsilanti, and Ypsilanti Township met and discussed how things can be made safer. Chief DeGiusti said the street officers have always worked together but the alliance created a partnership at the strategic and administrative levels. Chief DeGiusti said last summer there was gang activity in the Township and part of the City and because of this partnership the involved departments were quickly able to marshal its resources and began performing shared patrols. Chief DeGiusti said the alliance basically breaks down jurisdictional boundaries and provides the opportunity to share information. Chief DeGiusti said in March of 2014 the YPD began looking into the use of body cameras. Chief DeGiusti said the body cameras were purchased in December of 2014 and a video upgrade which included software, server and storage capacity. Chief DeGiusti cautioned that body cameras have a limited view and focus. Chief DeGiusti said training without backing it up with the proper research and implementation can become useless. Chief DeGiusti said officers can go through an abundance of training but if the training is not applied properly it is a waste of time and money. Chief DeGiusti said the best way to ensure training is applied properly is with agency culture and the Police Department’s goal is to treat everyone with dignity and respect. Chief DeGiusti said a brand new officer receives 594 hours of training at the Police Academy which include an 8 hour block of cultural awareness training. Chief DeGiusti said once with the force officers receive annual training in legal update, firearms, blood borne pathogens, first aid and CPR, policy and procedure, cultural awareness, special response teams, K-9 maintenance training, and once an officer is promoted to Lieutenant they attend EMU’s School of Police Staff and Command. Chief DeGiusti said officers also receive training on Alzheimer awareness; handling emotionally disturbed persons, domestic violence response, interviewing techniques, evidence technician, and any other possible specialty schools. Chief DeGiusti said the Department also has trainings planned for implicit bias and handling of mental health crisis. Chief DeGiusti said a Crisis Intervention Team will also be formed which will include selected officers and a mental health professional. Chief DeGiusti said the Police Department is always trying to improve and provide the community with the best service it can. 107

VIII. DISCUSSION ITEMS –

1. Community Oversight/ Citizen Review Board
 - a. Sub-Committee Report

Police-Community Relations/ Black Lives Matter Joint Task Force
July 11, 2016

Council Member Anne Brown stated the Citizens Review Board sub-committee consists of herself, Commissioner Symanns, Commissioner Shuler, D'Real Graham, Mayor Pro-Tem Richardson, and Reverend Denese Brown. Ms. Anne Brown stated thus far the sub-committee has reviewed the National Black Lives Matter recommendations, the current Ypsilanti Police Department Practices, the local Black Lives Matter recommendations, and best practices throughout the country for community oversight commissions. Ms. Anne Brown said the sub-committee will be returning to the task force with a list of areas of concern and a nine point plan for either implementation or further discussion.

Council Member Dan Vogt stated there is a City Millage going to be on the ballot on August 2nd. Mr. Vogt said the millage is an attempt to protect City services. Mr. Vogt said this millage would be a replacement for an expiring road millage and would not cause an increase in taxes. Mr. Vogt said the millage would be used to pay the Water Street debt and the General Fund could be used to maintain City services. Mr. Vogt said if the millage does not pass there will need to be significant cuts to city services. Mr. Vogt said in order to attract minority and female police officers which can be difficult because those officers are in high demand. Mr. Vogt said if the millage is not passed and the Police Department funding is cut it will be less likely Ypsilanti will be able to attract minority and female officers. Mr. Vogt said the millage will allow the City to pay off the Water Street debt and free dollars to be spent on City services. Mr. Vogt said it will allow the City to balance the budget for the first time in years and is extremely important.

Washtenaw County Sheriff Jerry Clayton stated he is glad so many are in attendance for an issue of great importance. Sheriff Clayton said the community and the nation have been traumatized not just in the last few days but the last few years. Sheriff Clayton said since he took office the tenants he wanted the Washtenaw County Sheriffs to follow were to treat all people with dignity and respect. Sheriff Clayton said there is a perception that effective law enforcement hinders treating people with respect, and he disagrees. Sheriff Clayton said the Sheriff's Department is in the middle of a citizen's review of use of force, or subject control. Sheriff Clayton said a new series of trainings have begun focusing on enhancing interpersonal interactions. Sheriff Clayton said the goal of this training is when a person has contact with police all parties involved leave whole in the physical and psychological sense. Sheriff Clayton said the police's legitimacy comes from the public and the only way to receive that legitimacy is to treat people correctly. Sheriff Clayton said police are not perfect and they can make mistakes but they are willing to own up to their mistakes and have a willingness to fix them.

IX. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION –

1. Jasmine Stout stated the Police Department should be more engaged in the community because it is important to bridge the gap between the police and the public. She added anger management techniques should be trained to officers.
2. Brian Griffin stated he was a Corrections Officer and suggested de-escalation training be given to officers. He added the public has no issues with officers wanting to go home to their families each day but the African American community does not want the end game to be death.
3. Jennifer Grunzel stated she is in public service and individuals in public safety work long shifts in stressful situation and the mental health of officers should be of great concern. She said the Sheriff wants to do what is right but what is right is subjective. She said the police should work with partners because more eyes watching provide a greater oversight of the behavior of officers. She said providing officers with paid time off and a person they can speak to would help with emotional issues of the job.
4. Shar Paul stated her son has a black life that matters applauded the Task Force for holding this meeting but she does not want progress to stop at this meeting. She said her son asked her if he gets pulled over should he turn on his camera right away. She said her 16 year old

son is preparing for getting pulled over just in case and she has reassured him not every police officer is bad. She said she has told her son to comply, respect, and ask questions when speaking with a police officer. She said she has heard a lot of questions and not any answers. She asked what needs to be done to have officers begin to trust again and bring the community together.

5. An audience member stated the only way to end police brutality is unity and love. He said more money is spent on prisons and jails than on schools in this country, making it impossible to succeed. He said do not think minorities join gangs by choice they do it because there is little opportunity in their community. He said change begins in the school and schools need teachers that care.
6. Peter Brown, West Willow, stated police are people and those people have a uniform and gun in order to brutalize minorities. He said he was stuck in the mud and called for a tow truck and by the time it arrived Officer Anderson came to the scene and when AAA came to tow his car Officer Anderson informed them it is a police matter. He said he was accused of drinking and given a sobriety test and after passing the test he was still arrested. He said after a few hours he was taken to St. Joseph's Hospital where he had blood drawn and then returned to the Police Station. He said he requested a phone call and was not allowed one and after a few hours of returning to the Police Station he was released. He said when he was released he was not returned his ID because of this he was unable to retrieve his vehicle from impound. He said when he returned to the Police Station he was given a piece of paper instead of his ID and was informed since he refused a drug test. He said he has never been charged and now St. Joseph's is sending him to collections because he did not pay for the drug test. He said this ordeal has cost him \$1,300 because he had to explain to the Secretary of State that he did not refuse a drug test.

Council Member Nicole Brown asked for the individual's contact information so that she can follow-up with his issue.

7. An audience member asked for the police get involved with the community to gain trust and give respect to community members and get respect in return.
8. Heather stated she lives on the Southside, owns a business in Downtown Ypsilanti, and used to be a Police Officer. She said graduated from EMU in 2007 with a criminal justice degree and worked for EMU Police Department. She said she also worked as a firefighter and an EMT so she has experience in public safety. She said she applauds the police departments for training their officers but you can't train people to not be racist, sexist, or engage in racial profiling. She asked how officers can be hired that live their lives every day with integrity.
9. Miranda Ricor stated she is studying criminology and would like to see prison reform and reform in criminal justice. She said the United States has the highest incarceration rates in the world which is a result of the US war on drugs. She said being incarcerated is dehumanizing and there are many problems inside prisons that the outside public does not see. She said to solve this problem there needs to be serious criminal justice reform.
10. Donita Jones stated she is a mother of three and a grandmother of five and she does not want her grandson growing up afraid of police the way her children were.
11. Tyrone Bridges stated he is a candidate for a Trustee seat in Ypsilanti Township. He said as a former Human Relations Commissioner in the City of Ypsilanti he led the removal of the felony check box on applications and pushed for greater transparency in the complaint process. He said on August 2nd the people need to voice their opinion at the polls and elect

representation that are proactive and not reactive. He said new people need to be elected rather than continually electing the same people over and over again.

12. Latasha Jones stated the Sheriff said officers are being trained to understand how to be in contact with individuals with mental issues and asked if the officers on staff are assessed for any mental issues. She asked where the good police officers are and why are they not speaking for us.
13. An audience member 25 years ago she was 24 with two kids living on welfare and now she has two degrees. She said she has a son and a daughter and both their lives matter. She said she is sick of the divisions that occur in society. She said there must be honest discussions in order for change to occur. She said when she was younger people were not afraid of the police but today that is not the case.
14. Brook Hoffman, 321 South St., stated she would like the Task Force to address what cultural competency training involves and asked if the syllabus for the training could be posted. She asked who provided the training and if an officer only needs to sit through 8 hours of training or they can fail.
15. Boomerang Gains stated he started a stop of violence music tour which will be traveling to several states. He said the public cannot allow the media to separate the public and he said this situation boils down to good versus evil. He said not every police officer is bad and asked that people think about how the police feel when an officer kills a person. He said when that happens every other cop is blamed which isn't fair. 10719
16. Alexandra stated that a change starts with the youth being engaged and learning to understand the police more. She suggests that different programs can be put in place to help children and parents who cannot make ends meet.
17. Briana Watson stated she is afraid for her younger brother, and previously had a bad encounter with the police. She believes that citizens should know their rights and know that one is not compelled to speak to the police.
18. Anthony Morgan stated police are not the enemy, and people must be critical thinkers. He said the police are limited and the people have not inspired the police to do anything. Morgan asked about the timeline, agenda, and purpose of the task force.
19. Salany Williams stated police do not spend enough time training to become an officer, and they should spend more time doing so.
20. Tanya Wallace stated her nephew was accused of stealing. She said police were hostile toward the young man and asked why they were so hostile. She then asked if departments know which of their police officers have gone rogue. She added officers should be held accountable for their actions.
21. An audience member stated he/she is tired of seeing African Americans being killed by police, and is angry about the Minnesota shooting. He/she added they are tired of fearing because of their skin color.
22. An audience member stated the Texas killing were perpetrated by a young man who was not deprogrammed from being in the military service and he saw the police as the enemy because that is the way the media has been portraying them.

23. William Mills stated he has had nothing but bad experiences with the police. He does not feel like he can trust them, and said the police have never helped him in his life. He asked if giving out tickets were really about helping the community or if it is just a way to collect more money.
24. An audience member stated the Sheriff was on his phone and not listening.
25. Shane stated he is not dependent on the police and now has to depend more on the neighborhood and friends when in need of help.
26. Karen Baker stated African Americans do not have the same privilege as Caucasian Americans. She added people need to be more comfortable talking about the fact that African Americans do not have the same privilege as everyone else.
27. Nathan Phillips stated he called the police for an incident, but they did not help him. He was falsely accused of stealing a lawnmower and was assaulted by the police.
28. Sam stated this is not a good place of a campaign for the millage. He added there is not cultural competency, and officers do not live in Ypsilanti. He stated the first part of community policing is making sure officers actually live in the neighborhood. He stated he is angry at the meeting and asked where the police public response is.
29. Sabrina stated well placed cultural competency training does work and is optimistic that people of different colors will be able to easily have conversations with one another about race.
30. Carla stated we need to find quick and easy ways to fix the task force. She stated her thirteen year old son was confronted by the police because they said he looked suspicious while he waited to go to school. She added the police put her son into the car and took him to school without notifying anyone. She stated she had to explain to her son that he can be in danger even when he is not reaching for anything. She said there was no community building to show that the police would keep everyone safe.
31. An audience member asked what Caucasians can do to help the situation. He/she added people should stop calling the police because someone looks suspicious. They asked if someone could explain what suspicion actually looks like.
32. Gail Waldooff proclaimed that Ypsilanti needs to do better with their education. She asked where the bridge is between the city and Ypsilanti schools. Gail stated that the Ypsilanti education system does not work and the number of graduates must increase. She stated things cannot continue as normal when normal is violence.
33. Donna Jones stated she is tired of there being certain rules that African Americans must follow while dealing with police that other races do not seem to have to follow. She stated police must stop treating African Americans like the enemy.
34. Courtney stated parents need to do a better job raising their children. She added parents should know if their child has anger issues they should help them deal with it properly, and they should raise their children to become well-adjusted adults.
35. Toya stated that with a lack of understanding culture, police let their fear get the better of them, which causes them to act a certain way toward minorities. She stated there is not enough teaching for white people on minority cultures to get them away from their fear. She

suggested that people should get to know everyone and should try not to believe everything they hear on the media. She added we must stop letting the media divide us with hot button issues.

36. Jackson stated the system is not broken and is going exactly the way it should be going. He added the system was established to hold minorities down.
37. Wanda Robinson stated people's values are not tied to their productivity, and many African Americans are productive citizens to society. She added people in institutions believe that Black Lives do not Matter, and said institutions that put out Blue Live Matter have given safety nets to those killing blacks.
38. Tori stated that the community cannot trust that police officers.
39. LaQuisha Johnson stated she wore a Black Lives Matter badge to work to show this matter should not be taken lightly. She added she wants to make people feel as uncomfortable as minorities currently feel. She stated the problem is not how the police view African Americans, but how the world views African Americans. She added people should be looked at as people and not by their race.
40. Emmanuel Chatman stated as a police officer, one must think outside of the box to better help understand the community. He believes the taskforce can get things done that need to be done and added that no one will ever be okay with a person who has never experienced the culture they are trying to police.
41. Norette stated that in order to get anything done, we need to pray.
42. An audience member stated that when the taskforce was started, he/she sent an email and video about citizens being intimidated, and no one on the task force said they watched it. He/she stated that most of the community knew what was happening, and asked why efforts were not made to let those in the community know what was taking place. They added it's like the taskforce does not want to get involved.
43. Randy said he is scared and last week was the hardest part of his life. He stated he told those behind the movement to stay with it. He said they he came looking for answers and encouraged all artists to inspire. He added everyone should use their abilities to uplift the community.
44. Simmons stated that there is a lot of talk about cultural humility, but he believes it needs to be a general mindset change. He said we think one set of justice is acceptable, and that is part of the problem. He added, just because police can shoot -- they must make the decision to do otherwise and remove themselves from the situation. He said police officers should be first responders.
45. Trishay expressed the troubles he went through in the Police Department, and they did not acknowledge him. He said they should treat everyone like real people.
46. Mayor Edmonds thanked everyone for attending and stated there will be a class this fall called "Examining Whiteness". She added it is a good place for many of us to start.
47. Olson stated our non-profit has a lot of kids, but not a lot of volunteers.

48. An audience member stated it is one thing to talk in a meeting like this, but engagement needs to happen at other places like the church, store, work, etc. They stated they are a Park Commissioner because they want to see everyone engaged with one another. They stated we need more than just the taskforce.
49. Jason stated people can do anything to be engaged as long as they are spreading the love. He asked what the taskforce was doing about violence and how one can build trust when the taskforce lies to people. He then asked how much is being spent on guns instead of training.
50. Darius stated he has been in Ypsilanti for two years and there is a fear that there is no accountability of what is happening. He stated that the community wants to know when things go wrong and asked what the repercussions are. He added justice should not happen just for some people, but for everyone. Darius stated white people should take action and film the wrong actions made by police officers rather than just allowing it to happen. He added that white people should take a stand.
51. Joanne stated she saw Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X, etc. so she knows there is prejudice and racism. She added that we must do something about what is going on.
52. Aly stated she and her husband are foster parents of two African American boys. She stated they are facing felony and misdemeanor charges for something minor and that no one cares what she is going through. She added her boys are not with her and that scares her.

X. CHAIR RESPONSE –

None

XI. ADJOURNMENT –

Commissioner Shuler moved, seconded by Council Member Anne Brown, to adjourn the meeting.

On a voice vote, the motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 10:18 p.m.