

## VILLAGE OF COOPERSTOWN

### Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative 4 November 2020 - Meeting Summary Community Advisory Board

#### 1. CAB Members:

Ellen Tillapaugh, Mayor VOC

Jeanne Dewey, Trustee VOC, Public Safety Committee

Dr. Richard Sternberg, Trustee VOC, Chr. Public Safety Committee

Chief Frank Cavilieri, Cooperstown Police Dept

Senior Officer, James Kelman, Cooperstown Police Dept

\*Bruce Maxson, Assist. Public Defender

Rev. Dane Boston, Rector, Cooperstown Episcopal Church

Dr. Richard Brown, Psychiatrist, Bassett Medical Center

Adam Richter, Bassett-Columbia Medical Student

\*Veronica Pokorny, Communication – Paperkite Creative

\*Dr. Anush Patel, Oncologist, Bassett Medical Center

[\* = unable to attend]

2. We noted the Friends of Village Library series of programs – Cooperstown Reflects on Racism. The link to the recordings of the programs was previously shared via email.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC55qfGwnH4Z0zVezDitur2Q>

This Anti-Racism Program Series will continue in January. Mayor Tillapaugh and Chief Cavilieri will be on the January 13<sup>th</sup> panel at 7 pm via Zoom at which the topic is Law Enforcement. We will be discussing Gov. Cuomo's Executive Order and reviewing the progress of the Community Advisory Board.

3. Prior to the meeting, the CPD Use of Force policy as well as a New Orleans use of force policy were once again shared via email with CAB members. We planned to begin review of the Policy, but have deferred that until our November 18<sup>th</sup> meeting.

4. Since our last CAB meeting, the nation again witnessed a police shooting of a black man. On October 26, 2020 Walter Wallace, Jr. was fatally shot by two Philadelphia police officers. Wallace was experiencing a mental health crisis and was armed with a knife.

Because so much of our CAB discussion has focused on mental health issues, police training and community policing, and in light of the death of Walter Wallace, Jr., Chief Cavilieri had arranged a showing of a video depicting a non-lethal interaction with an individual armed with a knife and suffering a mental health crisis.

The body camera video was from a May 24, 2018 incident involving the Grand Rapids Police Department. This is the link to that video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AI2mF8MasGc>

As we viewed the video, Chief Cavilieri paused the footage, to highlight techniques which enabled a positive outcome; police kept their distance (distance = time - precluding the need for rapid decisions); they were armed with a non-lethal weapon, a bean bag gun with red markings; they talked to the individual, asking their name, encouraging them to drop the knife; only when the individual became agitated and was swinging the knife did they fire the bean bags; officers had a plan and worked together.

CAB members had an excellent discussion and question session following the video.

- Could tasers have been used? Officers would have needed to be much closer, around 10 feet.
- How long does a taser incapacitate? It is a 5 second cycle. After the cycle normal function returns.
- Why are individuals repeatedly tased? Poor officer training. It is a 5 second cycle and officers need to move in quickly in that time to disarm the individual.
- Are there risks from a taser? Yes, if someone has an underlying health/heart condition there could be serious complications.
- Do tasers work? Studies have shown that if someone is on certain drugs (PCP) they are not incapacitated by a taser. A taser won't penetrate thick clothing. Also a taser is an escalation weapon. If it doesn't work, then the next weapon could be a gun.
- Does the bean bag cause bruising? Yes, it causes a black and blue mark. It is used on extremities (legs).

Frank noted that anytime a weapon, and that include a police baton is removed from its holster, even if it is not used, a use of force reporting form has to be completed. He will provide information on that when we discuss and review the Use of Force policy at our next meeting.

[The footage of the Walter Wallace, Jr. shooting was not available or viewed when we met, but was later made public] – here is a link:

<https://www.cnn.com/videos/us/2020/11/05/walter-wallace-jr-body-cam-footage-philadelphia-police-shooting-llr-lc-lon-orig.cnn>

Next meetings: 5 pm Ballroom/Village Hall Nov 18, Dec 2, Dec 16, Jan 6, Jan 20,  
[1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays]