



INTEROFFICE MEMO

DATE: April 9, 2024

TO: La Mesa City Council
City Manager, Greg Humora
Chief of Police, Raymond Sweeney

FROM: Leroy Johnson, Community Police Oversight Board Chair

SUBJECT: 2023 Community Police Oversight Board Annual Report

Overview

The City Council created the La Mesa Community Police Oversight Board (CPOB) on October 13, 2020, with the City Council's approval of the Ordinance adding Chapter 2.30 to the Municipal Code. The initial meeting of the CPOB was held on February 17, 2021, followed by semi-monthly meetings on the first and third Wednesdays of each month during its first year of service.

The purpose of the CPOB is to serve as a liaison between the community and the La Mesa Police Department (LMPD) on matters of public safety and to advise the Chief of Police, Mayor, City Council, and City Manager on the administration of public safety duties within the City. This work includes but is not limited to:

- Directing and reviewing audits of internal investigations,
- Reviewing and recommending policies, practices, and programs,
- Promoting and encouraging open communication and cooperation between LMPD and residents, and
- Informing the community of its rights and responsibilities regarding the complaint and conflict resolution process involving LMPD officers.

The work of the CPOB is designed to affirm the La Mesa Police Department's ongoing commitment to policing that is fair, impartial, and objective in meeting the needs of the City and its residents.

Membership

The CPOB consists of eleven voting members who are current residents of the City of La Mesa. The categories of representation are:

- A representative from each of the four police beats
- A representative from each of the four communities: faith-based, business, young adult (18-30 years of age), and older adult (62+ years of age)
- Representatives from Helix Charter High School and the La Mesa-Spring Valley School District
- An advocate for people experiencing homelessness, substance abuse, mental health, or other social issues

Introduction

As delineated by the CPOB Ordinance, the CPOB is tasked with a number of responsibilities that include working with the City and the Chief of Police to make recommendations regarding LMPD policies, procedures, and practices. These duties include recommendations for training programs, hiring, promotions, internal investigations, de-escalation training, in-service training, and other areas of policing appropriate for review. Over the past year, the CPOB has worked to develop and maintain productive working relationships with LMPD Command Staff, the La Mesa Police Officers' Association (POA), the City, and community stakeholders to support its mission. As reflected in the following section, the CPOB has focused its efforts on ensuring that the community is represented in decisions that influence LMPD operations. The CPOB has and will continue to maintain a dialogue with the Chief of Police and LMPD Command Staff, the Independent Police Auditor (IPA), and the CPOB counsel to continue this work.

Summary of 2023 Accomplishments

The CPOB has worked with the City Manager's Office and LMPD to develop an Annual Workplan to organize its workload and ensure compliance with the adopted City Council Ordinance. The CPOB achieved the following accomplishments during 2023:

1. Ongoing collection of baseline data through an informal survey to assess information to measure community perceptions about the LMPD and subsequently compare this information over time. Presentation of survey results to date given at the September 20, 2023 CPOB meeting.
2. Participation on selection panels to interview candidates for LMPD command staff positions including the Department Captain and Lieutenant positions.
3. Continuation of ongoing continuing education for all CPOB members on matters related to:
 - Confidentiality of Police-related records
 - LMPD Policies and Procedures
 - Community Oriented Policing
 - Emergency Operations and Communications

- LMPD hiring practices and employee wellness
 - Workshops and seminars presented by the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE)
 - Brown Act and Roberts Rules of Order
4. Dissemination of an internship application and program for youth ages 16-22.
 5. Dissemination of information to the public regarding access to the complaint process form and flow chart.
 6. Collaboration with the IPA to develop a quarterly reporting process.
 7. Collection of research on various crime prevention and social service strategies.
 8. Participation in the Chief's community outreach efforts by promoting the series of Community Conversations to residents and stakeholders.
 9. Continued work of the three subcommittees to develop reports and offer recommendations that are focused on:
 - a. Community Policing and Outreach
 - b. Hiring Practices, Promotions, and Officer Wellness Programs
 - c. Policies, Operations and Training
 10. Development and approval of the 2023 Annual Report to City Council, Chief of Police, City Manager, and Independent Police Auditor.

2024 Work Plan

Over the next year, the CPOB plans to continue building upon its successful foundation by pursuing additional opportunities to partner with the LMPD towards achievement of the following:

1. Continue working with the Chief of Police to engage in the LMPD hiring process whenever possible. Offer recommendations to the Chief of Police regarding the hiring processes, procedures, exams, and interview questions.
2. Provide recommendations on officer trainings, procedures, and policies including alternative social service and crime-prevention policies and strategies.
3. Work with the Chief of Police, LMPD, and subject matter experts to analyze data submitted to the Department of Justice through the Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA). Utilize this data, along with supplemental information received through the

CPOB's survey, to make informed recommendations to the Chief regarding best practices.

4. Collaborate with the IPA to review audits of LMPD investigations on a quarterly basis and ensure the adopted complaint manual is accessible to the community.
5. Receive ongoing training and updates regarding various aspects of police work; participate in ride-alongs and other hands-on training opportunities to understand policing procedures and laws that will inform the CPOB's role in making recommendations to the Chief of Police.
6. Promote the CPOB intern application process and select an intern for the Youth Internship Program.
7. Work with the Chief and Police Officer's Association to promote the mediation program. Work with the IPA, the City staff, the Chief, and the Police Officers Association to select an unbiased mediator for the mediation program.
8. Engage with members of the media and City leaders to showcase various new and valuable programs at the LMPD. Assist and recommend in identifying and developing programs for greater community outreach to schools, non-profits, faith communities, and other local groups. Work with the City to review, evaluate, and implement outreach and messaging strategies that showcase the work of the CPOB and the LMPD.
9. Explore opportunities for recommending improvements to employee wellness, especially as it relates to mental health and stress, and address community public safety concerns regarding health and wellness of the public.
10. Work with the Chief of Police to review and implement trainings such as implicit bias and age-appropriate interactions provided to LMPD and to the CPOB.
11. Provide semi-annual and annual reports to the La Mesa City Council and City Manager.

CPOB Ad-Hoc Subcommittees

In compliance with the CPOB Ordinance, three Ad-Hoc Subcommittees were established by the Chairperson in 2023 to offer recommendations on key areas of emphasis of the CPOB. The ad-hoc subcommittees are as follows:

- CPOB Ad-Hoc Subcommittee on Community Policing and Outreach

- CPOB Ad-Hoc Subcommittee on Hiring Practices, Promotions and Officer Wellness Programs
- CPOB Ad-Hoc Subcommittee on Policies, Operations and Training

In 2023, the Ad-Hoc Subcommittee on Policies, Operations and Training conducted meetings with representatives from the Police Officers Association to continue working on a mediation policy. The meetings, facilitated by City staff, were productive and the new mediation policy for the La Mesa Police Department was approved by City Council in 2023.

Moving forward, the three ad-hoc subcommittees will convene meetings in 2024 and continue to work in their areas of emphasis. Future subcommittee reports will be included in the Annual Report as necessary.