



REPORT to the MAYOR and MEMBERS of the CITY COUNCIL  
From the CITY MANAGER

DATE: February 22, 2022

SUBJECT: Community Police Oversight Board Annual Report

ISSUING DEPARTMENT: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

SUMMARY:

Issue:

Should the City Council receive the Community Police Oversight Board Annual Report?

Recommendation:

The City Council should receive the Community Police Oversight Board Annual Report.

Fiscal Impact:

There is no fiscal impact associated with the recommended action.

Strategic Goals:

- Safe Community
- Continue to Improve High Quality Municipal Services

BACKGROUND:

On September 15, 2020, the City Council adopted Ordinance 2020-2881 establishing the Community Police Oversight Board (CPOB). Since its first meeting in February 2021, staff has worked with the CPOB to complete essential tasks necessary to ensure its effective operation. These activities included adopting Bylaws, drafting an Annual Work Plan, hiring an Independent Police Auditor, and developing Policies and Procedures in the CPOB Ordinance.

DISCUSSION:

La Mesa Municipal Code Section 2.30.110 requires that the CPOB draft and issue public reports regarding its activities. Specifically, Section 2.30.100 subdivisions (g)(1) through (g)(5) and (h) direct the CPOB to issue public reports related to the following: policies and procedures on training, hiring and promotions, training as to internal investigations, in-service trainings, de-escalation techniques, implicit bias, community-oriented policing, and other appropriate areas of policing and training.

To implement direction provided in the CPOB Ordinance, the CPOB formed Subcommittees focusing on the required elements of the Annual Report. The Subcommittees were comprised of representatives from the CPOB and the Independent Police Auditor. The Subcommittees also included representatives of La Mesa Police Department command staff to address technical questions about police department operations and training.

The attached Annual Report includes a cover memo summarizing the CPOB's efforts over the past year and highlighting proposed efforts over the next year. The Annual Report also includes the individual Subcommittee Reports with specific recommendations regarding community policing and outreach, policies, operations and training, emergency operations and communications, and hiring practices, promotions, and officer wellness.

In advance of this item, staff provided the entire Annual Report to the Police Officer's Association (POA). The POA President reported to staff that the POA Board reviewed the CPOB Annual Report and had no additional comments. The CPOB also provided the report to the Chief of Police for his review and comment.

Reviewed by:



Greg Humora  
City Manager

Respectfully submitted by:



Carlo Tomaino  
Assistant City Manager



DATE: February 22, 2022

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

FROM: Janet Castaños, Community Police Oversight Board Chair

SUBJECT: Community Police Oversight Board Annual Report

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### 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 focused its first-year efforts on creating a sound foundation by which to effectuate the City Council's direction and ensure 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 into the next year.

## **Summary of 2021 Accomplishments**

Since its first meeting, the CPOB 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 the first year of service:

1. Completion of administrative setup of CPOB including:
  - Recommendation to City Council to adopt CPOB Bylaws
  - Selection of Chair and Vice-Chair
  - Recommendation to City Council to adopt a Policies and Procedures Manual for the IPA
2. 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.
3. Participation in the selection of the IPA firm Bartlett James LLC with the Professional Services Agreement approved by City Council on July 27, 2021.

4. Participation on selection panels to interview candidates for LMPD command staff positions including the Chief of Police.
5. Completion of introductory training and 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)
6. Creation of an internship application and program for youth ages 16-22.
7. Development and approval of a complaint process form and flow chart and collaboration with the IPA to develop a quarterly reporting process
8. Collection of research on various crime prevention and social service strategies.
9. Participation in the Chief's community outreach efforts by promoting the series of Community Conversations to residents and stakeholders.
10. Analysis and discussion of the Hillard Heintze After-Action Report with the IPA and Chief of Police.
11. Formation of five subcommittees to develop reports and offer recommendations that are focused on:
  - Community Policing and Outreach
  - Policies, Operations, and Training
  - Emergency Operations and Communications
  - Hiring Practices, Promotions, and Officer Wellness
  - Compilation of overall summary report
12. Development and approval of the Annual Report to City Council, Chief of Police, City Manager, and Independent Police Auditor.

## **Proposed 2022 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 and LMPD to implement recommendations made by the After-Action Report.
2. 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.
3. Provide recommendations on officer trainings, procedures, and policies including alternative social service and crime-prevention policies and strategies.
4. Work with the Chief of Police, LMPD, and subject matter experts to analyze data submitted to the Department of Justice through the Racial and Identify 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.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. Select an intern for the Youth Internship Program.
8. Work with the Chief and Police Officer's Association on an alternative complaint resolution program such as mediation program. Work with the IPA, the National Conflict Resolution Center, or other similarly qualified experts as appropriate.
9. Engage with members of the media 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, churches, and other community groups. Work with the City to review, evaluate, and implement outreach and messaging strategies that showcase the work of the CPOB and the LMPD.

10. 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.
11. In conjunction with the City, review the communication plan for all significant pre-planned events within the City, including a flow chart that clearly illustrates the mutual aid response process.
12. Work with the LMPD staff to explore the possibility of having LMPD reinstitute an Explorer Program or youth internships to enhance recruitment.
13. Work with the Chief of Police to review implicit bias training provided to LMPD and also provide this training to the CPOB.
14. Provide semi-annual and annual reports to the La Mesa City Council and City Manager.

#### Summary Findings from CPOB Ad-Hoc Subcommittees

As part of its efforts to comply with direction provided through the CPOB Ordinance, the CPOB Chairperson established five Ad-Hoc Subcommittees each of which were tasked with compiling and drafting specific parts of this Annual Report. The Ad-Hoc Subcommittee reports are attached with the summary. For the City Council's reference, key elements of their summaries include:

- Community Policing and Outreach
  - Emphasis on increasing officer visibility and engagement in the community to enhance relationships and build trust.
  - Implementation of various public safety outreach programs/presentations that will enhance public knowledge and awareness.
  - Importance of implicit bias training to encourage greater understanding of others by becoming more aware of our own unconscious biases.
- Policies, Operations, and Training
  - Continuation of efforts to review and provide recommendations on various departmental policies and procedures.
  - Recommendations and review of various new technologies that will enhance police and public safety accompanied by appropriate trainings in proper use of such equipment.
  - Information collected regarding the selection of a data collection platform to collect and report on Racial Identity and Profiling Act (RIPA) along with appropriate training to effectively use this data.

- Development of new and existing trainings that will enhance officer performance including de-escalation, Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT) trainings, restorative justice practices, and disability awareness trainings.
- Emergency Operations and Communications
  - Review of Regional Mutual Aid request procedures, Incident Command Structure (ICS) procedures, Emergency Operations Center (EOC) trainings, and Mobile Field Force (MFF) trainings in an effort to adhere to best practices and legal requirements.
  - Recommendations regarding improved communications among police, fire, emergency medical personnel and the general public.
- Hiring Practices, Promotions, and Officer Wellness
  - Participation in the hiring process by community members along with opportunities to recommend improvements to the recruiting and hiring process.
  - Development of various improvements to the officer wellness program that extends to mediation services and collaboration with various health and wellness organizations.
- Compilation of Overall Summary Report

The CPOB is presenting this report in compliance with the reporting requirements established by the City Council. Moving forward, the CPOB will work with the IPA to prepare quarterly reports of complaints and investigations. Concurrently, the CPOB will provide Semi-Annual and Annual Reports to the City Council, City Manager, and Chief of Police. These recommendations are being presented to the City Council, City Manager, and Chief of Police with the intention of continuing to work with LMPD on implementation in 2022.

Attachments:

CPOB Ad-Hoc Subcommittee Reports





DATE: February 22, 2022

TO: Community Police Oversight Board

FROM: Community Police Oversight Board Ad-Hoc Committee on  
Community Policing and Outreach

SUBJECT: Summary Report

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The Community Police Oversight Board (CPOB) Ad-Hoc Committee on Community Policing and Outreach met via Zoom on September 23, 2021 and October 13, 2021. Present at the meetings were: CPOB Member Caitlin Tiffany, CPOB Member Mike McWilliams, Lieutenant Chad Bell (LMPD), and Karisa Croxton (IPA).

Lieutenant Bell provided the committee with an overview of the current La Mesa Police Department practices in the areas of Community Policing and Outreach. The committee discussed the topics and developed several suggestions for inclusion in this summary report. The suggestions are detailed below.

#### **COMMUNITY POLICING AND OUTREACH**

- Deploy Police Officers on bicycles (can be viewed as more approachable).
- At the discretion of the Chief of Police, deploy Police Officers wearing alternate uniforms at community events to make residents feel comfortable interaction with the police department.
- At the discretion of the Chief of Police, deploy Police Officers wearing alternate uniforms while working on school campuses.
- Support Police Officers interacting and getting to know the students at elementary schools (letting the children talk).
- Provide safety classes for children (all different types): bicycle safety classes (riding and theft prevention), warning signs (unhealthy relationships, reaching out for help if something is wrong).
- Inform the community that officers are interested in attending different types of events within the community and then attend those events.
- Seek CPOB assistance with police training course on Implicit Bias when necessary.
- Foster community partnerships with schools, churches, nonprofits, and other organizations.



DATE: February 22, 2022

TO: Community Police Oversight Board

FROM: Community Police Oversight Board Ad-Hoc Committee on  
Hiring Practices, Promotions & Officer Wellness Programs

SUBJECT: Summary Report

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The Community Police Oversight Board (CPOB) Ad-Hoc Committee on Hiring Practices, Promotions and Officer Wellness Programs met via Zoom on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021. Present at the meeting were: CPOB Member Leroy Johnson, CPOB Member Brandon Kertson, Lieutenant Greg Runge (LMPD), and Dennis Montejano (IPA).

Lieutenant Runge provided the committee with an overview of the current La Mesa Police Department practices in the areas of Hiring, Promotions and Officer Wellness. The committee discussed each topic and developed several suggestions for each area for inclusion in this summary report. The suggestions are detailed below.

### **HIRING PRACTICES**

- Invite CPOB members to participate in the oral interviews for police department applicants.
- Seek to obtain demographic data on applicants that pass or fail the various testing elements: written examination, oral interview, physical abilities test, background investigation, psychological examination, and medical examination.
- Provide oral interview questions to the CPOB for review and input.
- Conduct full review of “automatic” and “potentially disqualifying” background issues. Consider adding the following to the list of “automatic” disqualifiers:
  - Found to have posted hate speech on social media. Hate speech is defined as abusive or threatening speech or writing that expresses prejudice on the basis of a protected class, such as ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or gender.
  - Found to have conducted themselves inappropriately or in a manner that discredits the profession, on social media or otherwise within the last five years.
- Research the various options available that satisfy the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) requirements for the psychological examination. Are we losing

good applicants to an outdated evaluation method? Is there an option that is specifically geared towards evaluating police officer candidates that can be utilized instead of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI)? Provide the options to the CPOB and LMPD for review.

- Implement an Internal Referral Bonus Program to attract quality candidates.
- *Recruiting-* Research innovative ways to target a diverse applicant pool. Consider diversity hiring fairs and career events at local universities and community colleges.
- *Recruiting-* Reach out to Administration of Justice programs at Grossmont College and Southwestern College to see if there are any roles (instructor, guest lecturer, career fairs) that LMPD personnel can assist with.
- *Recruiting-* Research possibility of re-instituting an Explorer / Cadet program

### **PROMOTIONS**

- Include CPOB members on promotional panels.
- Involve the CPOB further in the promotional process by giving the board the opportunity to participate in the development of the hiring processes (oral interview questions, practical scenarios, written examinations, etc.).
- Consider developing practical scenarios / events that involve interacting with members of the media.

### **OFFICER WELLNESS PROGRAMS**

- Consider having the members of the LMPD Peer Support Team that are trained in crisis intervention and critical incident debriefings provide support to members of the community that experience trauma.
- Collaborate with the faith-based community to hold Community Wellness Days that would operate similar to the Community Safety Fair- except with a focus on wellness, physical health and mental wellbeing.
- Research whether accessing EAP and/or Peer Support for mental health counseling can be made mandatory for employees that experience crisis or trauma.
- Train a team of employees and the LMPD Chaplain on how to properly deliver a death notification so as to minimize trauma to the community member as well as the employee making the notification.
- Develop data points and a method to reliably track the effectiveness of the Wellness Program.
- Explore collaborating with the National Center for Conflict Resolution (NCRRC) to provide services through their Community Mediation Program.



DATE: February 22, 2022

TO: Community Police Oversight Board

FROM: Community Police Oversight Board Ad-Hoc Committee on  
Policies, Operations & Training

SUBJECT: Summary Report

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The Community Police Oversight Board (CPOB) Ad-Hoc Committee on Policies, Operations & Training met via Zoom on September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021. Present at the meeting were: CPOB Member Ana Fuentes, CPOB Member Bob Duff, Lieutenant Katy Lynch (LMPD), and Bert Nunley (IPA).

Lieutenant Lynch provided the committee with an overview of the current La Mesa Police Department policy revisions, operational matters, and training (both existing and in development) for La Mesa Police Officers. The committee discussed each topic and developed several suggestions for each area for inclusion in this summary report. The discussion points and suggestions are detailed below.

### **DEPARTMENT POLICIES**

- The following revised policies have been reviewed and approved: Use of Force (Policy 300), Public Safety Video Surveillance System (Policy 339), Community Relations (Policy 346), and First Amendment Assemblies (Policy 431). The policy on bias and bias-free policing (Policy 401) is still under review and nearing completion.

### **OPERATIONAL MATTERS**

- The Department purchased 15 additional Body Worn Cameras (BWC's) to ensure each Community Service Officer, Lieutenant, Captain, and the Chief are issued a BWC. All Officers, Detectives, and Sergeants have already been issued BWC's in 2019. The new BWC's, along with the necessary supporting equipment, have been received and are being programmed.
- The Department has established a Mobile Field Force (MFF) Team to address protests and civil unrest. The MFF Team is working to obtain necessary safety equipment to outfit the team. The MFF Team is also training together as a team; this training includes recent legislative changes.
- The Racial Identity and Profiling Act (RIPA) goes into effect for LMPD on January 1, 2023. This means the agency will begin collecting data on January 1, 2022, and submitting data to DOJ on April 1, 2023. After researching numerous options, LMPD has selected "Veritone" as the platform that will be used to collect and report "stop data" to the DOJ. Training on RIPA and the data collection platform will take place

for all officers in November. The Chief will provide reports to the CPOB regarding data collection efforts and outcomes.

## **TRAINING**

- Department training currently includes De-Escalation Training, Principled Policing, Crisis Intervention Training, and PERT (Psychiatric Emergency Response Team) training, in addition to other legislatively mandated related for perishable skills (which includes Tactical Communication).
- The Department is working with the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) to deliver mindfulness training. Through a partnership with UCSD's Center for Mindfulness, the Department is working on developing this training in a format that would be feasible based on staffing and work schedules.
- The Department is working with a professor from UCSD to examine a curriculum entitled "Identity Conscious Policing." This is multi-pronged training related to self-awareness and restorative justice practices.
- The Ad Hoc committee also suggested the possibility of training related to specific disabilities, such as autism. The Department has identified training for law enforcement related to autism and is working to determine the feasibility of presenting that training at LMPD.



DATE: February 22, 2022

TO: Community Police Oversight Board

FROM: Community Police Oversight Board Ad-Hoc Committee on  
Emergency Operations and Communication

SUBJECT: Summary Report

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The Community Police Oversight Board (CPOB) Ad-Hoc Committee on Emergency Operations and Communication met via Zoom on September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Present at the meeting were: CPOB Member Larry Darby, CPOB Member Yashica Sylvester, Captain Matt Nicholass (LMPD), and Bruce Smith (IPA).

Captain Nicholass provided the committee with an overview of the current La Mesa Police Department practices in the areas of Emergency Operations and Communication. The committee discussed each topic and provided suggestions for each area for inclusion in this summary report. The suggestions are detailed below.

### **EMERGENCY OPERATIONS**

- The CPOB members were provided an overview of the assistance (Regional Mutual Aid) request procedures when La Mesa would require backup from other law enforcement agencies. CPOB suggested a flowchart of mutual aid responses that cover small-scale requests of neighboring agencies to large-scale county responses.
- The CPOB members heard scenarios where La Mesa Police would use the Incident Command Structure (ICS). The ICS is the focal point that clearly identifies the roles and responsibilities during large-scale events. It was recommended the police department continually train on ICS to remain proficient.
- The police department regularly reviews policies and procedures related to Emergency Operations and ensures current standards and practices are implemented. There is a commitment to provide adequate training to all users. The police department trains with other city departments, e.g., fire department, public works, etc., and participates in roundtable discussions and practical exercises.
- Members of the police department and City staff attend Emergency Operations Center training hosted by the City's Emergency Preparedness Coordinator to include responses to medical emergencies during a civil crisis.
- Police officers receive Mobile Field Force (MFF) training (e.g., civil unrest) to adhere to current best practices and legal requirements.

## **COMMUNICATION**

- The CPOB members were informed of the radio communication challenges the police department experienced on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020. CPOB has been assured that these challenges have been rectified by enabling encryption in all the police department's handheld police radios. The CPOB members were appreciative that the police department made immediate improvements to their radio system, allowing for encrypted communication through the handheld radios. The CPOB members recommend the police department continue its efforts to also encrypt the vehicle radios.
- Ensure there are adequate radio communication capabilities between police, fire, and emergency medical personnel.
- Have police officers attend the Regional Communication System (RCS) training to improve interoperability knowledge of the radio systems.
- Prepare a Communication Plan for all significant pre-planned events within the city (e.g., Oktoberfest, Helix High School graduation).
- Prepare an Emergency Communications Plan in conjunction with the Fire Department and Communications Manager.