

Citizens Advisory Committee
Regular Meeting | September 1, 2021 - 7:00 p.m.
Troutdale Police Community Center – Kellogg Room
234 SE Kendall Ct, Troutdale, OR 97060

Held in-person and virtually via Zoom

Public comments are welcome at any time during the meeting.

1. Call to Order, Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance

In attendance: Shelly Reynolds (Chair)
David Wheaton
Heidi Hinshaw
Chris Barney
Diane Castillo
Victoria Rizzo
Amasa Moon
Nicole Lawrence
Twillia Harrington

Excused: Will Knight (Vice Chair)
Alexander Lumiere

Staff: Amber Shackelford, Assistant Planner
Alex Lopez, Assistant Planner
Melissa S. Bocarde, Transcriptionist/Independent Contractor

Members of
the Public: Mary Barney

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Reynolds and the Pledge of Allegiance was said by those in the Kellogg Room.

Chair Reynolds asked if anyone wished to speak on a non-agenda item.

2. Special Guest Police Captain Steve Bevens

Captain Bevens introduced himself and asked if this was the first time he had addressed this group. Chair Reynolds said that it wasn't, but there were new members.

Captain Bevens said he is an officer with the Sheriff's department and is in charge of running the patrol operations. He was first hired as a Troutdale police officer in 1998, was promoted to sergeant, and he worked for Troutdale until 2015 when the City decided to contract with the Sheriff's office. He also started and was a sergeant for the homeless outreach program, called HOPE. He also helped with things like outreach events and being a school resource officer. After being promoted to lieutenant, he has worked in river patrol and in training. Now as a captain, he is designated as the Chief of Police for the City of Troutdale. In the 1990s, he was a reserve deputy for Washington County and they encouraged him to apply with the City, and he's been pro-Troutdale ever since. He is excited to work with them. He is in daily communication with the mayor. His hope is that he can not only report their concerns to him but that he can use their group as a voice of support for the Sheriff's office. They had a rough year last year.

Their chaplain program wasn't going well. Also, in the metropolitan area and through the United States, law enforcement was not viewed highly due to the murder of George Floyd. They feel as if they were under attack. Deputies quit. Right now, he's really focused on homeless issues for the City. He is working constantly with the mayor on issues of homelessness within the city and Thousand Acres. He feels their approach is different from that of the City of Portland. They believe in the broken windows theory; address things immediately before they fester and become bigger and bigger. For example, yesterday morning, he personally approached a man who was sleeping on a bench at Mayor's Square. He woke him and offered resources, and the man said he appreciated it and thanked him. He also works with several departments such as the Forest Service and the Department of State Lands in regards to the homeless issue, primarily in Thousand Acres.

Captain Bevens said they are also looking at equity and inclusion and have an Equity and Inclusion Manager, Rebecca Sanchez, who was hired last year. He's hoping maybe she can be at their next meeting to talk about what's going on at the office and the trainings she's set up, and it would be good for them as a group to hear from her.

He looks at this group as a way to not only address what the citizens bring to them, but also vice versa, for the CAC to help with his office's needs. They are having serious issues with hiring and retention, and it's true of other industries, like retail and restaurants. The amount of turnover is unprecedented right now in the Sheriff's office. On the corrections side, people are retiring and leaving early. Human Resources has said they've never seen anything like it. They've lost five deputies to Deschutes County and the City of Bend and two more transferred to jobs in Arizona. The requirement for recruits with no law enforcement experience is to have a 4-year college degree, and they're 0 for 11 for recruits making it through the training program. The recruits are fresh out of college and don't know what they're getting into and some quit on the first day. They want to brainstorm with the group ways of recruiting officers, such as focusing on military or college recruitment. They also have changed the lateral process job requirements. It usually takes about 2 years for recruits to get on the road and become a district car.

Chair Reynolds asked Captain Bevens if they accept military service in lieu of the college degree. Captain Bevens said he thinks they have changed the deputy requirement to 3 years of reserve experience or 2 years of full military experience. They're now working on getting both unions to approve 3 years of law enforcement experience to become a lateral instead of also needing the college degree. He thinks that will be approved soon. Chair Reynolds said that she appreciates his service to Troutdale. He said he appreciates Troutdale because people will approach the officers to say thanks, and this is the opposite of the response they receive in Portland.

Mr. Wheaton said he has a lot of bias on this issue because he thinks the problem with some cities, including Portland, is that they shoot themselves in the foot. He thinks the County Commissioners need to publicly support public safety, and he doesn't see them doing it. Telling someone why they should work for you starts at the top.

Ms. Hinshaw said she was disappointed that he didn't remember them from last year because she remembers him. She said her two questions are, first, what is his definition of public safety and second, how does he see the police force evolving?

Captain Bevens asked if he was addressing the Public Equity and Safety Committee. Ms. Shackelford said that no, he is addressing the Citizens Advisory Committee, and he addressed them last year. He apologized for the misunderstanding.

Captain Bevens said his definition of public safety is partnership and working with the community. He's always been a public servant. It's always been his goal to help good people and arrest bad people, but especially to be a public servant in any way. He said that in terms of how the police force will evolve in

the future, he has already seen the profession change dramatically since he was hired in 1998. They don't go on calls that they normally would have gone on. They don't respond the same way they would have 4 years ago to many calls ranging from a suicidal person barricaded in their home with a weapon or to someone going through a mental health crisis to checking on someone sleeping in a park. He feels there are changes that need to be made. Law enforcement is historically hard to change because of the strength of the unions. Change depends on which direction the political leadership wants it to go in that city.

Ms. Moon said he mentioned that community involvement could help boost morale. Does he have any ideas of ways they could do that? Captain Bevens answered that they have to restrict many activities due to Covid, but years ago, having the Sheriff's office at events like the Cruise In was huge. He always enjoyed doing that. He hopes to resume things like that in the future.

Captain Bevens said he would offer quick updates about the Sheriff's office and what they have done for Troutdale. Glenn Otto Park has a deputy during the summer months and the contract with the City and County have to do 960 hours of service there. Deputy Barnes was assigned there during the summer and it was a success. There were no drownings at Glenn Otto this summer. Also, the Reynolds School District has not signed a contract with the Sheriff's office. They met with Dr. Ortiz and he is supportive of it but as of now, the district does not have school resource deputies.

Ms. Hinshaw said she does not support having school resource officers in their schools.

Ms. Castillo said that she recalled the shooting at Reynolds High School, and her belief is that the officers there were pivotal to the safety in the school that day. If she remembers this correctly, then she definitely supports all conversations pursuant to the safety of children in the Reynolds school district.

Ms. Rizzo said she's been in meetings with schools in Reynolds, and she thinks that the resource officers are wonderful assets to the school. She doesn't feel like kids are fearful. Students actually become quite friendly with the officers. She thinks they need them in the schools and that those who work in schools will understand what she's saying.

Ms. Hinshaw apologized for speaking out of turn earlier. She has two children in local elementary schools and has researched this. From what she's seen, it does not increase safety and it does increase danger. That is her opinion as a stepmother.

Chair Reynolds said that her children graduated from West Linn High School and they did have a community resource officer there. Her children may not remember their teachers, but they do remember the resource officer. It's not only about safety, but it's about creating relationships with the children in the community. It supports authority in the school, and it also helps children make better decisions. They have a role model who is there to talk about what he or she does. Everyone in West Linn knew the resource officer and felt safer because he was there.

Ms. Lawrence said she grew up in Portland and attended John Marshall High School. It was the first school in Oregon to have a shooting on the campus, and it was the year she graduated. It was a very diverse student body, and the school resource officer was amazing, and she still remembers him. She thinks it's a great opportunity for kids to interact with local law enforcement to see that not all cops are bastards, which is something children are being fed regularly, and it shows that there are good cops who care and want to put relationships first. She hopes Reynolds gets a contract going and makes this happen. She wants children to be able to have positive interactions with people who wear uniforms.

Mr. Barney said that he attended a school outside of the City. He asked Captain Bevens for informational purposes what the functions are of a school resource officer.

Captain Bevens said he could answer that question. Also, he respects everyone's opinions. He responded to the Reynolds High School call and personally knows coworkers and friends who ran towards the gunfire. He thinks it's critical that agencies hire the right school officer and not someone who wants the great days off and to work the day shift. It needs to be someone who wants to almost be a counselor for the kids. At Reynolds High School, resource officers assist with things like talking to the parents or counseling or mentoring or helping a kid. It's very important to hire someone who has a heart, just as you would do that for a homeless outreach officer. They have a strict hiring process for it, and you need someone who has a calling. He feels emotional about that hard day, and resource officers can be invaluable, especially at Reynolds High School.

Ms. Hinshaw asked what resources he offered the man who was sleeping in Mayor's Square. Captain Bevens answered that it was someone he'd never met before. He remembers when it wasn't OK for law enforcement to try to help people who were homeless because it was looked at like empowering them. He said he told the man he needed to wake up, they introduced themselves, and he asked if the man needed food or water since he had them with him. He told Captain Bevens he had no interest in shelters in downtown Portland. They also talked about low impact camping.

Captain Bevens said he also wanted to report that dispatch issues are huge right now. Callers are on hold for 30-45 minutes for non-emergency and even on hold for 911 calls. He is the new liaison officer. Dispatch is run through the City of Portland and they are just one of the users. Dispatch is trying to resolve this issue, and they are having the same problems with turnover and recruitment. He has been researching an online call service for the city which allows residents to report a crime online. That way, it's convenient for someone at work or lunch to file the report and get a case number rather than waiting for a deputy to come to their house. He has had the approval to contract with Case Services, and they've modified it to help their residents, and then they can follow through. Ironically, BOEC bought the same service. They'll be able to start in November.

Ms. Harrington asked if he anticipates changes in petty crime statistics since it will be easier to report the crimes. He says they discussed that and that usually if someone wants to report a petty crime, but wants to advise the police that it's happened so they're aware, they don't get a case number. This way they will get a case number but it is not going to show more service calls.

Ms. Moon asked if it's important to report smaller crimes for statistical purposes even though the officers are very busy. Captain Bevens answered that, yes, they have people who do statistics about areas and times when crimes are committed. They can assign deputies and detectives to patrol areas based on that information.

Ms. Hinshaw said she had a request. She would like them to implement something similar to the Cahoots response program in Eugene where a trained mental health counselor can go with an officer to calls when people are having a mental health crisis. Captain Bevens said he agrees with her. He feels that when he is dispatched to this situation wearing a badge and a gun, that's not the most effective way to go. Also, his daughter is a social worker, and he wants her to be safe when she is on a call.

Captain Bevens said that the Municipal Court has now worked with the City of Fairview, City of Wood Village and all of the misdemeanor crimes go to Troutdale Municipal Court. This simplifies the legal process for the officers.

Ms. Moon asked Captain Bevens what the most common crime is in Troutdale. Captain Bevens said that Troutdale is the busiest district and they always have two deputies and a sergeant assigned. Right now, he believes that suspicious people, car thefts, and a rise in aggressive assaults are the most common. Stolen

vehicles are up and so are pursuits, which they terminate almost nightly because it's not worth it to pursue them. He said that Troutdale sees everything, including prostitution at the truck stops.

Ms. Reynolds thanked Captain Bevens for his visit.

3. Review and Approval of Minutes

a. August 4, 2021 Regular Meeting

There were no corrections. **Ms. Rizzo moved to accept the minutes as written and Ms. Hinshaw seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

4. Discussion Items

a. First Friday Presence

Ms. Shackelford said that Ms. Hinshaw had asked about whether the CAC would want to participate by having a booth or something similar. There is still time to plan for October. The only regulation for it is that there can't be more than five CAC members at a time in order to follow the open meetings law.

Ms. Rizzo asked if candy would be distributed by the merchants at Halloween this year. Ms. Shackelford said she wasn't sure. Ms. Rizzo said that when the CAC participated and distributed toys and candy, it was very popular and fun. She'd like them to think about doing that event also.

Ms. Hinshaw said that her idea was to have a CAC presence so people know they can raise concerns to them. However, she isn't sure if it actually does a whole lot of good for them to do it, so maybe it's pointless. She thinks that handing out candy sounds fine.

Ms. Castillo said that in the past, at the Halloween event, they had flyers and a banner and candy for the children. CAC members dressed up and some of the other advisory committee members participated as well. If they do something on First Friday, she thinks they should ask Ms. Boxler from the City what would be helpful. The City isn't open, and the Staff don't have time to be there, so maybe the CAC could help.

Ms. Hinshaw said that she'd thought about doing something at First Friday to explain the rent burden issue and how people can learn more about it.

Chair Reynolds asked who would like to volunteer for the First Friday event project.

Ms. Hinshaw asked if people were excited or not.

Ms. Castillo said that she was almost positive she would be in town. She would be willing to get the materials from the City. She can also bring the banner. She asked if Ms. Shackelford could bring information about volunteer opportunities with other committees. She will also ask Ms. Boxler for other promotional items.

Ms. Hinshaw said she would be the point person and email everyone to see who was interested in volunteering.

Ms. Castillo said she would bring organic lollipops. That would be fun candy that wouldn't detract from the food vendors. Ms. Shackelford said there's a budget for the CAC.

Mr. Barney asked if they were discussing First Friday or Halloween. Chair Reynolds said they were discussing First Friday.

Ms. Castillo said that if several people volunteer, they can take turns with coverage.

Chair Reynolds said she is helping Parks & Facilities Superintendent Tim Seery set up at this upcoming First Friday, and she will ask him about it.

b. Rent Burden Meeting Update

Ms. Shackelford said that this meeting was supposed to be held tonight, but it will happen instead on September 29th. The meeting will start at 6 PM and if it's in person, they will meet at Troutdale Terrace Apartments in their community room. She hopes that will help involve more people who haven't wanted to attend it at the police facility.

Ms. Castillo asked how people will be notified other than low-income residents will find out about the meeting so it's a balanced discussion. Ms. Shackelford said it was in *The Champion* and will also be on social media. She's happy to hear their ideas and to tell their own networks about it.

Mr. Barney asked if this would affect the October meeting. Ms. Shackelford said they will cancel the first Wednesday meeting in October.

Mr. Lopez said even if there's an in-person component, it will be a hybrid meeting so people can still also attend on Zoom.

5. Staff Communications

Ms. Shackelford said there will be an open house on October 20 from mid-afternoon to early evening for the Parks Master Plan, and it will be held at the Troutdale Elementary School to help parents be able to be involved. There will be information about it on social media. Also, she followed up on Mr. Knight's request at the last meeting to make it easier to access audio recordings of the CAC meetings. They have removed the password. Finally, this will be her last CAC meeting. She will be at the rent burden meeting, but Mr. Lopez is now their liaison.

Ms. Rizzo asked when the Safety and Equity Committee will meet. Ms. Shackelford said she didn't know. The Sheriff's office is in charge of it.

Ms. Castillo asked if there's an update about the Urban Renewal Area and if they are now accepting proposals or marketing it. Ms. Shackelford said that it was rezoned this summer to urban mixed use which was a good first step towards clarifying uses for it. She doesn't know if it's at the development stage yet.

6. Committee Comments

Ms. Moon commented that she enjoyed hearing from Captain Bevans.

Ms. Harrington also said she enjoyed hearing from Captain Bevans.

Mr. Barney said it had been a great meeting, and it's been a pleasure to work with Ms. Shackelford. He welcomed Mr. Lopez.

Ms. Castillo said she would echo that comment. She also was interested to learn that people are spending so much time on hold when they make 911 calls. She finds that concerning. Also, she understands why online reporting works well for small communities, but she appreciates face to face reporting because there are nuances to it. She welcomed Mr. Lopez.

Mr. Wheaton thanked Ms. Shackelford and looks forward to working with Mr. Lopez.

Ms. Hinshaw said that she has passionate opinions about the police, but she assures the new committee members that she's a nice person who has strong feelings. Also, she wants to welcome them to the CAC. She asked how to pronounce Twila's and Amasa's names. She would be happy to answer any questions they have about their role if they'd like to email her. She looks forward to being a student with Ms. Shackelford. She is excited about First Friday.

Chair Reynolds said that she appreciates all that Ms. Shackelford has done and looks forward to working with Mr. Lopez.

7. Adjournment

Mr. Barney moved to adjourn the meeting and Ms. Rizzo seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Shelly Reynolds

Shelly Reynolds, Chair

12/03/2021

Date of Approval

Melissa S. Bocarde

Melissa Bocarde, Attest

12/4/21

Date