

Erie County Police Reform & Reinvention Collaborative

Minutes from meeting #1 September 30, 2020

15 mins: Introduction-

County Executive Poloncarz welcomed the Task Force members and asked each one to share a little background information about their credentials.

15 mins: Discussing Executive Order 203-

- Review the needs of community served by its police agency
- Establish policies
- Involve the Community and receive feedback from public comments
- Offer a plan for public comment
- Present plan to legislature
- Certify adoption of the plan to State Budget Director before April 1, 2021

15 mins: Discussing sub-sections of guidebook- Key questions and insight for consideration.

- What functions should the police perform- Determining role of police, budget restrictions.
- Establish smart and effective policing standards and strategies- Specific police strategies, stop & frisk, Swat teams. Procedural justice and community policing.
- Fostering community orientated leadership, culture and accountability- Leadership, internal accountability, transparency.
- Recruiting and supporting excellent personnel- recruiting a diverse workforce, trainings, supporting officer well-being and mental health.

15 mins: Process and plan for moving forward

- Planning, listening, and learning

- Draft initial proposals
- Public comments
- Revise and ratify plan
- Legislature ratifies plan and adopts proposals

5 mins: Schedule for future meetings

- Meeting #2- Review of Erie County Sheriff's Office policies
- Meeting #3&4- Public comments
- Discussed future meetings being both virtual and in-person as necessary.

5 mins: County Executive named Dr. Martin Floss as Chairman of the task force.

15 mins: Open comments from Task Force members-

Miles Gresham asked about central police services being included in the scope of this task force. Central police services will not be under review of this task force. Commissioner Jancewicz spoke about Central police Services and offered his services to the task force upon request.

5 mins- Closing remarks by County Executive Poloncarz.

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Minutes from meeting #2

October 22, 2020

5 mins: Introduction-

County Executive discussed the agenda for today's meeting.

20 mins: Presentation by Erie County Sheriff's Office

- Roles of a Sheriff- video presentation by Sheriff's Office Liaison

20 mins: Task force discussed policies and procedures of Sheriff's Office

- Task force would like to know what policies are active and which of them need to be updated. Will submit questions to Sheriff's Office liaison for up to date responses.

30 mins: Task Force discussed how to accomplish goals of police reform

- The group discussed different methods of researching police reform. Discussed looking at other models throughout the country. Chairman discussed coming to conclusions once data is received and basing conclusions off data based evidence.
- The task force discussed breaking into sub-committee's to focus on addressing all "Key questions and insight for consideration" that was provided in the guidebook.

30 mins: Task force discussed focusing on services of the police, Use of force data, and mental health calls. Group discussed at length and will seek further answers by submitting questions to Sheriff's Office liaison.

10 mins: Closing statements-

Discussed format and structure of future meetings.

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Minutes from meeting #3

October 26, 2020

20 mins: Introduction from Chairman Floss-

Discussed how the Task Force will analyze information, discussed how task force will evaluate information and discussed how task force will arrive with conclusions for proposals for police reform.

40 mins: Public comments-

Questions and comments from the community were discussed amongst task force members. Task Force members listened to the public comments and will incorporate the public's comments into their research and policy evaluations.

30 mins: Introduction of Task Force members to the public-

Task Force members introduced themselves and gave background information of their credentials.

10 mins: Closing statements-

The task force discussed format and structure of future meetings. The task force would like to remain virtual, due to health concerns in regards to global pandemic (COVID-19)

Erie County Police Reform & Reinvention Collaborative

Minutes from meeting #4 October 27, 2020

15 mins: Chairman discussed goals of the task force, discussed thinking critically about reform and the recommendations that will be made to improve policing.

60 mins: Public comments-

- Dispatching mental health providers to calls dealing with mental health issues/concerns
- Decrease or eliminate overtime pay for police (To better balance budget)
- Abide by “Carol’s Law”
- Creating a way for the public to report police misconduct (Task Force member Brittany Penberthy added their needs to be more follow through with training the employees that handle public complaints, often not enough follow-through)
- Discussed Pro-active policing and Re-active policing.

15 mins: Task Force discussed different methods on how to encourage more public comments. Task force discussed selection of sub-committees. Discussed whether next meeting should be virtual or in-person. Next meeting will be virtual and scheduled for 11/5/2020.

Erie County Police Reform & Reinvention Collaborative

Minutes from meeting #5 November 5, 2020

10 mins: Introduction-

Chairman discussed moving forward with task force and encouraged the sub-committees to meet and to start focusing on policy changes and reform.

30 mins: Public comments-

- Independent review boards of police misconduct
- Transparency of complaints made against Sheriff's deputies
- Re-allocation of police funding to more community based services
- Switching police "paid overtime" to "Comp time" only, to reduce the budget

20 mins: Sub-committee's scheduling-

The task force discussed sub-committee goals and format. Discussion of how chairperson for sub-committees should be selected. The groups will pick their own sub-committee chairperson, once they meet individually. Sheriff's liaison encourages sub-committees to reach out to his office and he will provide them with answers to the questions they might have.

20 mins: Sharing information-

Group discussed sharing information via Google Docs. The task force discussed sub-committee procedures on how to accomplish task and complete proposal draft.

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**Minutes from meeting #6
December 7, 2020**

15mins: Chairman discussed “Public surveys” and “Deputy Surveys” that the Task Force will circulate for feedback for reform. Task Force spoke about the types of request for information they asked of the Erie County Sheriff’s Office.

Sub-committee’s reported on their findings and request to be provided additional information about policies of the Erie County Sheriff’s Office.

10 mins: Group 1 discussed their questions they were asked to complete. Their section was “What functions should the police perform?” The group requested further information on police calls over the last 5 years, as well as budget line request.

10mins: Group 2 was charged with completing the question “Employing smart and effective policing standards and strategies.” The group discussed community policing, and dispatching mental health providers to a call where an individual is having a mental health crisis.

15 mins: Group 3 was tasked with looking into “Fostering community-orientated leadership, culture and accountability.” This group discussed internal affairs and how those cases are investigated. They had questions as to determine the length of these investigations, where can the public view the results of these investigations. They had questions about the policy of having a lower ranked officer investigating a higher ranking officer or supervisor and how does that dynamic work. They also requested further information on “Use of Force” calls.

15 mins: Group 4 was charged with “Recruiting and supporting excellent personnel.” This group discussed their request to the Erie County Sheriff’s Office. They had questions about the methods of recruitment, and the

recruitment of minority candidates. What steps does the Sheriff's office utilize to promote diversity in their agency? The group also asked for demographics of the Sheriff's Office.

20 mins: Closing-

Discussing which "Citizen survey" to choose, there were two choices to choose from. The task force voted and selected one survey to go out to the public. The task force discussed different sources on how to circulate the survey once it is ready to be distributed. Group discussed using local town or village social media outlets, using the Erie County Executive's social media outlets to advertise the survey to the public.

Erie County Police Reform & Reinvention Collaborative

Minutes from meeting #7

December 22, 2020

5 mins: Introduction-

Chairman Floss has sent the questions requested by the sub-committee's to the Erie County Sheriff's Office. Sheriff's Office Liaison stated that he has received the questions (74 total questions); he will have the questions answered by the next meeting of the task force.

10 mins: The task force discussed sending out the survey to the different media outlets. The task force will use town and villages social media sites.

15 mins: Erie County Sheriff's Office mentioned making a notation on the survey; requesting that the survey should be completed by residents of the towns and villages that the Erie County Sheriff's Office serves. The sheriff's Office does not patrol all municipalities in Erie County and the Sheriff's office requested that the survey be specific to the areas they do patrol. The task force considered the request but after further discussion decided to make the survey available for all Erie County residents.

10 mins: Closing-

The task force discussed the survey selected to be completed by the Sheriff's deputies. Chairman Floss is still finalizing the questions on the Sheriff's survey and stated it will be completed by the next task force meeting. By the next meeting the Sheriff's Office will respond to the questions asked by the sub-committees. The Chairman will analyze the answers received from the Sheriff's Office and then share with liaison to share with all task force members. Next meeting scheduled for 1/7/2021.

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**Minutes from meeting #8
January 12, 2021**

10 mins: Introduction-

Chairman Floss discussed the urgency to start working on a draft, and requested sub-committees to meet and start working on their section to complete.

30 mins: Discussed information and data received from the Sheriff's Office. The information received showed frequency of police calls, the type of police calls and the location of the calls where they responded. The Chairman shared data virtually of the police calls received in 2017 and 2019. 17% of service calls were reported responding to the City of Buffalo. The Chairman showed data of Type 1 and Type 2 calls for service (these types of calls only made up 5% of all calls of service).

20 mins: The group discussed "No knock warrants" that the Sheriff's office executed. There was 276 "No knock warrants" performed during 2014 and 2019. The task force members asked about the demographics of the suspects that the warrants were executed on? Erie County Sheriff's Office did not keep the records of demographics of the warrants performed, but stated they could retrieve that from the court paperwork. Task force member asked if the Erie County Sheriff's Office trains with any other local police agencies. Erie County Sheriff's Office liaison stated "the Sheriff's Office does collaborate and train with other local agencies."

10 mins: Chairman Floss will send out survey in the next two days, task force members will then share the survey on social media outlets and as many venues as possible.

10 mins: Erie County Sheriff's Office liaison spoke to the task force about the questions his office received. Liaison will complete the questions, noted that

some questions are duplicates and spoke to how he will format those responses.

10 mins: Closing-

The task force discussed taking time to meet with sub-committees to work on that group's section of the draft. The task force is now waiting to receive the answers to the group's questions and waiting on "Citizen Survey" responses.

Next meeting 1/28/21.

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**Minutes from meeting #9
January 28, 2021**

10 minutes: Introduction-

The task force now has the “Citizen survey” available on social media sites for the residents of Erie County to complete. Chairman shared information on “calls for service” the Chairman made statistical charts to categorize the calls for service that were received by the Erie County Sheriff’s Office.

- The Erie County Sheriff’s Office receives about 95,000 service calls per year on average.

5 minutes: The task force discussed the sub-committees formatting of their section.

- Discussed writing an overview section for each sub-section.
- Sub-committee members will address all the questions and provide an answer for each question in their sub-section.

10 minutes: The group discussed creating a rough draft and having one or two writers from the task force revise the draft for submission.

- The task force is still waiting for information on demographics of the Erie County Sheriff’s office.

30 minutes: The task force discussed the survey responses. The Chairman shared some of the data he has received so far.

- The Chairman described the survey responses as being mostly positive for the Erie County Sheriff’s Office. The Chairman is still working on getting the responses from the survey to the rest of the task force members
- The task force discussed how to portray the information that they received from the surveys, into the draft.

- **The task force members are concerned that the survey will not be completed by the minority community; task force discussed reaching out to local churches and minority media outlets.**
- **The task force would like to have under represented communities involved in the survey, task force would like the survey to represent all communities in Erie County.**

15 minutes: Closing statements-

- **Chairman and task force discussed the research they have completed.**
- **Chairman will get the “Citizen Survey” responses to all members of the task force.**
- **Chairman will send “Deputy Survey” responses to all members.**
- **Next meeting 2/9/21**

Erie County Police Reform & Reinvention Collaborative

Minutes from meeting #10

February 9, 2021

10 mins: Introduction-

Chairman discussed the “Citizen survey” had 363 responses from Erie County residents. The “Deputy’s survey” had close to 22 responses.

20 mins: The task force discussed completing the draft by 2/22/21 and submitting the draft for public comment. The task force members have viewed sample drafts to get a better viewpoint of what is required for their draft. The group feels comfortable in the research they have done to arrive at their recommendations and feel confident that the proposals they will make will be evidence based and offer practical resolutions. The task force will submit a rough draft to the Chairman by 2/15/21.

20 mins: The task force revisited the “Calls for service” data from the Erie County Sheriff’s Office. The task force discussed “Use of Force” calls data. The task force had questions as to what classifies as “Use of force” as the description is vague in the Erie County Sheriff’s Office policy book.

20 mins: The task force discussed community policing, seeking clarification on what Sheriff’s Office defines as community policing. The Chairman discussed that the Sheriff’s Office might not realize how many of their actions or patrol is actually community policing, the task force will seek further information on that topic from Erie County Sheriff’s Office.

15 mins: Closing-

The task force set up meetings for the sub-committees to work on their assigned sections. The sub-committees will work on their rough drafts to be submitted to the Chairman. Each sub-committee will meet virtually and individually to complete the goal, before submitting the draft.

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Minutes from meeting #11

February 17, 2021

5 minutes- Introduction-

The task force spoke about the recommendations that were made by the sub-committees. The task force discussed if there are any differences in opinion on a recommendation between task force members, how to settle the discrepancy. The task force decided to support all suggestions and include the recommendation, even if there are oppositional thoughts.

25 minutes- The task force discussed final draft formatting.

- The draft will include a section for public comments.**
- The draft will include a section for the Erie County Sheriff's Office to comment on the recommendations.**
- The task force discussed the "Overview" section, to ensure that the reader will see all the research the task force included into making their final recommendations.**

20 minutes-Discussion of timeline to complete the draft

- The sub-committees have submitted their findings and recommendations.**
- Task Force member Margaret Murphy will create a final version of the draft, from all the submissions of recommendations from the sub-committees. Chairman Floss will assist with the final draft as well.**
- The task force will submit the draft for public comment on 2/23/21**