



**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION
MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING
Monday, February 3, 2020**

The Public Safety Commission convened a meeting Monday, February 3, 2020 at City Hall 301 W. 2nd Street in Austin, Texas.

Commissioner Rebecca Webber called the Board Meeting to order at 4:00p.m., and announced the resignation of Commissioner Ed Scruggs.

Board Members in Attendance:

Daniela Nunez
Rebeca Bernhardt
Preston Tyree
Rebecca Webber
Chris Harris

Kathleen Hausenfluck
Selena Alvarenga
Meghan Hollis
Rebecca Gonzales

Board Members Absent:

Staff in Attendance:

Troy Gay, Chief of Staff, Austin Police Department
Brandon Wade, Assistant Chief, Austin Fire Department
Jasper Brown, Chief of Staff, Austin Travis County Emergency Medical Services

Citizen Communications

- **Carlos León, Citizen** – Free speech access and equal protection rights safeguarded by constitutional law
- **Paul Robbins, Citizen, Environmental Activist** – Toxic building materials used in new homes and apartment

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** - Commissioner Webber asked for discussion/edits of the January 6, 2020 minutes; hearing no comments, the January 2020 minutes were deemed approved.
2. **Introduction of APD Assistant Chief Robin Henderson** - Chief Manley introduced Robin Henderson as the new assistant chief with APD and shared how pleased he is to have worked with her in different capacities over her 22 years with her latest role being the Executive Lieutenant. In that role, Robin accompanied him on the majority of his meetings with City Manager and with Mayor and Council. She is very informed on the current and important topics affecting APD.

Robin shared briefly about her personal life and 22yr career here at APD. She expressed it was a pleasure to serve the Austin Community.

- 3. Election of Public Safety Commission Chair** – Rebecca Webber nominated Meghan Hollis and Commissioner Tyree seconded the motion. Commissioner Webber asked if there were any other nominations from the board and there were none.

Vote- Unanimous

Against- 0

Absent - 0

Abstain- 0

- 4. Lessons Learned Last Summer: Debrief of Commissioners’ participation in City process for hiring an outside consultant to audit APD’s sexual assault investigations**
Webber introduced this item and invited Patricia Bourenane, Executive Assistant to Assistant City Manager Rey Arellano. Patricia elaborated on the two study groups the request to add two representatives from the PSC to join the working groups. **Commissioner Webber** invited Amanda Lewis from the **Commission for Women** to speak on her experience serving on a previous working group. Amanda Lewis, shared her expectations on being a part of the working group (hiring an outside consultant to audit APD’s sexual assault investigations), and the fact they did not really have any power in procurement process was part of the frustrations is that they didn’t know how the process works.

There was follow-up conversation among the board members on the experience of serving on the working group.

- 5. Nomination of Commissioners to serve on Austin Police Department Systemic Racism Study Scope-of-Work** – Commissioner Webber nominated Commissioner Harris, Hollis and Gonzales to serve on the group. Commissioner Gonzales volunteered to be an alternate member due to her heavy travel schedule, and Commissioner Harris asked for clarification on conflict of interest rules because he has worked/contributed to the actual study. **Commissioner Bernhardt** seconded the motion and Webber called for a vote on the three nominated.

Vote: Unanimous (9 commissioners)

Absent: 0

Abstain:0

Against: 0

6. Nomination of Commissioners to serve on Austin Travis County Emergency Medical Services/Austin Fire Department Dispatch Equity Study Scope-of-Work Working Group

Commissioner Webber motioned to nominate Commissioners Tyree, Hausenfluck and herself for this working group, and Commissioner Gonzales seconded her motion.

Vote: Unanimous (9)

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 0

7. Presentation of Austin Fire Department 2019 Annual Report – Assistant Chief Wade introduced the item and Thayer talked about the new look of the annual report and mentioned that it is more graphic this year, and this is the first digital report from Austin Fire Department. Currently this report is still a draft and there are a few edits that AFD will take and correct before distributing to everyone. The theme this year is “What matter to you, matters to us.” Assistant Chief Wade opened the floor for questions/discussions and there were none.

8. Austin EMS Association recent successes and upcoming initiatives

Selena Xie, President Austin EMS Association presented a power point on the recent successes and upcoming initiative of the Austin EMS Association. The topics were:

- Medic Assaults
- Schedule Updates
- Workload Challenges

There were questions from the board over the information presented from Commissioners Tyree, Alvarenga and Hollis. Discussion across the board on the need for another ambulance to be added to the department. A recommendation was motioned by Webber and seconded by Nunez.



Public Safety Commission Recommendation no. 20200203-008

Date: February 3, 2020

Subject: Recommendation that Council Direct the City Manager to Implement Straightforward Solutions to Improve Medics' Lives

Motioned by Commissioner Rebecca Webber

Seconded by Commissioner Daniela Nunez

The Public Safety Commission recommends that Council direct the City Manager to build on recent successes and solutions jointly developed and implemented by the Department and the Austin EMS Association and continue to work with the Association to implement straightforward solutions that will improve medics' lives:

1. Extend sick call-out time to 7:30am rather than current policy requiring a call by 6:30am.
2. Withdraw newly implemented policy requiring medics who are sick during their on-call assignment to staff a replacement on-call assignment later on.
3. Convert the paging system that is used to alert medics to new calls—currently an emergency tone at one, extremely loud volume—to ramp-up tones which gradually become louder and are already in use by the Austin Fire Department to alert firefighters to new calls.
4. Cease non-essential, extremely loud pages after 10:00pm and use computers in the ambulances for these non-essential messages instead.
5. Limit non-urgent truck change outs (when medics must switch their gear from one ambulance to a different ambulance) to regular business hours and dry weather.
6. Trust that medics are in the best position to determine when they are too ill to care for patients—and are, likewise, highly qualified to determine when work must be missed due to a loved one's illness—and withdraw the patronizing policy of requiring a trip to a doctor's office to obtain a note proving that a medic or a medic's loved one is sick.
7. Add EMS resources to Central Austin because the repeated nightly pattern of extensive EMS needs downtown pulls ambulances from the surrounding neighborhoods.

Vote – Unanimous

For: 9
Against: 0
Abstain: 0
Absent: 0

Attest: *[Staff or board member can sign]*

Janet Jackson, Board Liaison,
Austin Police Department

9. Community reaction to January 2020 Analysis of APD Racial Profiling Data: Joint Report of the Office of Police Oversight, Office of Innovation, and Equity Office

Commissioner Webber introduced the item and asked Commissioner Harris to describe the item/data on traffic stops here in Austin. Speakers from the community were

- Meme Styles
- Kathy Mitchell (Just Liberty)
- Chas Moore (Austin Justice Coalition)

There was discussion and questions among broad members and presenters in attendance. There was mention of Stanford study on Racial Profiling, the memo from Chief Manley in response to this study, and a Lights Out Voucher program in Los Angeles that is proving to be successful. Commissioner Harris commented that he would like to hear more about this program. Kathy Mitchell commented on the impact on the prison business created by previous elected officials (state and federal levels) and the mass incarceration among black males. Per Kathy Mitchell, this report is excellent; now we need to start addressing the solution.

Adjourn @ 6:15pm