

Public Safety Committee (PSC) meeting Transcript – 8/7/2023

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good afternoon, everybody. >> I'll call to order the public safety committee of the Austin city council while it's August 7th, 2023 at 2:00 pm. We are meeting at 301 west second street in the city council chambers, and we have a quorum of the committee present. The first thing we'll do, members, is we will take up citizen public communication. And it's my understanding we have a few people that have signed up for public communication. Yes, sir. >> We'll start with online speakers for public communication that's going to be crystal loon. Speaker. >> Please unmute. >> Can everyone hear me? >> Yes, ma'am. Yes great. >> Hi everyone. Good afternoon. My name is crystal young and I'm a resident of district one. Many close friends and family members who work in health care across

[2:01:44 PM]

the state of Texas, including those in the Travis county medical facility. Today, I want to raise concerns about the massive to basic budget proposal, specifically about how the budget placement of also known as the office of the chief medical officer within the ems department presents a tremendous conflict of interest for both departments. As you may know, every paramedic and emt and fire and ems works directly under the medical license of the chief medical officer who leads zo. This person is tasked by state statute to ensure quality of medical care for all of Austin. This responsibility is synonymous to that of the office of police oversight. However, there's a reason why we don't combine that budget for the office of police oversight with the police department. Wright you need to ensure that oversight departments such as Amo and the office of police oversight in this case are independent and can empower those departments to make impartial decisions for the safety and medical well-being of

[2:02:45 PM]

your constituents. Previously, city council members recognized the importance of oversight, responsibility, and they approved the separation of the budget from the agencies it oversees. The back to basics budget attempts to oversimplify the department structures and is a huge step backwards from the system that empowered our nationally recognized patient care provided by our ems and fire personnel. I humbly ask you to please reexamine the proposed budget in light of the medical oversight responsibilities of Amo and ensure that the city continues to provide and maintain high quality patient care to the citizens of Austin. Being an independent Amo budget as part of management services. Thank you. >> Next speaker is Ben Marullo. Yeah >> Why don't you step up to the lectern there? >> Afternoon, folks. My name is Ben Marullo and I'm a district nine constituent living on

[2:03:45 PM]

brazos and fifth street at the sienna apartment. Buildings a couple of months ago, I contacted councilmember quadri's office because I've witnessed a heightened homeless population camping in this community on brazos street, specifically between fourth and sixth street. Myself and many other residents of the apartment buildings and patrons of local businesses have seen firsthand the resulting public safety issues as people have been assaulted and threatened, chased and even spit on by unhoused peoples on drugs with mental illness and their behavior is often influenced by substance abuse, which poses a significant threat to residents , businesses and visitors. Safety and quality of life into amidation harassment and assault have become shockingly frequent and unacceptable. I truly empathize with our unhoused neighbors who need help to get to a better place. However I'm here today because I genuinely worry that this council lacks an approach that balances the long

[2:04:47 PM]

term needs of unhoused people. With the short term public safety needs of austinites that live in and around areas with increased homelessness. S. I personally don't feel safe in my community and I worry every day that myself or my neighbors will be hurt by somebody who is on drugs or mentally ill. And because of this, I have not stood idly by. Council member quadri knows I've often voiced my frustration, actions and concerns to his office and APD. We met in July and shared these concerns together. I drafted an action plan proposal that stresses increase public safety measures such as increased police presence, but still clear to me that we lack short term solutions to this problem. Local businesses have unfortunately had to take matters into their own hands because we have not seen solutions from the city. 10 to 12 hour daily coverage of dual off duty and armed police officers have been rolled out and it's drastically reduced. The number of homeless camping on brazos. So it's clear to me that an increased police

[2:05:47 PM]

presence keeps more austinites safe. I recognize that this is not an easy problem to solve. I also recognize that we lack officer numbers in APD, but there has to be a solution that can be implemented in the short term. I want to collaborate with you, our city leaders, to figure this out. It cannot be put on hold. It cannot be ignored because people's safety depends on it. And there's nothing more important than making sure that austinites are safe in their community. And I hope that we can make progress and figure out tangible solutions to this issue. Thank you. Thank you. >> Councilmember qadri. >> Thank you, mayor. I just want to thank Ben for being here today. Our office has been in contact with them. As Ben had mentioned, we had a meeting earlier on. I think we have a meeting coming up in the next week or so. So I appreciate him getting him stuff and we're we're almost neighbors, so I know a lot of the issues that he's talking about. And I've had conversations with mills on a on a police initiative that's that's in the works. So if Ben, if you want to reach out later

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to mills I know he'd be happy to chat with you. Thank you. >> Thank you. Council member. >> Next speaker is Josh gale. All righty. >> Micah like me today. Hello, everyone again, I'm sure you all remember me. My name is Josh gale and I am one of Jason's. John's many friends and his former roommate. I come to you all again today after a few weeks since I last spoke to you, because once again, another member of our community has been pulled out of lady bird lake. It's continues to happen every few weeks, every couple of months. And in between, almost every time I come to see you all on the flip end, one of the programs that we've put into place had a major success.

[2:07:50 PM]

Someone walking home from Rainey street was found by the ems patrolling that path. When I heard that news, I almost broke down in tears to know that we helped somebody. I think was huge. But that isn't the stop of our work. With it being budgeted budget season and with us talking about the money, it's time for us to continue to showing that we care about our citizens and to put forward and pay for the funding and the changes us to make these plans stay in place and to continue working for us. Because right now I'm terrified that this is all just political theater. And the moment I decide that I'm going to be quiet, this will all just get thrown out. So I continue to show up and to ask you all to put in the changes that we need to protect our citizens who are just trying to

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have a good night out another concern of mine ties to the I-35 tex dot plans, specifically around the pedestrian bridges of 35 potentially being shut down. As you know, that was jj's walk home. If that if there is no ability for people in that area to cross the river there, that creates a major, major safety concern, which means there needs to be funding put in place to provide different options for those people to get home. I'm Emily Crowe has spoken to you all before about her transit idea. And I'm sure there's other ideas we can all figure out together. But ultimately, it's time to put the money up, protect our citizens, and make sure that we aren't pulling anybody out of this lake anymore . Thank you for your time. >> Thank you. >> And mayor, council member and I just want to make a quick response that the pedestrian and bicycle crossing of I-35 is very

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high priority in our conversations with dot and we definitely want to at the very least, maintain the current level of access. But but really, no, improve the level of access. I will say also in just this whole conversation around Rainey street, my understanding is that a lot of the service workers at Rainey live on east Riverside and will walk or bike, you know, downtown to work. So I completely agree that that that's a really we need to make sure that that crossing is as safe and convenient as possible to facilitate good one of members trying to get home from work. >> Thank thank you. >> Thank you. Councilmember please continue with the public communication. >> Next speaker is Christopher zeeble. >> Greetings and thank you for allowing me to speak. My name is Christopher Ziebell. I'm an emergency physician in live in district ten, and I'm here to

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talk to you today also about the budget proposal and the structure around the office of the medical director for austin-travis county ems. It looks like what I'm seeing as I'm talking to folks that I know who work in ems is that there is a proposal to go back to a structure that we had in the not so distant past, which was a very dysfunctional structure in which the physicians and physician assistants who work for ems did some of their work at the mercy of the paramedics who were in command of ems. The result was the three previous ems medical directors all left because they found this an untenable way to work. They couldn't actually fulfill their duties as leaders of the organization and ensuring medical quality when they were asked to report to people who had less training and less experience than they did in the management of the medicine. So I just wanted to express my opinion that the office of the

[2:11:57 PM]

medical director, including all of the associate medical directors and the people who make up the hmo service, must be independent in their function and decision making capacity from the way that the

paramedic command structure is organized. >> Eid thank you, sir. Thank you . >> And our last speaker is Marshall Cothran. >> Thank you. I'm Marshall Cothran here to also speak about the office of the chief medical officer okmo on behalf of the Travis county medical society, which is in district ten, by the way, which I'll refer to as tcms, representing 4000 plus physicians in our community. Tcms has an Ed ems advisory committee, which consists of emergency department directors

[2:12:59 PM]

of every receiving hospital in the region and consulting specialists in emergency medicine, cardiology, neurology and trauma surgery. Our committee advises the medical directors of Austin, ems and surrounding jurisdictions on all aspects of pre-hospital medical care, clinical protocols, credentialing and clinical oversight and pre-hospital care issues that impact the receiving hospital. Ls and Dr. Mark Scott's tenure. Our advisory committee has observed dramatic improvement in the quality and safety of pre-hospital care for the patients of our community in 2017. Tcms recomp amended specific ratios of physicians to ems and AFD providers to ensure safe physician oversight of the ems delegated practice. There are greater than 2300 delegate rated ems and AFD providers for whom the physicians overseeing them have direct legal liability

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under their medical license. However, it was not until the passage in 2021 of council, a council member alters budget amendment creating hmo that Dr. Escott was afforded the resources to implement these minimum safe physician oversight ratios. Importantly the utmost structure provides the physician independ. It's required of state law for their oversight functioning. We are deeply concerned that the current budget proposal would dissolve hmo, save for the cmo position itself and his executive assistant and reassign all other hmo physicians and support staff into various pockets of the ems command structure, reporting to paramedics, thus compromising physician Independence and effective clinical oversight. It's a sweeping reorganization motion that appears hastily conceived, and it certainly fraught with unintended consequences under Dr. Escott, hmo has developed a renowned

[2:15:01 PM]

pool of physicians and support staff in a culture of collaboration and innovation that is recognized nationally in the emergency medicine community. Hmo is a beacon of cutting edge emergency medical practice, which leaves us with two questions. One, what's wrong with the system now? And number two, why the rush to change it? Tcms supports efforts to enhance coordination and collaboration between. Ems and. Okmo provy added that okemos personnel and programs are kept intact and under the existing indepen pendent reporting structure of the office. >> Thank you. Thank you, mayor. Yes.

Councilmember alter. >> Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Cothran and Dr. Sabella for being here. Colleagues, this is not on our agenda. So we can't really have a deep conversation Ann about it. But it is something that concerns me. And if just invite you, if you have questions to, to talk with me as well. Thank you. >> That's all the public

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communication, correct? Do you manager do you want to say something? We aren't. We are not posted for this. So people that were invited to come speak then people that were invited to speak on this item, it's not a posted item. So if we get into a discussion, it will I'll be happy to address this at a later time. >> But I thought some of the representations that were done just a minute ago were totally inaccurate. >> Okay. Thank you. The first item on the agenda, other than public communication, is approval of the minutes. Is there anyone that has any suggested changes or amendments to the minutes? Councilmember Kelly moves adoption. It's seconded by councilmember vela. Any discussion? Hearing none. Without objection, the minutes are adopted. Members, there's been a request that we take up. Item number three before we take up item number two. So unless there's objection, I will call up item number three, which is a briefing and discussion regarding the maintenance of air conditioning systems on AFD trucks and apparatuses.

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Kathie. I think we saw this show one time before, but I'm happy to see it again. Yeah Halston fire department. >> I'm Jennifer Walz, the director of fleet mobility services is do you have a presentation or do you just want to know? >> We can open it up for questions? Yes, we do. >> We did have a presentation. Okay, good. So almost, almost done back there. >> That's a presentation. I'll come back up. Okay. >> Okay. So you've heard from me earlier. I have here next to me, Rick Haaland, who's our assistant director over emerging technology, who handles the acquisition side, and a lot of the data management side of fleet. So I'll turn things over to him. He can give you a little bit more in depth understanding of ac repair and how it's

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fluctuated from last year to this year, data points and so forth. And then we can come back to what we're doing to address the problem. So here's Rick Haaland. Great. Thank you. >> Good afternoon, mayor. Good afternoon. Council members on the screen, what you're looking at is the repair history over the last five years, which you can see is we have 39 ac repairs that were completed in June, 30 in July. The average is 18 per month. And we have a summer average volume lift of 27 on a couple of observations with the data that we've pulled is that is that the current peak of ac repairs with the fire

department historically has been in June and it's up 34% year over year. The months leading up to June, though, appeared to be underreported. If you look and you see the months leading up to June in 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, what you see is kind of an

[2:19:09 PM]

escalation of reported ac repair volume in 2023. There appears to be this gap and I'm thinking that it might have to do with the winter storm. Some of the responses to the winter storm, some of that activity that took place there. But generally speaking, the historical trend line, if you look at it, is kind of in a downward trend. So we're actually making progress slowly, but it's just kind of flat out. In other words, this is not a big surprise. The 39 peak ac repair demand that was kind of backlogged is historically normal. So what we're doing in the fleet department itself is we've assembled a team of dedicated ac repair staff. We're performing pre check diagnostics at some of the fire stations themselves. So we have a mobile team that's going out and they're looking and seeing what's wrong. And if it's something that's quick and easy to fix, they'll fix it. If not, then they'll go ahead and schedule it for repair. We've authorized overtime, of course, and we've increased our inventory volume of ac related

[2:20:10 PM]

parts for repair. And then we've leveraged our strategic vendors for in-warranty repair orders from a people perspective, we've shifted additional staff to assist with the ac backlog. We're reviewing the staffing ratios with AFD and ems because they both operate out of service. Center six currently at roughly about 37 to 1 vehicle to tech ratio. So we're training more staff. We only put the most trained and highly qualified staff to work on ems and AFD equipment because it's so complex. We've established a schedule for repairing the backlog that's been built up. As you can see in the numbers on the previous slide. And of course, the northeast service center is a big piece to future improvement in this area for opportunities. So in the AFD fleet, there are reserve vehicles both for engines and for ladders and there is a reserve quantity that's based on the number of active units. Currently, the we have 17 in

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reserve engines or pumpers and we have two that are called ready reserve. These are vehicles that are already equipped to immediately go to the field in the event of a fire or respond to an emergency. They're already equipped with equipment on it. One of the observations is on our aerial reserve, which is seven units, which is 47% of active units. There are no ready reserves. There are no there's no equipment that's actually pre-positioned inside the vehicle for immediate response. That I think is an opportunity for us all to take a look at. It's a couple hundred thousand dollars worth of equipment to go on the vehicle, possibly see some communications equipment that S.T.E.M. Would have to put in the

vehicle and then we are proposing to the apparatus committee. We don't just buy vehicles randomly. We work with the committee on what we're buying in terms of fire apparatuses and we notice that our vendors have come out in 2023 with what's called an enhanced hvac system. We don't know fully what that means. We think it controls airflow. So

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there's some ceramic tinting on the windows. There's some other things that go with it. We're trying to get a full understanding of it because it's brand new and we've not been able to order it in the past. The other thing is that we are looking for an opportunity to maybe house or cover the apparatuses when they're idle to 106 degrees outside the air conditioning units are only designed to cool the cab of the vehicle 25 degrees within 30 minutes. So if you're starting position is 100 degrees plus in the cab, you're never going to get cool by the time you get to wherever you're going. And finally, from a leadership perspective and kind of just action item perspective, tactical perspective, you know, leadership, dedication. And I know that both the fleet and AFD teams are dedicated to making sure this is a rectified issue or cultivating a safety culture and then working on persists progress over time and enhanced repair communications so that early communications is better. If you saw in the last slide there was kind of that gap in communications with which which

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created a backlog that in and of itself we're trying to digest that amount of work volume that we normally don't see in a sudden period of time. And then I think one of the things we can do to get ahead of this and this goes for the rr fleet as well, is seasonal maintenance awareness campaign, where, you know, every spring and fall go out and we prepare our vehicles and try to touch every single one of them. Today we work on a normal schedule, but I think there is an opportunity to get out there and get in advance and get these vehicles in touch and make sure all the components and parts and pieces that of the vehicle are safe and ready to go to the field in the summer or in the winter. And we've been on both extremes here in the last three years. And then really empowering and ownership up among the fleet and AFD personnel to make decision. None of us in this room are on the front line and see when these air conditioning systems are broken or in need of repair. But our frontline staff is. And so we want to make sure that these folks understand that you need to communicate as needed. And

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then and we'll take it and schedule it from there within the fleet mobility services department, that's the update. >> Well, thank you. We'll start with any questions? Burns and council member Kelly. I can't see you right now, so if you'll if you have any questions. >> Yeah, I just unmuted. Mayor, thank you so much.

And I can't thank fleet and AFD leadership enough for being so responsive to this need. It's definitely something that was concerning to me, which is why I brought it up. I'm not sure if that presentation was in backup, but I'd like to request that it goes there so that we can refer to it when we get questions from people in the community about it. I'm really glad to hear about the mobile team, the increased inventory, the backlog repair schedule changes the leadership dedication. I have seen in over the course of the discussions we've been having both while we were talking about the budget and now and I really like the component about the empowerment among fleet and AFD to really bring these items forward so that they can be

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addressed properly. And thank you, mayor, for taking my request to make this first out. I appreciate it very much. Sure thing. >> Hang on one second. Any other questions? Make a run for it. Very good. Thank you for your presentation, Ann appreciate you being here. All right, we'll take up item number two. Item number two is a briefing and discussion on the completed recommendations concerning APD training academy. It's my understanding there's a presentation for this as well.

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>> Hello, I'm assistant chief Jason Staniszewski. I'm over the training division and this is commander woody Lyons. >> I am the commander over the APD training division. So today we want to talk a little bit about the recommended actions and what we have compiled since our last meeting here last month . >> Could I ask you to move that microphone a little closer to you, maybe moving it quite a bit ? There you go. >> He's quite a bit bigger than me, so we've been asked to compile a little bit more information on the recommendations and what we've implemented since the last time we spoke here about a month ago . So there's been, you know, many recommendations that have been made throughout the patrol reports. And one of them was that we brought up or council brought up last time was the audits of the cadet classes. So we've completed the audit of the 147th cadet class, which graduated on may 19th of 2023.

[2:27:22 PM]

Several of those recommendations for the audit can answer several of the recommendations in the main report. So that's kind of what we wanted to report out today, that what we've done for the 147th. So we're currently have the 148th, which is being audited by Kroll directly, and they'll be reporting out the 140 or the 148th and then the 149th will be graduating December 29th. And we will create another report for the 149. Do you have any questions before we start the presentation? >> Anybody have any

questions? All right. We're working on getting the presentation up. Okay >> Like you said, the 147th graduated on may 19th. You can go to the do you want to start talking about the curriculum

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review committee, which which has been topic of many discuss sessions over the recent past the committee actually worked through the 147th and ended shortly after that since. The 147th is graduate and we've with the recommendations of Kroll, we have. Modified the curriculum review and to do two different committees, which would be a citizens advisory committee in conjunction with Joyce James consulting. We plan to have a draft of the policies and procedures within two weeks for that portion of the community review committee. We're also working with a professional. Academe curriculum review. Currently, we have been continuing our conversations

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with Kroll and we're meeting with finance to create a scope of work. We're meeting directly with Kroll to finish the procedures. And then we're also started reaching out to professors at the university of Texas so we can implement that for the next class. The direct recommendation is for the curriculum. Next slide. So going back to the 147th, eight classes were taught in in cooperation with the subject matter experts , though some of those topics include the sexual harassment recommendation, the us and Texas constitution. And Wright's history of policing the race in Austin. Mindful and resilience and multiculturalism. So those were some of the classes that were taught with subject matter experts to directly to the cadets. You can see the several

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of the co facilitators represented from the united or the university of Texas, Texas state university, Houston, tillerson and other community colleges around the local area. Going into community connect, which is where the 147th first started. And you can see the they completed 59 hours and these are with the outside agencies directly working with these groups, such as the sobering center, the Texas school for the deaf, the community first village settlement home jails, the jobs. So this really emerged, the cadets in the beginning of their career with the Austin police department. And to have a mindset as they're moving forward that these are the individuals the most in need and who we need to concentrate on as as they're moving throughout their career. >> Good afternoon. I want to go ahead and move into the culture of adult learning. So as you can

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see there, our staff began incorporating the adult learning concepts into the curriculum in mid 2021. But what exactly is adult learning and what is the bloom's taxonomy? Well, as we know, it is recognized framework that categorizes the different levels of cognitive thinking and learning. And as you can see, there's multiple concepts related to bloom's taxonomy, including remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create. And so far we've incorporated this adult learning concept in theory into 22 classes, and we're continuing to expand that out from the 147 throughout the rest of the cadet classes. Next slide, please. As we continue with adult learning, we want to specifically highlight the professional

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development for our training academy staff. You know, when I took over as the training commander, one of the things that was very pivotal to me was enhancing the development of our team. So I met with our team. I conducted a strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and that gave me as well as my staff, the opportunity to learn our strengths and weaknesses and where we can make some, some substantive changes. So a couple of the courses that we've actually put our instructors through was the advanced trauma training science based interviewing, interviewing the right way ethics train the trainer as well as media literacy 101 for police training. As you can see there on the slide, there's a multitude of other courses that our instructors have taken on. And again, this is something that is ongoing and continuous and we are very dedicated and committed to enhancing the professional and growth and

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development of our instructors. Next slide. Moving on to some transformative change. As you can see here, we want to speak briefly about the belonging and inclusion. One of crows recommendation was is to ensure that we get this incorporated in the cadet classes as we move forward. As we can see here, the groundwater analysis training, which I like to call gwa, was provided by Joyce James consulting. We also instituted this training to our fto's who train our newly graduated cadets and to become an fto. It is a mandated and required for all of those prospective students to take the training prior to beginning the fto school. As you can see, the fto's are required to complete a two day recertification training and some of those courses include teaching methods force review. The red dot transition pistol

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and updated ground ground water analysis curriculum. Next slide . >> So the next was the demographics of the 147th and how it compared to the city of Austin. As you can see, the numbers correlate pretty evenly among young black, white and hispanic. The male and female genders. That's a little bit different on the numbers, but that's roughly the demographics for the 147th and our trainings academy. Next slide. So continuing on with the with the recommendations and where our academy staff and our academy cadets are going as well as the department is the incorporation of icrts and able icrts has been incorporated for several years within the police department. All of the cadets were trained in it as well as

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the ftos will be continuing to get updates on the icas, which is basically our de-escalation training. The active bystander for law enforcement. We're in the final stages of that and we hope to have that class up and running shortly. The cadets will be brought back before their probation period ends to complete that training. And that training will be as the icrts is will be mandated department wide. On a side note, also, our reserve officers will be required to have this training. I know we've talked about that over the last couple of weeks. So this training will be mandatory from the chief all the way down to next slide. >> So continuing on with the training for the 1/47, all of the cadets received 37 hours of our crisis intervention training, which is when we're dealing with individuals suffering crisis in a mental health capacity. >> Some of the presenters there

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that actually met with the cadets and provided instruction was integral care. The national association of mental health's trauma informed care. And one thing that's really important is that that the integral care staff actually worked with us during our practicals to see how the cadets interacted in scenario based training. And then they were able to offer their their recommendations and their opinion on how the cadets handled the situation. I want to discuss briefly about some more transformed change that we have . Put in there for the 147 cadet class, and it's going to be related to the trauma informed training. >> So as you know, one of the colonel's recommendation was to for APD to put on trauma and forced crisis intervention training, training to enhance officer and community safety. Well, this trauma informed care

[2:37:36 PM]

training does help our cadets to learn how trauma impacts the brain and memory coding and then how to apply that information when engaging with victims and awareness of the neurobiology of trauma enhances our cadets reactions and responses to citizens for the 1/47 cadet class currently, we've had

ten courses that have include this training as well as a multitude of role play scenarios. As next slide. Moving on, we want to discuss our physical fitness training. As you can see here for the 147 cadet class, we have four cadets that initially failed the pt test within the first week of the academy. One cadet was terminated because they they did not reach the 60% threshold in three cadets met the 60% threshold, retested and passed within 30 days. That was the one change that we specifically made for the 147 cadet class prior to the 147

[2:38:38 PM]

cadet class. If a cadet did not actually meet the 70% threshold on the first day or the first week of the academy, they would have been completely terminated. So as you can see, this change allowed those three cadets to continue within our program. So I would like to think that that that was a big gain and a big plus for the department continuing. We have three injuries related to pt. As you can see, we have that one cadet that injured themselves during warm up and two cadets just became over exerted due to a lack of dehydrate in some performance improvements include the average scores on the benchmark bodyweight workout, which increased by 13. And we've had zero cadets actually fail to test at the end of the academy. And that's something I'm very excited about. Next slide. Moving on to speak a little bit about our mentorship program. This is something that we are

[2:39:38 PM]

still developing and is in an ongoing process. Now when we're thinking about this thing, we want to ensure that whatever we do is not only thoughtful, but it's something that is going to be embedded within our program and in the department holistically, if you will. So we're kind of taking our time. We're benchmarking with other agencies and we're working with Kroll to ensure that when we get our mentorship program up and running, it's one of the best programs in the nation when it comes to our Rideout program. All of the cadets completed 2 to 10 hour ride outs during the week. 71 of their training that was another recommendation that was included by the Carlton. And next, kind of want to talk about attrition. >> Obviously, it's very important when we're talking about our staffing levels and trying to keep cadets through the academy and then eventually being cut loose through fto. The attrition we began with, we

[2:40:40 PM]

ended up with 22 separations throughout the 147th. We had to cadets that are recycled. And what that basically means is for some reason they didn't make it through the cadet and they were falling, such as an injury. They can't complete the physical aspects. Then they would be we would offer them a job with most of the time with dispatch and the communication options. Then once the next cadet class started,

we rejoined with the next cadet class. So so the reasons for attrition, the top five was the physical fitness, which we talked about earlier. The academics and performance, because we do hold our cadets to a high standard, we expect them to know our policies in the law . Likewise, the character, integrity issues we hold our cadets and our officers to a high standard for that half of the individuals that are Ed from the academy was for personal reasons, which is the commute. The child care job risks. They

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just wasn't what they expected to be. And then 9% were recycled . Chief before you move on, can you explain the number of total cadets? >> So we have a sense of the attrition rate, not just the number of cadets. Please >> The I'm sorry, how many cadets started the academy? >> I have. How many started with 47. >> So 55 started and then that would have. Graduated 37. >> Okay. Thank you. >> And just to kind of put a little perspective to move forward with the 148th, obviously the Kroll will report out the 148th and the tuition, which is where we're still at 19 out of 34 for the 149th or the 1/48. And but the 1/50, we've really looked into why why the cadets are leaving. And if there's something we can change

[2:42:42 PM]

and I'm happy to say that we've only lost four for the current cadet class that will be graduating in December. So out of those four, I believe one was a pt and injury. So we've really focused on why cadets were leaving and we have a very successful class right now. Moving on, I just want to kind of briefly touch on some additional changes that we've made. >> And one of the things that I know was one of council's priorities and. You just need to move it closer to you. >> It's pointed the wrong direction. Okay we're going to try this again briefly. >> I want to just talk about some additional changes we have made. I know one of council's priorities was specifically going to be related to the culture at the academy, and I

[2:43:43 PM]

know Kroll talked about this also in their report. So again, Ann, you know, once I arrived at the training academy and I had a many leadership talks and discussions with not only our academy leadership, but with our instructors as well, we decided to kind of look at the attrition rate holistically and see exactly where we can make some improvements. So one of the areas that we decided to make some improvements was going to be regarding our performance accountability program. Well as you can see now moving forward, our performance accountability will be administered specifically for the violations of officer safety as well as any violations that are going to be related to law enforcement actions. We utilize as this performance accountability to teach our cadets that the actions of one affect the whole. So we want to say that there's going to be some, you know, some

[2:44:43 PM]

kinks that we're still going to have to work out within this process. But with that being said, we are doing this in a collaborative effort. And I'm excited to see exactly how this will impact our attrition rate moving forward. The next change I do want to speak about was the basic peace officer course. And the schedule we recently amended our schedule to reflect the recommended sequence for basic so that it gives specific reasons on exactly why their schedule is aligned in that order and some of those reasons include starting with subjects that are generally cognitive in nature. Then continuing to the effective learning modules. And then finally to the psychomotor learning from remembering to application. So we're going to be going back to this model. We made some adjustments in our cadet training schedule and it seems as though we are on the

[2:45:45 PM]

path ahead. I'm looking forward to the future and I am excited and beyond committed to enhancing the knowledge of our cadets and building the future generation of police officers in the city of Austin. >> Council was 33 for the last class for the 1/47 questions. >> Councilmember Velasquez. Thank you both for your service. >> I had just one quick question. When on your slides where you're talking about transfer normative change, how many hours or are you able to tell us how many hours were spent in each of the specialized areas when you're talking about integral care and collaborations with integral care and safe. We should be able to get the exact hours. >> We don't have that in our presentation, but we can definitely follow up. Appreciate

[2:46:47 PM]

you. >> Thank you. Okay. Other questions or comments? >> Councilmember Bella. Just a handful. >> What you said that the attrition rate you start off with about 55, graduated about 33. What what's a normal attrition rate for a cadet class? >> It's varied throughout time. I mean, there's always different reasons. Unfortunately for the last couple of classes that has been unusually high, higher than we certainly want and that's one of the focuses. But it I believe for these last couple of classes, it's been roughly about that that average about 40% or so. >> We're losing about 40% or so of the of the cadets. Yes. And so in prior to that, less it was less than that. Let's say, you know, in in 20% or something around there. So recently we've seen a little bump in the in the loss of cadets. >> Do you have the generally, sir? >> Well, first of all, thank you

[2:47:47 PM]

for asking that question. Our attrition rate generally in the past couple of years has been somewhere between the 25% and the 35 to 40. So we're still around within within that within that specific range. >> Got it. And the test and the 60% threshold, could you all just elaborate on that? What exactly? You know, I mean, physical basically fitness test, right? And then the 60% threshold, what exactly does that mean? >> So the percentages, the combination of the physical fitness, all of the exercises, if you will. So if the cadet does not meet their 70, that is considered a failure. Like I stated before, Shaw prior to the change for the 1/47 cadet class, if the cadet did not meet the 70, they were terminated. But now we have that 10% buffer to allow somebody who had, you know, let's say, a bad day. And

[2:48:48 PM]

once we implemented that change, we have not had any cadets that retested within that 30 day time frame fail. So we're able to keep those three cadets from that one, 47 cadet class in our academy. >> That's great. And these are basically. I'm sorry, go ahead. >> Yeah, yeah. The pt test actually consists of a mile and a half run push ups and sit ups, and that's based off of when we say the percentage of their age and their sex. So it's what's different going to be for a 35 year old is going to be different from a 23 year old. So and we're constantly looking those matrix to see if there are best practices, if they're if they're fitting in with the normal society. But that's basically where we have and they have it. We average that out and that's where we come with the 60. So somebody may be under 60% and say the run, but over in the push ups, well, it's the average. >> Okay. And good to know the other one. Just a couple more questions. Groundwater analysis training, that one, I'd sorry, I

[2:49:49 PM]

didn't quite catch what exactly is that training that that you all have? I think it was on slide like 4 or 5 there that's put on by Joyce James and it talking about racism and systemic racism systems within a within our culture. Okay it kind of part of the cultural competence and just understanding the kind of nature of the community and then the presenters and honestly that's a great list of presenters that that you all have. In particular, I, I know Dr. Kevin foster on the on the school board and my understanding is that and I mean, you know, he's a UT African American studies professor, he's going to tell it like it is to the cadets. How is that being received by the cadets like these kind of frank discussions about, you know, race and society and those kinds of themes is being very much well received? >> That's one of the pivotal

[2:50:50 PM]

courses that we instituted in our program. And we actually do cadet evaluations at the end of the academy and all of the feedback related to that course is very positive. So I'm very thankful for, for Dr. Foster, for his service to our training academy. >> That's great to hear. I had a conversation with him a few months back and he was saying that just from the classroom response, the students are engaged in that part of the discussion. It's a very and that's great. I mean, it it's good to see that. And I'm glad to see it as part of the curriculum. >> Thanks, councilman councilmember Allison alter. I'm sorry I didn't. I'll call on committee member council member Kelly thank you. >> I just wanted to say thank you for the presentation. I really appreciated it. I know that there's a lot of work going on out there at the academy. I just happen to be at the public safety training campus for a class that I was taking this

[2:51:50 PM]

summer, and I saw how hard the cadets were working out. And I know that they're taking physical training seriously. So thank you for making sure you're doing everything you can to keep them safe, especially with the weather that we have right now with the extreme heat going on. And thank you for everything that you're doing to ensure that they have the best ability to get through the academy with the requirements that you've provided. I appreciate that. Thank you. >> Thank you. Councilmember councilmember Allison alter. >> Thank you. So, colleagues, I just want to remind you that the audit that they're doing now is part of something that we asked Kroll to do as part of one of their delivery goals was to create a protocol that the academy staff could go through after each class to report back to us so that we would be able to see kind of what's going on to some degree. So and I think this is our first official report on that. So I appreciate that. And I would just ask if you could please share with the council the actual protocol, you

[2:52:50 PM]

know, so that folks can see the kinds of questions and overview to real easily. I think it does give us a sense of what we need to be looking for and addressing in the kinds of questions that we need to be to be asking. So I would appreciate that. So I have it looks like Kroll is on virtual, so I have a couple of questions that I'd like to get their feedback on and then some questions for staff. So we it looks like for the 147th, we had a 40% attrition rate. What maybe before I go to you, what was the attrition? What's the attrition rate right now for the 148th? It's 19 of 34, sir. Correct and how many are in the 150th class? So the 148th is correct. >> We started with 34 and we're currently at 19. We're anticipating all 19 of those graduating. The 149th is the

[2:53:50 PM]

class where we started with 34 also. And we're still at 30. And that's the class that we're graduating in December. So we're we're about halfway through on that class. >> Okay. So my question for Kroll is for at least for the 148th and 147th, we're talking at least a 40% attrition rate. What is normal for an attrition rate like? How alarming, how alarmed should we be? You know, we are trying to fill our classes and help people through here. But I don't know that we have a context for police academies more broadly of what we should be expecting. >> So I'll date myself a little bit with this response. But when I was running the Boston police ten years ago, 25 to 30% attrition rate from the class was pretty standard. That ten years is a different time frame though, in that, you know, right

[2:54:52 PM]

now, working with police departments around the country, recruiting and retention is a huge challenge. And we're seeing that not as many candidates are interested in a, you know, 25 year commitment to the same career in the same department. And then I also think, you know, covid clearly wrecked the, the numbers for a couple of years there. But 25 to 30 was the standard in law enforcement prior to this. Recruiting challenge. That's national. And I would just add to what Mr. Linsky said with respect to APD , we had been looking at when we did the 144th cadet class, the independent evaluation, I believe they had a close to 40% attrition in that class as well, which at the time was the highest with, with I think one exception in the highest attrition of any cadet classes is at least going back as far as 2015. >> And so the 147th and 148 have

[2:55:54 PM]

continued that trend of 40% or more attrition in which is clearly on the higher side. It's good to see that the apparently the one, 49 seems to be off to a pretty good start. So hopefully that trend will continue. But 40% is definitely high. And I think what Mr. Linsky is saying is consistent with more nationally. You'll see, you know, 25, 20 to 25, maybe occasionally 30. Thank you. >> And are there suggestions of things that we can be doing to improve of retention that we're not already in motion to do? I know there are things that we are doing and commander Lyons went through several of the things. Are there are there things that we should be considering to improve attrition that we're not already working on or that you want to highlight as priorities of stuff that may be in the works? >> I think a couple of things

[2:56:55 PM]

that were we thought would be helpful and I think the has tried it is to do the right outs sooner in the academy program so that the cadets get a sense for what it's like to be on the street, to take the learning out of the classroom and what it's like to interact with the public and see whether or not it's a job for them. We saw in the initial class that we monitored after they went out to the street, they

realized that it was different than the sanitized academy setting and several people decided not to fill the career with Austin pd. There have been steps and they're in various programs that have been in play to help mentor and help, do education and training and even some physical fitness preparedness with candidates before they come into the academy. I think academics is certainly a challenge, for some folks, especially folks who might not be their first language skill and, and I know in Boston we were successful with working with a college university city to kind of the

[2:57:55 PM]

nine months we were going through backgrounds and checking on recruits to see whether we're going to hire them. We allowed them the opportunity to get some education knell support programs prior to the academy learning how to take a test. For example, some people don't do well on tests and training people how to take tests and that type of thing can be helpful. I think the academy has done a good job of looking at physical standards and the way in which they've measured them and tried to adjust accordingly to try and, you know, we want physically fit police officers, but we also need to make sure that the standards meet the actual requirements of the job and aren't just something that, you know, is, for, for example, in Massachusetts, we had a wall that people had to climb over for pre-employment the wall wiped out a lot of female cadets who weren't able to climb the six foot wall. And quite frankly, we did a job analysis. Oftentimes our police officers weren't vaulting six foot walls. So we're able to bring that wall down and make some changes. And

[2:58:57 PM]

I think that the intro, assessments for physical fitness are pretty good. And they've taken some steps to reduce injuries with the physical fitness and the learned skills training. Obviously, you know, out of someone's control. But if you're doing learn skills on flat ground and indoor auditorium where you're not going to twist ankles and tear a ligament in your knee, that's a lot better than than putting cadets at risk out in the field that has rabbit holes and rocks and things that can cause harm. So some of the stuff is in play . But this is, again, this is a challenge nationally where academies are trying to look how do they support cadets and recruits through this process as thank you. >> You know, as a council member, I'll just say, you know, it's very important to me that we take the steps to reduce those attrition levels and retain folks who have committed to do the service and so, you know, if as you're doing the

[2:59:57 PM]

work and you're discovering things, if there's resources or things that are within our power that we need to take so that you can do that, please be sure to surface that. I think one of the things that will be really important in that retention is upping the quality of the adult learning, which is what we're working on.

And I think the investments that we're making in the budget are really important for that. So I'm looking forward to that and I think they follow the suggestions of the of the crow reports for that. While I have Kroll, I did want to ask you if there are any concerns that are surfacing for the 148th that we ought to know about. I don't know if you're ready to share any of those at this point or not, but, well, I can highlight a few areas that I think are, probably falling shorter than, than we might like. >> And one would be there's, there's no process yet in place for, instructor evaluations of

[3:01:02 PM]

instructors, other than cadet evaluations which happened at the end of each class through a survey that's conducted. And that's a requirement. But actual supervisor evaluations and other , peer review of academy instructors is, is I think is something that's not been developed yet. We do think the instruction I know commander Lyons referenced instructional development and professional development opportunities. However I think that that is an area that needs a lot more work and that's an area that ties right into, incorporation and the ability of instructors to incorporate adult and active learning concepts into their course curriculum. There's a fair amount of adult learning in active learning in role play scenarios in a lot of aspects. So a lot of what learn skills unit does over there, the defensive tactics and so forth. Has role play scenarios that are acted out by cadets and they're

[3:02:02 PM]

handled very well. Same with the cat training has has a day that's devoted to role plays, crisis intervention, training. They do an excellent job with that. And they have a day of the training devoted to role plays. A lot of the classroom based teaching were what we've gotten from the cadets, at least that we've spoken to. You know, there's still a fair amount of, of, kind of rote memorization and, and reading of, of material jails and penal codes and powerpoints. So I think that's a work in progress. So that would be another area that I think clearly needs to be be further worked on. We're or the other, the other area thing that's I'd say is completely incomplete is the development of a, of a video library which was something we tried to address, as you know, a couple of years ago. And it was tied into part of the, you know,

[3:03:05 PM]

the video review and then the curriculum review and incorporation of videos, which is something no cadets have very much wanted. And 144th, it was a big issue because they weren't really using, videos in training . So we had recommended that that they begin to use a lot of the internal resources as that has with body cam footage and all sorts of internal, video resources as identifying ones that could be good instructional videos and begin to build a video library. And that's something that unfortunately I think to

date has still not, happened. And don't, don't. We're going to be there next week, talking with a number of, of academy staff. We'll address that issue again. And then the only other area I would say of, that's, of still of concern is, is the loss of the division manager position. I know that the department is revising the

[3:04:08 PM]

roles and responsibilities for, for that position. I believe they, they've changed it to some extent. It's now going to be more of a manager of curriculum , instruction and development. And how, how that and some other civilian positions, which I think is a, is a good thing. And I know that council has budgeted for that and is in the process of developing those positions, but I would say it's more of a question mark as to where that is going and, and how effectively these positions will be incorporated into academy staff and how effectively civilian and sworn will collaborate and work together going forward, which I think is an important process, again, tying into the ability to continue to develop instructional techniques and adult learning into a course teaching. >> Thank you. So that segways nicely into my next question. And I had an opportunity to

[3:05:10 PM]

speak with both of you. Thank you. The other day at length about the budget investments. And one of the questions I had following that was how is the civilian management happening over time? So I understand it's starting that they're reporting to commander Lyons, but over time is how are we working that out and how do we make sure that those civilian instructors are in curriculum builders are doing the work that they're supposed to do and not just what the sworn officers don't want to do. So. Thank you for your question. >> That was a very good question and one of the things that I've done is I actually taken the time to go over the positions, but I wanted to be specific. One of the areas of contention, not only when it comes to our department, but a lot of other police departments, is duties

[3:06:10 PM]

and responsibilities. So with the program manager position that is going to be replacing the division manager position. What I've done was I've benchmarked with other agencies such as LAPD, Baltimore, la, San Diego, Dallas, etcetera, and in order to create some clear guidelines of duties and responsibilities, I retitled the position from a program manager three to be specific of manager of curriculum and instruction. That position has been posted and it will close on August 11th. So if anyone is in need of or has a desire to serve, that position is posted and we will welcome you to Austin police department. But continuing on under that program manager would be the curriculum and instruction specialists that would be dedicated to not only be assisting our instructors

[3:07:11 PM]

with curriculum development, but also role modeling the behavior as they provide and collaborate in a cohesive environment to ensure that we are delivering the instruction with appropriate adult learning models that way we can have that informed curriculum and ensure that our cadets are receiving the top notch education that that they desire . So with that being said, I had a meeting with not only my leadership team but with several members of the staff. And I've presented this plan regarding the acquiring these positions and what the duties would be as well as specific. I guess, if you will, expectations of that collaboration. And I'm happy to report that all of the academy staff is not only excited to be able to bring on the team to

[3:08:11 PM]

help deliver this type of instruction, but also help inform their professional development. With that course critiques, if you will. So I know one of the recommendations that curl recommended was in the course evaluations. Et cetera. So I believe bringing those experts, if you will, and those those folks that have the education and experience related to education and teaching would assist and allow our instructors to be the best that they can be . >> Thank you. I appreciate that. And, chief Stan, I hope that you're also leaning in to communicate Singh to the sworn members of the academy staff. The importance of these civilian role and supporting commander Lyons in that effort. >> I am and executive staff is. >> Thank you. And then the last is not really a question, just a comment. Acme mills looked like

[3:09:12 PM]

had to go to another meeting, but in our conversation, one of the things that surfaced was that as we're bringing in all these people, we're making all these changes. The academy is operating with one administrative support staff, and there are vacancies within APD that could be restructured and devoted to this work. And so I just wanted to underscore again my desire to see APD find a way to support the administrative needs of the academy so that they can be focused so that commander Lyons can focus on managing and our instructors can focus on instructing. So thank you very much. I'm excited to see this move forward under your leadership. Commander Lyons. It was a big loss, losing doctor Cregan and her permanent role. But I'm glad that she's on there assisting in other ways, and I look forward to seeing how this evolves. And thank you to curl for all that you're doing to help us move this forward. >> Thank you all for being here

[3:10:13 PM]

and thank you for presentation. Is there anything else that anybody wants to ask or comment on? >> I do want to mention one thing. >> Okay, sir, I know we've discussed a lot today about curriculum and instruction and the training academy, but I would be remiss if I didn't take a brief moment of time to highlight the personnel who actually work at the training academy, and that includes all of my sworn personnel as well as my administrative and civilian staff. >> That team is brilliant. They have been doing the work day in and day out and I am very fortunate enough to be able to lead that team and to continue to build the future generation of our police officers in the city of Austin. >> Well said. Thank you. Without objection, the public safety committee of the Austin city council is adjourned and it is 311 on Monday, August seventh. Thanks, everybody.