

**COMMUNITY POLICE REVIEW COMMISSION**  
**of the City of Richmond, California**  
**(CPRC)**  
**Wednesday, May 3, 2023**  
**7:00 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

**I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, PLEDGE**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Chair Carol Hegstrom in the Employee Lunchroom in the Basement of 450 Civic Center Plaza at Richmond, California.

**Present:** Carol Hegstrom (Chair), Dow Tunis (Vice Chair), Oscar Garcia, Andre Jackson, Randy Joseph\*, Steven Lacy and Rachel Lorber  
\*Arrived after Roll Call

**Absent:** Daniel Lawson

**Staff:** Lilia Corral - Present

**Council Liaison:** Claudia Jimenez – Not Present

**City Attorney's  
Office Representative:** Pam Lee - Present

**II. STATEMENT OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Pam Lee, Legal Counsel representing the City Attorney's Office, explained that this was the time when any member of the CPRC who had a conflict of interest with respect to any item on the agenda to identify that Conflict of Interest.

Commissioner Jackson reported that he knew Mr. Hurtado, the subject of the case under Executive Session.

Ms. Lee stated that Commissioner Jackson had earlier advised that he had met Mr. Hurtado but had no bearing, bias or financial interest with respect to Mr. Hurtado and there was no conflict of interest in this case. As such, Commissioner Jackson would be able to participate in the Executive Session.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (April 5, 2023)**

Chair Hegstrom advised that the first paragraph on Page 6 under Item XIII. New Business, Tabling at Events had been attributed to Commissioner Lawson and should have been attributed to Commissioner Garcia. She requested a correction.

<p><b>ACTION:</b> It was M/S/C (Garcia/Tunis) to approve the minutes of the April 5, 2023 meeting, as amended; approved by a Roll Call vote: 7-0 (Ayes: Garcia, Jackson, Joseph, Lacy, Lorber, Tunis and Chair Hegstrom; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Lawson).</p>
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#### **IV. AGENDA REVIEW**

Chair Hegstrom advised that City Council Liaison Claudia Jimenez would not be present at this meeting.

#### **V. PUBLIC FORUM**

Staff Liaison Lilia Corral advised of an email from Cordell Hindler that would be provided later in the meeting.

#### **VI. REPORT OF CITY COUNCIL LIAISON (Claudia Jimenez)**

City Council Liaison Claudia Jimenez was not available at this time.

#### **VII. REPORT BY CHIEF OF POLICE (Chief French or Designee)**

Police Chief Bisa French provided the crime statistics for the month of April and advised that there had been one homicide in the Central District, the death of a 17-year old, and there were no promising leads at this time. Among other statistics, there had also been six rapes, 16 robberies, 156 thefts, and 103 vehicle thefts. In terms of staffing, the hiring of police officers had slowed down last month and no officer had been hired during the month of April. One sworn officer, Al White, had retired. Officers continued to serve overtime and with the upcoming celebrations of Cinco de Mayo and Juneteenth, there would be less than half the officers desired for the events. Officers were being forced to work a maximum capacity of hours at 16 to 18 hours a day, and the five patrol teams normally comprised of nine officers were down to five officers per team. Currently there were only 41 officers on patrol. Several officers in training were expected to come off of training during the month of June, which should help a bit. She stated people were still leaving; there were four people in background from other police departments, 11 officers on injury leave and two on light duty. For professional staffing, things were a bit better and several professional staff members had been hired last month in the positions of Records, Property Tech, and Jailer, but she added that today was also the last day of one of RPD's Jailers so there would still be an opening for Jailer.

Chief French explained that she had been asked to sit on a panel last month called "Shift Happens," a Women's Policy Summit in San Francisco that had been organized by the San Francisco Department on the Status of Women. She had sat on the Health and Safety panel, a panel of all minority women including the District Attorneys of Contra Costa County and San Francisco, the San Francisco Mayor, the Monterey County Sheriff and others to discuss how to develop and incorporate policies to keep women and children safe.

Chief French identified other activities taking place such as several meetings with the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Merchants to discuss crime issues in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street corridor. Presentations would be made to the City Council later this month on human trafficking in conjunction with the Family Justice Center and the District Attorney's Office. She was also working with code enforcement on vendor issues with respect to the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street corridor taking away business from the established and licensed merchants, and was also working on traffic, parking and clean-up issues along the Macdonald corridor.

Chief French reported that last month the RPD had participated in the Easter Egg Hunt at the Community Center and had a promotional ceremony at the RPD and a Dispatcher Appreciation Dinner because it was Telecommunications Week. She also reported on a meeting with a non-profit group that wanted to bring a program called “Handle with Care” to Richmond. The program involved officers contacting the school district to notify teachers of students impacted by a shooting or other tragedy or trauma to advise that those students should be “handled with care.” She was working on bringing the school district on board and figuring out ways to do notifications. There would be a lot of training involved but she was excited about the program. She added that last month was also Sexual Assault Awareness Month and the RPD had participated in Denim Day in support of victims of sexual assault. She explained the meaning of Denim Day to bring awareness to sexual assault victims.

Chief French re-invited members of the CPRC to ridealongs and stated that scheduling would be done through Captain Stonebraker. She also acknowledged the media about text messages and the scandal going on in another police department. She stated it was important to acknowledge that there was no room for that type of behavior in the profession and she reminded RPD staff that if there was something going on it would not be tolerated and would need to be reported.

Commissioner Lorber referred to the text scandal at the City of Antioch PD and asked what RPD was doing to assure the community and potential recruits that behavior and those attitudes would not be tolerated by the RPD.

Chief French stated she was looking at policy in terms of reporting any kind of racial misconduct under the direction of the City Attorney’s Office. She would also speak openly about it and the message was being sent to the RPD and being discussed openly as an agency to make it clear that it was not acceptable.

Commissioner Garcia asked about the ShotSpotter Report, noticed that the Iron Triangle area had the greatest number of shootings and asked if there was something that could be done about that.

Chief French stated all officers would immediately receive the ShotSpotter information and that information would go to beat officers to identify where the shots were coming from who would then investigate the area. With the monthly crime analysis, officers had been looking at what was happening in the various beats and the crime analysis would forward that information to parole officers in the hot spot areas so that they would know to focus on those areas for patrol when they had the opportunity to do so. She added there should be specific units to address those specific types of problems.

Commissioner Joseph recommended that the ShotSpotter Report be clarified to accurately report the correct number of incidents as opposed to what appeared to be a combined total of shots fired. He also verified with Chief French that RPD’s total authorized number of officers at 145 would remain that number and as soon as that total had been reached she would ask for more officers.

Commissioner Jackson asked how the mandatory overtime assignments had been handled, and Chief French stated there were five different shifts. Three shifts Monday through Thursday worked 10 hours and Friday, Saturday and Sunday worked 12.5 hour shifts.

Vacancies, such as vacation, sick leave, training and other factors were considered over a two-month period to identify what gaps needed to be filled during that time, and by seniority everyone would have to sign up for six different shifts for two months. There were sometimes glitches and other time was filled in. A sleep trailer was being secured for officers who might be too tired to drive home.

Chair Hegstrom noted that the CPRC had sent two emails to the Chief, whose response was not needed on those emails where a case was not sustained or where recommendations had been made. There was one email however that required a response from the Chief. She would clarify the emails in the future as to whether a response was required.

Chief French added with respect to staffing and recruiting strategies that the RPD had partnered with the Human Resources Department and had been able to get a marketing strategy through social media that had been successful this year alone for 12 police officers, although those strategies had slowed down in that no police officers had been hired in April. The RPD had been able to hire eight professional staff as well. The marketing campaign directed people to the RPD website which identified the different job openings. As part of the strategy when people joined the page the recruiting people got an immediate notification and followed up with the contact to see if those contacting the website met qualifications and if so, to guide them through the process.

Chief French stated that additional support was needed from civic leaders and the City Council with continued support for programs and tools to promote things such as organizational wellness in terms of mental health, licensed therapists, additional therapies for officers, going live with an app to give officers tips on what they could do mental health wise to guide them where they needed to go. Actual health screening for RPD officers and staff for health and financial wellness was also needed to make sure that people were supported and valued to be able to retain officers.

Chief French added that a lot of different departments were offering hiring incentives and she described some of those such as Alameda County's recent \$75,000 hiring bonus and the City of Antioch's \$40,000 hiring bonus. She recommended a \$10,000 bonus to get people in the door and suggested that current staff who recruited could be considered for a bonus as well along with signing bonuses. She also emphasized the need for more support for new technologies to improve responses. While the City Council had recently approved some block cameras for license readers, the RPD wanted to expand its drone program and supported an assigned vehicle program that would be a good benefit and recruiting tool.

## **V. PUBLIC FORUM**

Staff Liaison Lilia Corral returned to Public Forum at this time and read an email from Cordell Hindler into the record.

*Cordell Hindler: I have a couple of comments for the record: 1) I am pleased that the Commission has returned to having in-person meetings; 2) The update is that my project is coming along and I will keep the Commission informed.*

**VIII. REPORT BY RICHMOND POLICE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION (Ben Therriault or Designee)**

Sergeant Ben Therriault, President of the Richmond Police Officers' Association (RPOA), stated that most of what Chief French had reported with respect to recruiting was supported by the RPOA. He identified some of RPOA's activities such as helping to sponsor the Cinco de Mayo parade. He added that internally all the same things the Chief had talked about were important to RPOA, which looked forward to getting the sleep trailer since many officers had been sleeping in their cars and a trailer and other wellness efforts would help retain officers. He referred to a program previously offered by the City with 10 to 20 sessions for relationships, family planning and the like but commented that experience had not been that great and the additional benefits under discussion would be much appreciated by officers. With respect to what was happening in Antioch, he stressed that issue was not systemic in the RPD and was unacceptable.

In response to Chair Hegstrom as to the morale of the RPD when faced with excessive mandatory overtime, Sergeant Therriault stated that various ways had been devised to spread the overtime to those who were willing to work overtime versus those who might not be able to do so in a flexible format that he described as fluid from a labor perspective. He suggested the system of mandatory overtime might have to continue for a year or more but as long as there were positive gains in recruiting there was a light at the end of the tunnel.

Commissioner Lorber asked whether there were certain soft disqualifiers that might need to shift for more successful recruiting, and Chief French stated that the standards had loosened from what the state governing agency had required and she had tried to keep standards in the RPD higher. She noted that over the years there had been changes to those standards, especially around drug use. While she believed that people should be given opportunities those who had something in their background that were offered an opportunity were nonetheless monitored to ensure RPD standards.

As to involvement in a gang or Proud Boys, the KKK or similar groups, both Police Chief French and Sergeant Therriault explained that a law had gone into effect this year to exclude officers from extremist groups through the checks and balances involved through the background process.

Commissioner Joseph referred to hiring panels that used to include members of the CPRC and he recommended that practice again to keep the CPRC up-to-date and in the knowledge of that process.

Chair French commented that if volunteering for a hiring panel those involved would have to participate in that whole day process.

**IX. REPORT BY RICHMOND POLICE MANAGER'S ASSOCIATION (Esteban Barragan or Designee)**

There was no report from the Richmond Police Management Association (RPMA) at this time.

**X. REPORT BY INVESTIGATIVE AND APPEALS OFFICER (Jerry Threet)**

Jerry Threet, Investigative and Appeals Officer, reported there were two pending investigations; one on the upcoming Executive Session and another scheduled for the Executive Session at the next meeting. He noted there had been a lack of communication with the complainant. [Note: Many of his comments were lost in an echo in the remote transmission.]

Commissioner Joseph verified Mr. Threet's recommendation for at least two months of outreach to communicate with a complainant for a complaint that had been turned in on time and had been investigated in a timely manner.

**A. Public Case Summary 2022-5 (M. Paul)**

<b>ACTION: It was M/S/C (Joseph/Garcia) to approve Public Case Summary 2022-5 (M. Paul), as submitted; approved by a Roll Call vote: 7-0 (Ayes: Garcia, Jackson, Joseph, Lacy, Lorber, Tunis and Chair Hegstrom; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Lawson).</b>
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**XI. OLD BUSINESS, DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**A. Update on the CPRC Annual Report (R. Joseph)**

Chair Hegstrom asked Mr. Threet to offer a brief annual report on the cases provided and the outcomes of those cases, to be posted on the CPRC website. The Commission requested that the information be provided from 2022 to the current date.

Chair Hegstrom also referred to the Use of Force Analysis for the RPD and statistics previously requested of Mr. Threet, who explained that he could prepare an analysis and the results of that analysis. [Again, Mr. Threet's comments were lost in an echo in the remote transmission.]

**B. Tabling at Events: Cinco de Mayo and Juneteenth (C. Hegstrom)**

Chair Hegstrom verified that CPRC members had signed up for times to table and Commissioner Joseph advised that he would no longer be able to attend the event. CPRC members rescheduled their times to cover the events and because the banner was not available staff would pursue efforts to reprint another banner for the event.

**XII. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. CPRC Outreach (C. Hegstrom)**

There was no discussion.

**B. Request a Report from RPD and RPOA on Recruitment Strategies (Garcia)**

Commissioner Garcia advised that he would wait for the City Council Liaison and officially postpone the request for a report from RPD and RPOA on Recruitment Strategies at this time.

Chair Hegstrom recommended the preparation of a list for the next meeting with specific recommendations presented by Chief French at this meeting such as the vehicle take-home program, \$10,000 bonus and technology support and recruiting and referral bonus, to be included as a voting item at the next meeting to then have the City Council Liaison bring the report to the City Council.

**XIII. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS, STAFF, AND RIDEALONGS**

There were no reports.

The CPRC adjourned into Executive Session at approximately 8:25 P.M.

**XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION – CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC – Government Code §54957(b)**

**A. Receive Complaint Report from CIAO on Complaint 2023-2 (Hurtado), Discuss and Vote on Finding and Recommendations**

The CPRC reconvened at approximately \_\_\_\_\_ P.M. from Executive Session.

**ACTION: Legal Counsel Pam Lee stated the CPRC had met in Executive Session to discuss one complaint received and a report and investigation of the Investigative and Appeals Officer in regards to Complaint 2023-2 (Hurtado), and had voted 7-0 to accept the report (Ayes: Garcia, Jackson, Joseph, Lacy, Lorber, Tunis and Chair Hegstrom; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Lawson); and 7-0 to accept the recommendation of the report with the recommendation being that the complaint was not within the CPRC's authority or purview to investigate. (Ayes: Garcia, Jackson, Joseph, Lacy, Lorber, Tunis and Chair Hegstrom; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Lawson).**

**XV. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at \_\_\_\_\_ P.M.

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Carol Hegstrom, Chair