Citizen Oversight Board (COB)  
Meeting Minutes – January 6, 2023

Present: Karen Collier, Larry Martinez, Julia Richman, Stefan Stein (partial), Ana Thallas, Nick Webber

Absent: Terrance Carroll

Others present: Daniel Van Schooten, Board Administrator  
Liz Castle, Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM), Independent Monitor  
Gregg Crittenden, OIM, Senior Deputy Monitor

1. Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.
2. The meeting minutes from December 16 were approved.
3. Richman welcomed Liz Castle to the meeting and congratulated her on her recent appointment to the position of Independent Monitor.
4. Administrator Daniel Van Schooten shared that Mayor Michael Hancock has not yet appointed someone to fill the vacant seat left by Al Gardner, but that it would likely be filled next week.
5. The Board discussed their planned schedule for 2023, including:
   a. more in-person meetings
   b. discontinuing Quarterly Public Forums in favor of holding the Board’s regular meetings in the community attended by community groups
   c. not scheduling a formal retreat for 2023 at this time
   d. planned ordinance changes to be addressed by the City Council’s Safety Committee on February 8
   e. Annual Report due March 15
6. The Board discussed their draft 2023-2024 Strategic Plan and finalized its language.
7. Van Schooten presented an overview of the process for drafting and approving the Annual Report:
   a. Van Schooten will complete the initial draft of the descriptive portions of the Annual Report by the end of January.
   b. The Board will complete the prescriptive portions of the Annual Report, specifically their assessment of the OIM and any recommendations, by the end of February.
   c. The draft report will be sent to the OIM for their review and feedback during the first week of March.
   d. The draft report will be sent to the Department of Public Safety and City Attorney’s Office for their review and feedback the second week of March, prior to publication.
   e. Nick Webber volunteered to take the lead in reviewing early drafts of the report.
8. The Board discussed the planned creation of a video highlighting the importance of law enforcement oversight and how our community can get involved. They also reviewed the proposed key messages and potential individuals to interview in relation to those key messages. Ana Thallas volunteered to take the lead in reviewing the script, music, and footage.
9. The Board adjourned to executive session at approximately 11:40 a.m. to discuss confidential disciplinary matters (in accordance with D.R.M.C. 2-34(a)).
10. The Board meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.
New Action Items:

1. Draft descriptive portion of Annual Report (Van Schooten)
2. Invite selected interviewees to participate in the creation of the Board’s video (Van Schooten)
1. Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.
2. The meeting minutes from January 6 were approved.
3. The Board welcomed new board member David Martinez.
4. The Board postponed voting on the Strategic Plan document until the February 3 meeting.
5. The Board discussed the following topics with DPD Chief Ron Thomas:
   a. Thomas stated that the DPD will be in compliance with reporting requirements of SB20-217 (Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity Act) that become effective on July 1, 2023. His intent is to provide as much of that information as possible not only to the state, but also to the public.
   b. Thomas was asked to address a discrepancy between (i) an assertion made at a DPD press conference concerning the July 17, 2022 DPD shooting at 20th and Larimer Streets, and (ii) the recent grand jury indictment of Officer Ramos in connection with that shooting. In its July 2022 press conference, the DPD asserted that Officer Ramos had fired once, while the indictment asserts that he fired twice. Thomas stated that the DPD’s statements were based on what they knew at the time, which included officer statements and counts of how many rounds were left in the magazine of each officer’s firearm.
   c. Thomas described a variety of steps being taken in relation to car and catalytic converter thefts.
      i. The DPD regularly conducts data analysis of where most thefts are occurring and prioritizes those areas for police patrols.
      ii. The Denver City Council and several neighboring jurisdictions have passed laws that prohibit scrappers from accepting catalytic converters that they can’t confirm belong to the seller. There are also ongoing discussions at the state legislature about potential measures to deter catalytic converter theft.
      iii. The DPD is helping community members prevent thefts by hosting events where people can get their catalytic converters etched or specially painted at no cost. Community members interested in this service should contact their local police district to see when the next such event will be held.
   d. Thomas stated that the DPD’s Academy testing standards have not changed recently, and he has no plans to change them in the future. Recruits must score at least 70% to pass each test in the Academy, and will be unable to continue at the Academy if they fail two tests. The DPD does provide coaching to recruits who fail or barely pass a test to help them better understand the information.
e. Thomas provided an overview of the DPD’s shifts and scheduling process. All officers work 4 consecutive days each week, with 10-hour shifts each day. There are 3 shifts each day, with overlapping shifts during times that typically experience higher call volume. Shift start and end times are generally consistent across districts.
   i. District 6, which includes the downtown entertainment district, has an extra 4th shift in the evening. Liquor-licensed establishments are also required to have security officers present who can assist the DPD should that be necessary.
   ii. The DPD has used 8-hour shifts in the past, but has found that the benefits of a consistent three-day weekend significantly outweigh any costs of longer shifts.
   iii. The DPD occasionally utilizes 12-hour shifts during major events, but Thomas does not believe it is healthy for officers to work 12-hour shifts long term.
   iv. Thomas acknowledged that when shifts overlap, there are times when the DPD’s vehicle fleet is strained and officers need to double up in a car until the prior shift ends.

f. Thomas stated that since the George Floyd protests, additional hours of crowd management training have been added at the Academy and included in annual refresher trainings. Supervisors are also being trained on their responsibilities in crowd management situations.
   i. Given the changes to policy and training, as well as DPD’s performance in other large-scale crowd management activities since then, Thomas is confident that the DPD’s management of another George Floyd-style protest would be handled differently and appropriately.
   ii. Although managing the out-crowd from bars at 2 a.m. is a crowd management situation, it is different from large-scale protests. The DPD Academy is currently working on developing trainings specifically focused on managing large crowds that leave bars after closing.
   iii. All DPD officers recently completed the required Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training, and the 2023 budget provides funding to cover overtime applicable to training hours, which will enable other backlogged trainings to be completed.

g. Thomas described several ways that he and DPD officers engage with the community, highlighting city-wide crime strategy briefings he holds every Tuesday which are open to the public. Each district also has community advisory boards that meet regularly and may also allow for virtual participation.

h. Thomas spoke about the dynamics of secondary employment for DPD officers. There are limits to how many hours officers can work other jobs and the department periodically conducts audits to ensure compliance with those limits. There is significant demand for off-duty officers to provide security at locations that range from grocery stores to sports stadiums.

6. Independent Monitor Liz Castle shared that she recently met with Thomas to discuss the OIM’s “Bridging the Gap: Cops and Kids” program, and that Thomas was supportive and helpful. She also mentioned that the OIM is looking for additional community volunteers to help host program events and facilitate discussions.
7. The Board adjourned to executive session at approximately 10:50 a.m. to discuss confidential disciplinary matters (in accordance with D.R.M.C. 2-34(a)).

8. The Board meeting adjourned at approximately 11:12 a.m.

**New Action Items:**

1. Work with DPD to acquire information about (i) catalytic converter etching and painting services, and (ii) various opportunities for community engagement. Share this information via the Board’s website or social media accounts. (Van Schooten)
1. Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.
2. The meeting minutes from January 20 were approved.
3. The Board discussed several changes to the draft Strategic Plan and decided to conduct the final approval vote via email, in order to include Board members who were absent today. However, all the Board members present at the meeting expressed their approval of the plan.
   a. Richman also shared that in accordance with the Strategic Plan, she, Larry Martinez, and Administrator Daniel Van Schooten recently met to start working on a community outreach plan.
4. Richman made the following announcements:
   a. The Board still has one vacancy, and community members are encouraged to apply for it.
   b. Richman and Independent Monitor Lisabeth Castle will be speaking to the City Council’s Committee on Safety, Housing, Education & Homelessness on February 8 to discuss proposed ordinance changes concerning the Board and to provide an overview of the Board’s strategic plan.
5. Board member Stefan Stein shared that he has been working with Van Schooten to draft changes to the Board’s bylaws consistent with the anticipated ordinance changes.
6. The Board discussed the following topics with Executive Director Armando Saldate:
   a. Saldate shared some changes that have been made to the City’s operating agreement with Denver Health, specifically highlighting the City’s new medical director position to oversee the Department of Public Safety’s emergency responses. The hiring process for that position is currently ongoing.
   b. Saldate shared an overview of the facts surrounding the February 9, 2022, in-custody death of Leroy Taylor, which included Denver Sheriff Department (DSD) staff bringing Taylor for medical care against the wishes of medical staff who did not believe it was necessary to see him again. Saldate then stated that the criminal and DOS administrative investigations involving Taylor’s death have been closed without findings of wrongdoing.
      i. Saldate said that Denver Health told him they would not be providing a final report or findings document arising from Taylor’s death, and they relied on the medical examiner’s report and finding that the death was from natural causes.
ii. Saldate said that he was concerned by what appears to have been a lack of attention from Denver Health’s medical providers and immediately removed the charge nurse’s access to the jail.

iii. Saldate committed to learning lessons from this incident and working to ensure that something like this does not happen again because it should not have happened.

iv. Saldate stated that DOS did not recommend any specific changes to medical policy because it is Denver Health, and not DOS, that has medical expertise. However, DOS raised with Denver Health that DOS was alarmed by what appeared be a lack of response by the charge nurse and therefore she was replaced. As a result of the fact that DOS raised concerns, Saldate believes that Denver Health is doing its due diligence to make sure something like this doesn’t happen again.

v. Denver Health has not shared with DOS what changes will occur as a result of this incident.

vi. Saldate agreed that the City needs more control and accountability over Denver Health’s services that are provided to incarcerated persons as well as through emergency medical responses. This was a significant driver for the City in its recent contract negotiations with Denver Health.

vii. Saldate stated that Denver Health is responsible for managing its own correctional care accreditation process.

c. Saldate referenced the Tyre Nichols tragedy and expressed his disgust and alarm about it. Saldate said that the Denver Police Department (DPD) does not have specialty enforcement units like Memphis’s SCORPION unit where high crime areas are saturated with police. Although Denver has gang units, they are not analogous and the ways in which they are used are significantly different.

d. Saldate said that crime hotspots have been identified in Denver but the law enforcement approach to these areas has not been one of pure enforcement or “broken windows policing,” such as arresting everyone who jaywalks. Denver has focused on increasing community outreach and prevention services in those areas (including mental health and addiction treatment services), as well as focusing on environmental factors like lighting, traffic, and cleanliness, to help deter crime in those hotspots. Criminal enforcement and arrests continue, but it is not the only response.

i. Denver has used a multi-agency approach and included the community in Place-Network Investigation (PNI) Boards to ensure that there is a multiple purpose response to each crime hotspot that is not limited to enforcement.

ii. Denver has contracted with academic Dr. Tamara Herold, one of the nation’s leading experts on hotspot policing and broken windows theory, and Saldate encouraged the Board to reach out to her to learn more on the subject.

7. Terrance Carroll shared his reflections on the police killing of Tyre Nichols in Memphis, Tennessee, and how as a former police officer it particularly appalled him. Carroll hopes that it will serve as an inflection point for how we think about law enforcement, which is dependent on community trust, and that community trust is broken. He is not sure how to fix it but it is important to take steps to try to reduce negative interactions with law enforcement such as the
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action the City Council recently took to decriminalize jaywalking. Carroll stated that there are
other things in the traffic code that should not be criminalized such as expired license plates.
Carroll also spoke about the importance of caring for law enforcement officers by combatting
compassion fatigue in officers, and how a forced sabbatical may help officers stay fit for duty.

8. The Board adjourned to executive session at approximately 11:10 a.m. to discuss confidential
personnel matters (in accordance with D.R.M.C. 2-33).

9. The Board meeting adjourned at approximately 11:20 a.m.

New Action Items:

1. Get more information on PNI Boards mentioned by Saldate (Van Schooten)
2. Follow up on a timeline for the creation of a lessons learned report or findings document
   related to Leroy Taylor’s in-custody death (Van Schooten)
3. Contact Dr. Tamara Herold about a possible meeting with the Board (Van Schooten)
Present: Karen Collier, David Martinez, Larry Martinez (partial), Julia Richman, Stefan Stein, Ana Thallas, Nick Webber

Absent: Terrance Carroll

Guests: Daniel Van Schooten, Board Administrator
Liz Castle, Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM), Independent Monitor
Miguel Ceballos-Ruiz, STAR (Support Team Assisted Response) Community Advisory Committee (SCAC) Member
Vinnie Cervantes, SCAC Co-Chair
Alexander Landau, SCAC member
Nicole Taylor, OIM Community Relations Director
Dr. Carrol Watkins Ali, SCAC Co-Chair

1. Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.
2. The meeting minutes from February 3 were approved.
3. Richman made the following announcements:
   a. The Board has officially published its strategic plan and it is available on the Board’s website.
   b. The Board still has one vacancy, and community members are encouraged to apply for it.
4. Everyone present introduced themselves.
5. Members of the SCAC shared their thoughts about the history of their committee and its relationship with the Denver Department of Public Health and Environment (DDPHE), as follows:
   a. Several members of the SCAC have been involved in the STAR program since before it was created and are deeply invested in its success.
   b. The STAR program was modeled after the CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets) Program in Eugene, OR, which has been run by White Bird Clinic for over 30 years and is independent of the local government. The CAHOOTS team responds to approximately 17% of service calls in Eugene, and the Denver community’s original goal for the STAR Program was for it to be able to respond to 20% of calls.
   c. From the start, SCAC has pushed for “community-driven control” to be a core value of the STAR program. This priority has not been shared by DDPHE and is the primary source of ongoing tension between the two groups.
   d. Over the summer of 2022, there were several instances of additional conflict between DDPHE and the SCAC. This began with an email from a DDPHE staffer that SCAC members considered racist, and was compounded when the same DDPHE staffer unilaterally ended the SCAC’s July Zoom meeting. Despite apparent efforts toward reconciliation made by DDPHE Executive Director Bob McDonald in their August meeting, DDPHE unilaterally and indefinitely suspended all future SCAC meetings just days before their scheduled September meeting and have not communicated with the Committee since.
   e. An attempt to address the conflict through formal mediation is being coordinated, but no meetings have been held yet.
6. Members of the SCAC shared their concerns about the STAR program’s management as follows:
   a. Lack of communication by STAR management with the SCAC:
      i. The Committee was not informed that the phone number for STAR was temporarily disconnected, resulting in Committee members providing the public with incorrect information. The phone number to request STAR services is: 720-913-STAR.
   b. The STAR program’s hours of operation are 6 am – 10 pm based on overall 911 call volume. However, the Committee believes that the greatest need for STAR’s unique capabilities are overnight, which is also when the need is compounded because no other alternatives are available.
   c. The Committee believes the contracting and Request For Proposal (RFP) processes for STAR services, both to provide medical staff and for wraparound services, have been mishandled. The Committee was not involved in these processes and the RFPs have received no proposals or just one.
   d. The Committee has heard from the City’s 911 Call Center that sometimes the STAR van is dispatched as a co-responder unit with law enforcement instead of the alternate response unit that it was designed to be.
   e. The Committee has heard that multiple city agencies have asked STAR to work in an enforcement capacity to move unhoused people along. This is also related to overall concerns about the 911 Call Center primarily dispatching STAR to address trespassing and unhoused person calls. The Committee believes STAR is ideal for responding to overdose calls, but currently those are dispatched to police.
   f. The 911 Call Center currently has 3 categories for calls: Police, Fire, and EMS. They are considering adding a fourth category for STAR-specific calls, but that could cause complications as STAR is not a 24-hour service and could result in overnight calls not receiving any kind of service prior to 6 am.
   g. The Committee believes STAR should improve its communication and coordination with similar teams in neighboring jurisdictions, such as the Aurora Medical Response Team.

7. The Board and the SCAC discussed possible paths forward to address the SCAC’s concerns.
8. The Board and the SCAC agreed that continued discussion and future meetings will be necessary to determine the most appropriate next steps.
9. Community member Cam Thomas asked the Board about the ability to join meetings virtually, and was provided with information about the Board’s virtual meetings.
10. The Board meeting adjourned at approximately 11:20 a.m.

New Action Items:
1. Continue brainstorming possible ways to address the SCAC’s concerns (All)
2. Reach out to DDPHE Executive Director Bob McDonald and request that he meet with the Board and provide information about the status of the SCAC and its meetings (Richman)
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Members Present: Terrance Carroll, Karen Collier, David Martinez, Larry Martinez, Julia Richman, Stefan Stein, Ana Thallas, Nick Webber

Members Absent: None

Invited Guests: Daniel Van Schooten, Board Administrator
Liz Castle, Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM), Independent Monitor
Gregg Crittenden, OIM, Senior Deputy Monitor
Elias Diggins, Denver Sheriff Department (DSD), Sheriff

1. Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.
2. The meeting minutes from February 15 were approved.
3. Richman made the following announcements:
   a. An ordinance change affecting the appointment process for Board members and member stipends was passed this week and is now in effect.
   b. The Board still has one vacancy, and community members are encouraged to apply for it.
   c. The Board will publish its 2022 Annual Report on March 15, and will virtually present it during the Board’s meeting on March 17.
4. Larry Martinez presented a first draft of a community outreach plan for the Board, which was part of the Board’s recently approved Strategic Plan.
   a. The draft proposes that each Board member be responsible for managing the Board’s participation at one externally hosted event each year.
   b. The draft identifies recurring events for the Board to consider participating in, as well as additional events hosted by community groups active in the field of public safety.
   c. The draft contemplates potential financial expenses related to community outreach efforts that may require funding.
5. The Board discussed the following topics with Sheriff Elias Diggins:
   a. Diggins spoke about changes to the City’s contract with Denver Health and Hospital Authority (Denver Health) for 2023.
      i. Diggins highlighted three sections of the contract that relate to the Denver Sheriff Department: A-6 (medical services for inmates provided at Denver Health), B-3 (medical services for inmates provided at DSD facilities), and C-7 (security services for inmates at Denver Health).
      ii. This year’s contract slightly modifies the language describing the Sheriff’s authority to deny contracted medical staff access to DSD facilities.
      iii. This year’s contract includes provisions about the Sheriff’s ability to designate an administrator to serve as the primary manager of Denver Health’s operations within DSD facilities. Denver Health is responsible for designating an individual who will work with the DSD administrator to resolve issues and concerns concerning medical services provided by Denver Health. A similar position existed several years ago.
b. Diggins responded to several questions about his ability to hold Denver Health accountable for their performance as a contractor.
   i. In the past five years, there have been four instances where the DSD has removed a contractor’s access to their facilities. Two of those instances occurred in the first two months of 2022 and one occurred in 2021.
   ii. Diggins stated that the removals were not for the same type of behavior, but rather for a variety of different behaviors.
   iii. The decision on whether to remove a contractor’s access to the jails is made by the Sheriff. After a concerning incident occurs or complaint is filed, Diggins consults with other leaders within the department and then makes a decision.
   iv. It is possible for contractors who have had their access revoked to get it reinstated, and Diggins did so once in 2022.
   v. In connection with questions posed to him about the City’s lack of access to the results of Denver Health’s internal investigation into the circumstances of Leroy Taylor’s death while incarcerated in the Downtown Detention Center, Diggins shared that he agrees with Executive Director of Safety Armando Saldate that they need to continue to work with Denver Health to improve transparency. Diggins also expressed that he understands the Board’s frustration that the lack of information sharing by Denver Health makes it difficult to address root causes and prevent a similar tragedy in the future.
   vi. Diggins mentioned that the Utilization and Management Committee provides a variety of statistics related to Denver Health, including data about grievances.
   vii. Diggins stated that he and other DSD leaders have full access to all complaint records, including those sent to Denver Health.

c. Diggins shared that after additional verification of two standards in early 2022, the Downtown Detention Center received full accreditation from the National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC) in the area of health care services. In the future, the DSD plans to seek additional accreditation from the NCCHC in the areas of mental health services and opioid treatment programs.

d. Diggins shared that the housing pod dedicated to the Medication-Assisted-Therapy (MAT) program has resulted in a significant increase in program participants, going from 269 people in 2021 to 578 people in 2022.
   i. The program can administer five different treatments: Buprenorphine, Methadone, Naltrexone, Suboxone, and Vivitrol
   ii. The program has significant room for growth, as approximately 3,500 people have claimed opioid use disorder when being booked into DSD custody. Diggins stated that the primary obstacle to growing the program is the DSD’s staffing shortage.

e. Diggins shared that starting on March 17, inmates will be provided with personal tablets that they can use to stay in touch with family and friends, access educational tools and materials, and more.
6. The Board adjourned to executive session at approximately 10:50 a.m. to discuss various provisions in the draft annual report, including Board recommendations to include in that report.
7. The Board meeting adjourned at 11:57 a.m.

New Action Items:
   1. Review and provide feedback on the draft community outreach plan (All)
Members Present: Karen Collier, Larry Martinez, Julia Richman, Stefan Stein, Nick Webber

Members Absent: Terrance Carroll, David Martinez, Ana Thallas

Invited Guests: Daniel Van Schooten, Board Administrator
Liz Castle, Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM), Independent Monitor
Gregg Crittenden, OIM, Senior Deputy Monitor
Matt Buttice, OIM, Policy & Operations Director

1. Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

2. The meeting minutes from March 3 were approved.

3. Richman announced that the Board had issued its 2022 Annual Report on Wednesday, March 15, and invited Vice-Chair Nick Webber to present an overview of the report.

4. Webber presented the Board’s 2022 Annual Report, including:
   a. A summary of the Board’s accomplishments in 2022
   b. A timeline of significant public safety events in Denver in 2022
   c. The Board’s assessment of the OIM’s effectiveness in 2022
   d. Descriptions of the Board’s public safety-related concerns and a variety of concerns expressed to the Board by the community
   e. A list of the Board’s recommendations to the Department of Public Safety and other City agencies.

5. In response to a community question, Independent Monitor Liz Castle stated that she does not believe that Denver’s law enforcement officers have the ability to manipulate footage from their body worn cameras.

6. Denver 911 Director Andrew Dameron, who was in attendance, shared several updates related to his Department:
   a. In response to community feedback on the Support Team Assisted Response (STAR) program, Denver 911 has rolled out a new policy for dispatching that allows callers to request a STAR-only response. Callers must confirm that they understand that this may result in no response if there are no STAR vans available.
   b. Dameron shared that the STAR program is in the process of buying 3 new vans. Acquiring additional vehicles has been a challenge as the program continues to grow.
   c. Dameron stated that after Ma Kaing’s murder last year, he has developed an ongoing working relationship with members of the East Colfax community. He has given them tours of the 911 Call Center and worked to help them understand the dispatching process.
   d. Staffing for the 911 Call Center has been a challenge, but the hiring process has recently been completely overhauled. On Tuesday of this week, an academy class of 29 new recruits commenced. The academy takes approximately six months, so there will not be an immediate impact on call wait times. The agency has now filled approximately 96% of their authorized positions, which is the highest those levels have been since 2018.
7. The Board adjourned to executive session at approximately 10:50 a.m. to discuss matters related to ongoing investigations (in accordance with D.R.M.C. 2-34).
8. The Board meeting adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

New Action Items:

1. Identify an opportunity for Director Dameron to return to the COB and discuss the operations of the 911 Call Center in a more structured context (Van Schooten)
1. Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.
2. Attendees introduced themselves.
3. DDPHE Executive Director Bob McDonald shared his perspective on DDPHE’s relationship with the Support Team Assisted Response (STAR) Community Advisory Committee (SCAC). He also provided an update on upcoming next steps involving the Committee.
   a. McDonald stated that there seems to be a misunderstanding of what the words “community led” mean in practice for the STAR program. For very practical reasons, the City needs to have the final say on operations and contract management of the program. While DDPHE welcomes recommendations and input from the SCAC, there will be instances where DDPHE cannot implement certain practices SCAC wants. For example, the STAR program does not currently have the capacity to provide 24/7 service.
   b. McDonald stated that concerns about a STAR van being dispatched alongside police are based on a misunderstanding. Sometimes police are dispatched first and once police are on the scene they determine that STAR should handle the matter. Similarly, STAR can call for police backup if the situation changes or is different than anticipated. Additionally, police units with co-responders are sometimes dispatched to STAR-eligible calls when STAR is not available.
   c. McDonald believes that the DDPHE staffer who ended the SCAC’s meeting last summer did not need to do so and could have handled the situation better. McDonald previously said as much and apologized for the staffer’s actions during the SCAC’s August meeting. Although members of the SCAC perceived the action to be the result of racial bias, McDonald does not believe that racism played a role in motivating the staffer’s actions. The staffer later resigned and no longer works for DDPHE.
   d. McDonald clarified that a dedicated STAR call line was never intentionally disabled, but rather experienced technical difficulties which DDPHE fixed as soon as possible.
   e. McDonald disagreed with the SCAC’s characterization to the COB that they were left out of the Request For Proposals (RFP) process involving the network of providers that work with STAR. McDonald stated that an RFP process has only been used twice and DDPHE only received one proposal in response. Additionally, SCAC members encouraged McDonald to award a contract to Servicios de la Raza, and this did occur.
   f. McDonald explained that he “paused” SCAC meetings last Fall due to several interconnected concerns, including:
i. SCAC meetings tended to be dominated by a few particularly opinionated and forceful personalities.

ii. At least one now-former member of the SCAC expressed that they were fearful or did not feel comfortable expressing their disagreement with the dominant SCAC personalities.

iii. The committee lacked a way to cast votes anonymously, which would help mitigate concerns of potential fears or inhibition.

iv. McDonald felt that a professional mediator was necessary to help negotiate a formalized role and structure for the SCAC, and continued meetings without the mediator would be unproductive and possibly counterproductive.

g. DDPHE agreed to a mediator from a list of mediators proposed by SCAC and McDonald will meet with SCAC leadership tomorrow to finalize the mediator’s scope of work. Assuming that the scope of work is agreed upon tomorrow, SCAC meetings will likely resume by the end of the month with the mediator in attendance.

h. McDonald disagreed with the statement from SCAC members to the COB during the COB’s February 15 meeting that they have not had any communication with DDPHE since last Fall. McDonald stated that DDPHE has provided SCAC members with certain documents and has communicated about the engagement of a mediator to resolve the disagreements between DDPHE and SCAC.

i. McDonald stated that he is open to the idea of codifying the SCAC’s role and structure in ordinance but does not think that doing so will be necessary.

j. McDonald believes DDPHE and SCAC share a great deal of common ground and want the STAR program to succeed.

k. McDonald shared that he will apologize to the SCAC for how he suspended their meetings.

4. The Board briefly discussed potential next steps and whether there was a productive way for the Board to have a positive impact on the upcoming mediation process, including being one of the constituencies with whom the mediator meets.

5. The Board meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

New Action Items:

1. Send additional information about the selected mediator to the Board (McDonald)
1. Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m.
2. The meeting minutes from March 17 and March 20 were approved.
3. Richman announced that City Council has introduced a resolution to appoint Tymesha Watkins to the Board’s final vacancy. The appointment process will likely be completed in 2-3 weeks.
4. The Board discussed several topics:
   a. The Board confirmed their desire to reschedule the regular June 16 meeting in order to avoid the Juneteenth holiday weekend and instead meet with members of the East Colfax Community Collective between June 13-15.
   b. The Board discussed the results of the April 4 election and next steps in engaging with new council members and run-off candidates. Terrance Carroll recused himself from any Board activity related to the mayoral race given his public personal endorsement of candidate Mike Johnston.
   c. The Board discussed potential changes to the draft Community Outreach Plan, including the inclusion of other types of events such as town hall meetings hosted by members of City Council.
   d. The Board reviewed a variety of proposed changes to its bylaws, including:
      i. Bringing the Board’s bylaws into better alignment with Charter and ordinance language.
      ii. Formalizing expectations related to training for new Board members.
      iii. Formalizing the process for approving expenditures included in the Board’s budget and expenditures that are not included in the Board’s budget.
      iv. Creating a process for enforcing ordinance language related to Board member attendance.
      v. The need for new language describing an annual conflict of interest disclosure process.
   e. The Board briefly reflected on the drafting and stakeholder review process for the annual report published in March.
5. Independent Monitor Liz Castle shared several updates about her first 90 days as the Independent Monitor.
   a. Castle expressed her gratitude to Gregg Crittenden and the OIM’s staff for their support and continued stability of the office.
   b. Castle has initially focused her attention on the areas of outreach and policy, with Crittenden maintaining the majority of the responsibilities related to case monitoring.
i. The outreach team has significantly increased its capacity to host “Bridging the Gap: Cops and Kids” forums. Police Chief Ron Thomas has assisted in encouraging police officers to volunteer as participants and efforts to recruit and train new community facilitators have been successful as well.

ii. The OIM hosted 5 Bridging the Gap forums in the first quarter of 2023, and anticipates hosting 11 in the second quarter.

iii. In addition to leadership from the Department of Public Safety (DOS), Castle has met with City Council members, the Mayor, the District Attorney, and the Denver Health and Hospital Authority’s General Counsel.

c. The OIM currently has two vacancies for administrative positions. This has required other staff to temporarily perform additional duties outside their regular roles. Castle will participate in the final round of interviews for one of the positions next week. The other position has required additional work to reclassify but Castle hopes to post that position in the near future.

6. The Board briefly discussed potential next steps involving the strained relationship between the Denver Department of Public Health & Environment (DDPHE) and the Support Team Assisted Response (STAR) Community Advisory Committee (SCAC), and whether there was a productive way for the Board to have a positive impact on the upcoming mediation process, including being one of the constituencies with whom the mediator meets.

7. The Board adjourned to executive session at approximately 11:30 a.m. to discuss ongoing investigations, personnel matters, and draft DOS policies.

8. The Board meeting adjourned at approximately 12:00 p.m.

New Action Items:

1. Schedule a meeting with members of the East Colfax Community Collective between June 13-15. (Van Schooten)

2. Begin outreach to mayoral run-off candidates (Richman)

3. Further refine the Community Outreach Plan (Van Schooten)

4. Draft/revise proposed bylaw language re conflicts of interest and an annual conflict of interest disclosure form (Stein, Carroll)
1. Board Administrator Daniel Van Schooten called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.
2. The meeting minutes from April 7 were approved.
3. Van Schooten announced that the appointment of Tymesha Watkins to fill the Board’s final vacancy will likely be finalized next week.
4. Executive Director of Public Safety (EDOS) Armando responded to the 7 recommendations included in the Board’s 2022 Annual Report.
   a. Saldate expressed an openness to working with Denver Police Department (DPD) Chief Ron Thomas to re-evaluate the structure of the DPD’s Use of Force Review Board.
   b. Saldate provided an overview of some existing efforts by the DPD to improve community trust and shared his hope that a newly authorized community engagement manager position in the DOS will help improve the coordination of those activities.
   c. Saldate appreciated the Board’s recommendations related to increasing recruitment and retention rates among uniformed and civilian personnel of the Denver Sheriff Department (DSD) and shared several efforts that they are making to continue to address the situation.
      i. He has recently assigned two of his executive team members to a panel to review candidates with the goal of streamlining the hiring process while ensuring that all candidates are being considered.
      ii. The DSD has also changed the standardized testing process for applicants. The prior test was done through an external entity called the National Testing Network (NTN). The NTN’s test was cumbersome and large numbers of applicants would simply not complete it. To improve the process, they replaced the NTN’s test with a new assessment that is both mobile-friendly and integrated into the city’s existing Human Resources system. Their goal in replacing the test was to streamline the testing process without lowering their standards. The DSD has already begun to see improvements in the number of applicants completing the test. The DOS recently made a similar change to the applicant testing process for employees in the 911 Call Center, with positive results.
      iii. The DSD has expanded their physical therapy program for employees, and also provided deputies with the opportunity to be fitted for orthotic shoe inserts to improve wellness as they are on their feet for long shifts.
iv. The DSD has seen increased usage of mental health wellness resources for employees.

d. Saldate shared that the DSD’s oversight of Denver Health medical staff is a complicated and difficult subject, but that they appreciate the importance of it. Negotiations for next year’s contract between the City and Denver Health will begin soon and Saldate stated that he would raise the Board’s recommendations in those negotiations.

e. Saldate stated that he believes the DOS can implement the Board’s recommendations related to improved communications with individuals who make misconduct complaints against law enforcement personnel. He acknowledged that there have been some instances with deficient communication, and that they are working with the OIM to address these issues. Saldate is hopeful that they will be able to acquire and integrate a new public-facing portal for the IAPro database, but there are a few hurdles that remain.

f. Saldate expressed his agreement with the need for oversight entities to have unfettered access to relevant information involving law enforcement shootings and other critical incidents.

i. He shared that the DOS is continuing to work on OIM’s access to the evidence.com database for body worn cameras, and that the barriers that exist are only on the DPD side. He is committed to addressing this issue.

ii. Saldate stated that he and Chief Thomas agree with the Board’s recommendations that the DPD promptly share critical incident footage with the OIM and review their practices around public critical incident briefings.

g. Saldate agreed with the Board’s recommendations related to reducing the jail population and the workload for DSD staff.

5. Saldate shared that the AID Center has served over 270 people so far, and that they are actively working with the court system to host a warrant clearing event in the future.

6. Saldate shared that he has had no substantive contact with either of the mayoral or council run-off candidates. In anticipation of the upcoming leadership change, DOS is working on a wide variety of documents and briefings to help the City’s next leadership team succeed. He also reminded the community that DOS has five positions that are mayoral appointees. They include: 1) his position as EDOS, 2) the EDOS’s Chief of Staff, 3) the Chief of Police, 4) the Sheriff, and 5) the Fire Chief.

7. Saldate stated that given the lack of available time, he would provide his notes about the DOS’s Community Corrections Division via email.

8. Board members discussed and approved the draft script for a COB promotional video.

9. The Board discussed the potential for renting a booth at the upcoming Cinco de Mayo event and the availability of Board members to staff the booth that weekend.

10. Independent Monitor Lisabeth Castle shared a brief update on the OIM’s continuing outreach activities.

11. The Board adjourned to executive session at approximately 11:30 a.m. to discuss confidential personnel matters and ongoing investigations.

12. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 12:10 p.m.
New Action Items:

1. Review emailed notes on the Community Corrections Division (All)
2. Coordinate scheduling for Cinco de Mayo event participation (Van Schooten)
Vice-Chair Nick Webber called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.
The meeting minutes from April 21 were approved.
Webber announced that Tymesha Watkins has been appointed to the Board.

DPD Chief Ron Thomas expressed broad agreement with the recommendations for the DPD included in the COB’s 2022 Annual Report. Thomas addressed each of these recommendations, as follows:

a. Thomas is actively working on making changes to the DPD’s Use of Force Review Board. He has consulted a variety of stakeholders concerning potential changes, including his legal counsel, other community groups, the Chief’s Advisory Board, and the Office of the Independent Monitor.

b. Thomas agreed that the DPD should improve their community engagement efforts and this has been a priority for him since he became Chief. He also shared that a newly hired community engagement director will help DPD better coordinate various programs and activities and centralize information. Thomas is considering creating a community engagement dashboard, much like the other dashboards the DPD has recently created and posted on their website.

c. Thomas has taken recent steps to publish information about internal affairs cases in an online dashboard, improving communication about internal investigations.

d. Thomas stated that since 2021, the DPD has had an agreement with OIM to provide OIM access to evidence.com, and DPD regularly provides OIM with briefings at the scenes of critical incidents and sometimes provides an additional briefing once additional facts are uncovered.

e. Thomas highlighted several ways in which Denver is working to reduce the jail population, including the use of co-responders, outreach case coordinators, Support Team Assisted Response (STAR) vans, the Assessment-Intake-Diversion (AID) Center, and the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program. The LEAD program diverts certain low-level offenders from the jail and provides them with intensive case management and referrals to other needed services. The opening of the AID Center has increased the capacity of the LEAD program.

5. Thomas shared that he has adopted a “Before the Badge” program used by the Seattle Police Department where police recruits spend time learning from community groups as part of their
training process. He has worked with Together Colorado and the Denver Dream Center to create a community engagement schedule for DPD recruits, and the first class will take part in the weeklong program later this month before beginning their academy training.

6. Thomas described various aspects of the High Activity Location Observation (HALO) camera program, as follows:
   a. Most HALO cameras were installed for the 2008 Democratic National Convention
   b. The DPD regularly re-evaluates where HALO cameras are placed, and includes crime data, pedestrian and vehicle traffic, special events, and community concerns in its decision-making process.
   c. Some HALO cameras are actively monitored in the Real Time Crime Center, which also consistently monitors radio communications.
   d. HALO cameras are always recording and footage is retained for 30 days unless it is intentionally preserved. Footage can be requested under the Colorado Open Records Act.
   e. Traffic cameras are not always recording, but they do have that capacity and the DPD can activate their recording mode when necessary.

7. Independent Monitor Lisabeth Castle shared that the OIM has hired a new intake coordinator, who will be starting on May 15.

8. Castle shared that the OIM will be hosting youth forums on May 9 and 11 at the Denver Center for International Studies. OIM will also be hosting all-Black and all-Spanish forums in the coming weeks.

9. The Board discussed their interest in visiting the County Jail facility and the 911 Call Center in the next few months.

10. The Board discussed the possibility of hosting booths at the Juneteenth Music Festival, the Cherry Creek Arts Festival, and the Colorado Black Arts Festival.

11. The Board reviewed their 2023 budget and discussed potential requests for additional funds in 2024.

12. The Board adjourned to executive session at approximately 11:03 a.m. to discuss confidential personnel matters and ongoing investigations.

13. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 11:37 a.m.

New Action Items:

1. Identify potential opportunities for Board member visits to the County Jail and 911 Call Center (Van Schooten)
2. Obtain details related to the rental of booth space at the Juneteenth Music Festival, the Cherry Creek Arts Festival, and the Colorado Black Arts Festival (Van Schooten)
3. Finalize 2024 budget expansion requests (Van Schooten)
1. Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.
2. The meeting minutes from May 5 were approved.
4. Richman reminded Board members that elections for Board leadership will be held on July, and that Board members should respond to a poll about their availability for upcoming Board events.
5. Larry Martinez announced that he has been selected for a 4-month sabbatical program, which will run from the beginning of June to the end of October this year. He will be out of the country for much of the time and will be unable to participate in Board activities but looks forward to resuming his participation on the Board once his sabbatical is completed.
6. Richman announced that she will be adopting a child that is due to be born in August, and will likely be unavailable for Board activities for at least the month of August.
7. DSD Sheriff Elias Diggins responded to the recommendations contained in the COB’s 2022 Annual Report, as follows:
   a. Sheriff Diggins agreed with the importance of improving recruitment and retention for both uniformed and civilian staff. He shared a variety of efforts that the DSD is making towards those goals and expressed hope that the overall hiring landscape is beginning to improve. He would like to be able to host several extra large academy classes in the near future in order to address the shortage.
   b. Diggins highlighted that the DSD was able to include a new medical administrator position in their contract with the Denver Health and Hospital Authority (Denver Health). He expects that position to be filled in the next two months and would be happy to bring that person along to his meeting with the Board next quarter. He also suggested that it may be helpful to create a dashboard that clearly shows the work that Denver Health is doing in the jails could help build community trust in their execution of that contract.
   c. Diggins stated that he is in favor of transparency and that while he leaves questions about the OIM’s level of access to things like evidence.com up to the Department of Public Safety (DOS), he is always ready to work directly with the OIM’s staff to ensure that they get a quick response to any request.
   d. Diggins shared that reducing and stabilizing the DSD’s jail population has been a priority for Mayor Hancock and his entire administration. There have been lots of efforts to do
so, the latest of which is the DOS’s Assessment-Intake-Diversion (AID) Center, which provides an alternative to jail for police officers to utilize.

i. Prior to the pandemic, the jail population was approximately 2,000 people, and while it dipped as low as 950 during the height of the pandemic, it has now stabilized around 1,700.

ii. The DSD does not have reliable data about how many of the people in its custody are housed.

8. Diggins also discussed the following topics:
   a. Both inmates and staff at the DSD have welcomed the introduction of tablets in mid-March.
      i. Diggins stated that while more robust usage metrics will be available in the coming months, early data shows that the tablets are allowing inmates to make significantly more phone calls than they were previously. Increased connection with friends and family during incarceration has also been shown to reduce recidivism.
      ii. The DSD is looking into ways to allow inmates to use the tablets to make confidential calls to their attorneys.
   b. The DSD has almost completed its construction of a new contact visitation space at the County Jail, which will consist of a larger open space and three more private rooms. The spaces will be carpeted and designed to not look like a correctional space. Contact visitation was suspended in 2005 due to concerns about contraband and potential domestic violence, but plans were made to reintroduce it after an OIM recommendation on the subject in 2017.
      i. The new policies for contact visitation are still being finalized.
      ii. The DSD has looked to the example of the Las Colinas Detention Facility in San Diego in creating their contact visitation space.
   c. The DSD still plans to complete their roll out of body worn cameras by June 2023. They are also upgrading their body worn camera models from “2” to “3,” which should provide increased battery life. Diggins acknowledged some difficulties during the roll out but stated that they are working through them and there will be additional training in the coming weeks. He also expressed that he believes the cameras are one of the best inventions for law enforcement and benefit both law enforcement and the community.
   d. The reason for the recent 20% decrease in the County Jail’s inmate population is due to inmate cells being repaired. Inmates in the affected cells were moved to the Downtown Detention Center.
   e. Diggins said that plans are in place to ensure a smooth hand-off between the DSD’s incoming and outgoing food service providers. He also described several different oversight mechanisms to ensure that the contractor’s services remain acceptable. These mechanisms include daily self-inspection reports that are provided to the DSD, a kitchen manager employed by the DSD, scheduled and unscheduled inspections from the Denver Department of Public Health & Environment, and review from independent accrediting agencies.
9. The Board voted to enter executive session at approximately 11:08 a.m. to discuss ongoing investigations and related confidential matters.

10. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 12:01 p.m.

**New Action Items:**

1. Extend an invitation to meet with the DSD’s new healthcare services administrator once that position has been filled. (Van Schooten)
1. Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.
2. The meeting minutes from May 19 were approved.
3. Richman made the following announcements:
   a. The Board was originally planning to meet with 911 Director Andrew Dameron today but he had to cancel. We are working to reschedule our meeting with him.
   b. The Board’s June 16 meeting will be cancelled due to the Juneteenth holiday weekend.
   c. The Board will hold elections for Board leadership positions on July 7.

4. The Board reviewed the progress they have made against their Strategic Plan for 2023-2024:
   a. Goal 1: Adequate Funding and Operational Resources
      i. The hiring of a new monitor has been completed and a performance plan has been created. Routine supervision and management of the monitor will continue.
      ii. The OIM is working to evaluate staff salaries and will report back to the Board in the future about their findings and progress.
      iii. The Board has made progress in improving the accessibility of Board membership by increasing stipend payments and shortening the appointment process by eliminating the nominating committee. Other possible steps have been discussed and could still be implemented.
      iv. The Board is in the process of updating its bylaws and hopes to vote on them during their July 7 meeting.
      v. The standardization of Board training will be partially addressed in changes to the bylaws, but additional work needs to be done to better define Board member roles and refine the training process.
   b. Goal 2: Sustained Stakeholder Engagement: Community Outreach and Involvement
      i. The Board has drafted a community outreach plan that provides a framework and opportunities for members to participate in community events throughout the year.
      ii. The Board’s website has been updated to include additional resources and information about the Board, its history, and the history of oversight in Denver.
      iii. Prior efforts to schedule meetings with the mayoral run-off candidates were unsuccessful, but will continue with the newly elected leadership.
   c. Goal 3: Unfettered Access to Records and Facilities; Public Reporting and Transparency
i. The timelines for goal 3A, related to issuing more data analysis, reports, and recommendations need to be updated as limited progress has been made so far.

ii. Administrator Daniel Van Schooten will meet with Nick Webber to review the results of prior Board efforts to grant the OIM the ability to drop in on public safety facilities and then identify potential next steps.

iii. Conversations are ongoing about potential changes to the Denver Police Department’s Use of Force Review Board, and the COB is working with the OIM to provide feedback on this issue.

iv. The Board continues to work on improving the transparency of the misconduct investigation process, including most recently work related to the policies and processes of the Department of Public Safety’s Administrative Investigations Unit (AIU).

v. The Board looks forward to the anticipated hiring of a Denver Sheriff Department (DSD) medical administrator who will improve coordination with and oversight of Denver Health’s services in the DSD’s jails. The Board has also encouraged Sheriff Diggins and Executive Director of Public Safety Armando Saldate to provide for greater oversight through contract negotiations with Denver Health.

5. Independent Monitor Liz Castle shared several announcements about OIM
   a. A billboard entitled “Graduations not Funerals” was recently unveiled at the intersection of Colfax Ave. and Franklin Street. The billboard was designed by members of the Denver Teen Empowerment Program and jointly funded by the OIM and the Denver Police Department (DPD).
   b. The DSD has re-started its Inmate Advisory Council meetings, which were suspended during COVID. The OIM plans to attend those meetings in order to improve their understanding of conditions in the jails.
   c. The OIM has several outreach events coming up in the next few weeks, including an all-Spanish youth forum and an autism curriculum development session with the DPD and the Firefly Autism organization.

6. The Board voted to enter executive session at approximately 10:33 a.m. to discuss ongoing investigations and related confidential matters.

7. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 10:54 p.m.

New Action Items:

1. Prepare and distribute proposed bylaws changes (Stein, Carroll, Van Schooten)
2. Prepare and distribute proposed conflict of interest questionnaire (Stein, Carroll, Van Schooten)
3. Discuss potential changes related to member roles and the training/onboarding process (Collier, Webber)
4. Review documents related to the OIM’s ability to drop-in on public safety facilities such as the jails (Webber, Van Schooten)
5. Update timelines for Strategic Goal 3A re issuing additional data analysis and reports (Webber, Van Schooten)
6. Prepare COB response to potential changes to DPD UOF Review Board (Richman)
7. Review draft letter commemorating the 20th anniversary of Paul Childs’ death (All)
8. Review proposed vignette video scripts (All)
1. Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at approximately 10:02 a.m.
2. Richman made the following announcements:
   a. She thanked the Board members who helped staff a booth during the Juneteenth Music Festival and invited them to share about their experience.
   b. July 5 marked the 20th anniversary of the police killing of Paul Childs. The Board’s statement commemorating the day led to coverage by several media outlets.
   c. The transition committees for the new mayoral administration have begun hosting public meetings. The public safety committee will meet tomorrow (7/8) afternoon at Regis University.
3. The meeting minutes from June 2 were approved.
4. Julia Richman was unanimously re-elected to serve as Chair for a one-year term. Nick Webber was unanimously re-elected to serve as Vice-Chair for a one-year term.
5. The Board reviewed and discussed proposed changes to the Board bylaws and the use of an annual conflict of interest questionnaire. The proposed changes to the bylaws and the form of the annual conflict of interest questionnaire were unanimously approved subject to a final review by the City Attorney’s Office (CAO).
6. The Board discussed the following matters:
   a. The video production vendor has provided the Board with video files to review and decide whether to accept the current video files or request additional edits. Richman encouraged Board members to provide any feedback on the videos in the next few days.
   b. The Board discussed the plan for their next meeting on July 21, as Denver Police Department (DPD) Chief Ron Thomas is unable to attend and neither the Sheriff nor 911 Director are available to provide tours of their facilities that morning. Board members concluded that they would like to visit the Assessment-Intake-Diversion (AID) Center instead.
   c. The Board discussed the DPD’s draft policy related to the use of surveillance drones. The Board Administrator will consolidate any additional feedback and provide it to the DPD.
   d. Terrance Carroll volunteered to serve as a backup administrator for the Board’s Facebook page.
   e. Administrator Daniel Van Schooten encouraged the Board to begin thinking about whether they wanted to implement a committee structure.
7. The Board discussed several topics with Independent Monitor Lisabeth Castle.
a. The OIM is continuing to attend the inmate council meetings held by the Denver Sheriff Department (DSD) and has found it to be a valuable opportunity to learn more about inmates’ experiences.

b. The OIM is continuing to attend quarterly “trends meetings” with the DSD and the DPD, and the meetings have generally been productive.

c. The OIM recently completed a Spanish-language “Bridging the Gap: Cops and Kids” forum, including Spanish-language facilitator trainings.

d. The OIM has rescheduled their planned all-Black forum for the end of summer.

8. Ana Thallas announced her resignation from the Board, effective immediately, citing the upcoming publication of her book and other changes in her personal life. Board members expressed their appreciation for her service and a clear passion for improving public safety in Denver.

9. The Board voted to enter executive session at approximately 11:20 a.m. to discuss ongoing investigations and related confidential matters.

10. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 12:00 p.m.

New Action Items:

1. Request the CAO conduct a final review of the Board’s proposed bylaws and conflict of interest questionnaire (Richman)
2. Provide any change requests for the video files provided (All)
3. Coordinate a tour of the AID Center for the morning of July 21 (Van Schooten)
4. Provide any feedback on the DPD’s draft drone program to the Board Administrator (All)
Members Present: Karen Collier, Stefan Stein

Members Absent: Terrance Carroll, David Martinez, Larry Martinez, Julia Richman, Tymesha Watkins, Nick Webber

Invited Guests: Daniel Van Schooten, Board Administrator
Emily Lauck, Department of Public Safety (DOS), Legislative & Policy Director
Carlon Manuel, DOS, Assessment-Intake-Diversion (AID) Center Director
Marilynn Ackermann, Together Colorado, Board Member
Vickie Wilhite, Together Colorado, Board Member

1. The meeting began at approximately 9:10 a.m.
2. Approval of the minutes from July 7 was postponed until August 4.
3. Emily Lauck introduced herself and her new role as the DOS’s Legislative and Policy Director. She will be the Board’s new primary point of contact for the DOS moving forward.
4. Carlon Manuel introduced himself and his role as the AID Center Director.
   a. Manuel described the AID Center’s purpose as a trauma-informed path to addressing the root causes of low-level crime. It does so by bringing together a wide variety of services from both government and the community and eliminating barriers to receiving that care.
   b. Although members of the public are eligible to receive services at the AID Center, a focus of the Center is to provide resources to individuals who have active warrants for low-level, non-violent crimes and face challenges accessing services and stable housing. Importantly, law enforcement officers have the option of transporting consenting individuals to the AID Center in lieu of arrest for certain state level and municipal level offenses.
      i. Being screened for active warrants is not required, and to date, no one has been arrested at the AID Center.
   c. Common barriers that would prevent community members from receiving services elsewhere include:
      i. Infants: The AID Center has a space that can be made private for breastfeeding and related infant care.
      ii. Children: The AID Center has a children’s play area where parents can keep an eye on their kids while they talk with service providers.
      iii. Pets: The AID Center has kennels where pets can be safely held when visiting or when going to court across the street.
      iv. Belongings: The AID Center has lockers where people can safely store accumulated belongings while visiting or when going to court across the street.
   d. The AID Center also helps people overcome other barriers to receiving services, including:
      i. Access to the foundational resources required to receive other benefits, including cell phones, birth certificates, and identification cards.
ii. Access to legal services such as public defenders and warrant clearing opportunities for active cases as well as assistance sealing older cases.

e. The AID Center operates with minimal staff of its own and largely relies on staff contributions from other City departments and local nonprofits to provide services that range from physical and mental healthcare, addiction recovery, housing, employment assistance, veterans’ benefits, and outreach court.

f. Manuel stated that working to expand the Center’s hours of operation (8am – 5pm) is one of his top goals, but that it is largely dependent on upcoming budget decisions.

g. Manuel also stated that the vast majority of people who visit the AID Center are in need of affordable housing. He is actively working to partner with the Denver Department of Housing Stability (HOST) to improve the Center’s ability to meet those needs.

5. The Board discussed several topics with Marilynn Ackermann and Vickie Wilhite, who serve on the Board of Together Colorado and are heavily involved in its police-oriented work.
   a. Ackerman and Wilhite shared Together Colorado’s public safety vision statement, which emphasizes the potential of building positive relationships to build safe communities.

   b. Together Colorado was invited by DPD to observe the entirety of the new “Before the Blue, Beyond the Badge” and to be in charge of a 2 – 2.5-hour window in which to share the history of Denver policing and racial dynamics.

   c. They believe the program is very valuable and reported that recruits rated it highly as well.

   d. They noted that program leadership pays close attention to the emotional intelligence of recruits during the program and works with recruits to address any issues.

   e. The pre-academy program will be expanding later this year from one week to two, in order to allow recruits to meet with communities in all of Denver’s police districts.

6. The meeting concluded at approximately 11:00 a.m.

New Action Items:

1. Follow up with Emily Lauck as needed to confirm the options that are available to police officers in lieu of arresting otherwise eligible individuals when the AID Center is closed. (Van Schooten)
Members Present: Terrance Carroll, Karen Collier, David Martinez, Stefan Stein, Tymesha Watkins (executive session only)

Members Absent: Larry Martinez, Julia Richman, Nick Webber

Invited Guests: Daniel Van Schooten, Board Administrator
Lisabeth (Liz) Castle, Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM), Independent Monitor
Gregg Crittenden, OIM, Senior Deputy Monitor
Armando Saldate, Department of Public Safety (DOS), Executive Director

1. Stefan Stein called the meeting to order at approximately 10:02 a.m.
2. Stein made several announcements:
   a. He will be leading the meeting as Board Chair Julia Richman is away on maternity leave and Vice-Chair Nick Webber is out of the country.
   b. The Board has begun working with City Council to recruit a new member since Ana Thallas’ resignation last month.
   c. The Board has completed its video project and the short videos will be released soon.

3. Armando Saldate shared about the following topics:
   a. Emily Lauck has been selected to fill the DOS’s position of Policy & Legislative Affairs Director and will be the primary liaison to the Board and to City Council.
   b. The DOS will be publishing two new dashboards next week with regularly updated data about discipline cases and 911 response times.
   c. Denver Sheriff Department (DSD) enforcement authorities
      i. Saldate stated all entities other than the Denver Police Department (DPD) that enforce municipal ordinances can only do so if he provides them with a delegation of authority to do so. Examples of entities he has delegated authority to include the Right of Way Enforcement team, which writes parking tickets, and the Colorado State Patrol’s Capitol Police, who work in and around the State Capitol Building and can enforce trespassing, property damage, assault, disturbing the peace and other alleged violations of the municipal code occurring on state-owned land. Saldate has not provided any additional delegation of enforcement authority to the DSD, and will not do so without involving the Board, the OIM, and City Council ahead of time.
      ii. Bike Patrol Unit
         1. Saldate acknowledged that language in the DSD’s new Bike Patrol Unit policy, particularly language around self-initiated stops, appears to be overstepping into general patrol duties, which Sheriff deputies are prohibited from engaging in.
         2. Saldate stated that Sheriff Elias Diggins told him that the intent of the new Bike Unit policy is not to expand the authority of deputies, but to simply allow them to use bicycles to perform the security functions they already provide.
3. Diggins also reportedly stated that although the Bike Patrol Unit policy had been implemented, the unit itself is not yet operational.
4. Saldate stated that the policy language needs to be clarified prior to the unit beginning operations, and that the policy might have been better suited to a “Post Order” rather than a department policy.

iii. Criminal Investigations Unit
1. Saldate shared that in 2021, Diggins had worked with the former mayor, former executive director of public safety, former chief of police, and former city attorney to agree in principle to allow the DSD to create a small criminal investigations team that would be receive a special delegation of authority to investigate and charge low-level crimes that might occur within the jails. Specific examples included simple assault and the possession or introduction of contraband.
2. Saldate stated that when he saw a draft policy for the Criminal Investigations Unit earlier this year, he was confused as it included the ability to charge crimes that were not jail-specific.
3. Several months ago, Saldate directed the DSD via email that the unit should not engage in training (beyond individual P.O.S.T. certification for anticipated members) until its proposed operating policies had been provided to the Board, OIM, and City Council and then approved by him. This directive was not followed by DSD.
4. Saldate stated that earlier this week, he was made aware of materials available on the DSD’s intranet indicating that the unit has been staffed, its members have participated in trainings and are actively working on criminal cases in partnership with the DPD. Saldate stated that he is currently uncertain of the exact extent of these operations.
5. Saldate stated that he has not provided any special delegation of enforcement authority to the unit, and they are currently unable to file charges as they do not have access to the necessary digital system which his office manages.
6. Saldate is not certain that the current draft policy complies with the City Charter and has asked the City Attorney to provide a formal legal opinion on the matter.
7. Ultimately, the creation of this unit is a political decision and will require the support of the new mayor as well.

d. Mutual Aid and Aurora
i. Although the City of Aurora has ended their mutual aid agreement with Denver, low-level day-to-day assistance and cooperation will continue across police, fire, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS).
ii. Saldate believes that the existing mutual aid agreements with Arapahoe and Douglas Counties are sufficient should Denver experience a large-scale protest or emergency. The Colorado State Patrol and Colorado Bureau of Investigation
are also ongoing and reliable partners. If the scale of the emergency is sufficient, the governor can also provide support through the National Guard.

e. Assessment-Intake-Diversion (AID) Center
   i. The AID Center has now served over 700 people
   ii. Although the idea of an AID Center came from police officers working downtown, police officers are not regularly using the AID Center as a substitute for an arrest.
   iii. The County Court has been a major partner in providing services through the AID Center and has referred many people as well.
   iv. The AID Center has recently received two grants that will allow it to expand its services:
      1. A Caring for Denver grant will allow it to partner with the Center for Trauma and Resiliency to provide better support to women who are justice-involved or homeless.
      2. A second grant will allow the AID Center to expand its Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program. The LEAD program works with individuals who have been arrested and charged with certain offenses and allows them to get the charges dropped or deferred if they work with a case manager to address previously unmet behavioral health needs. This grant will also likely allow the AID Center to expand its operating hours.

f. Street Enforcement Team (SET)
   i. The team has made 2,595 contacts so far in 2023 and has issued no citations.
   ii. The team has conducted over 600 welfare checks, many of which were related to the Downtown Action Team and around the Convention Center.
   iii. The team has made 865 referrals to the AID center and 30 referrals to the Department of Housing Stability’s (HOST) outreach team.
   iv. The team is in the process of being rebranded and will be renamed as the “Street Engagement Team.” They have already had their job classifications changed from something similar to a park ranger to something exclusively focused on engagement.
   v. The team carries Narcan and has reversed 9 opioid overdoses, likely saving the lives of those individuals.
   vi. Saldate expressed excitement about Mayor Mike Johnston’s approach to the problem of homelessness and the recent emergency declaration related to it. He is hopeful that the new focus on that issue will allow the City’s siloed responses to become more integrated and effective.

g. Mayoral Transition
   i. Denver’s strong-mayor system of government gives Johnston broad abilities to make a wide variety of changes to programs and priorities outside of the annual budget process.
ii. Saldate stated he believes the work he has been doing aligns with Johnston’s vision for the city, and has applied to continue in his role, but that if Johnston does not re-appoint him, he will do everything in his power to ensure that the transition to a new executive director is smooth.

iii. The community-based transition committees have issued recommendations to the mayor and Saldate stated he would share them with the Board.

4. The Board approved the minutes from the July 7 and July 21 meetings.

5. Without objection, the Board entered executive session at approximately 11:08 a.m. to discuss ongoing investigations and related confidential matters.

6. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 12:08 p.m.

New Action Items:

1. Review report and recommendations from the Public Safety Transition Committee (All)
2. Review new dashboards from DOS (All)
3. Follow up with Sheriff Diggins about plans for deputies to engage in enforcement duties (All)
1. Vice-Chair Nick Webber called the meeting to order at approximately 10:02 a.m.

2. The Board approved the minutes from the August 4 meeting.

3. Webber made several announcements:
   a. City Council has officially opened applications for the vacant seat on the Board. Applications are due by September 17 and a link to the application form is available on the Board’s website.
   b. Also available on the website are new videos describing the law enforcement oversight process and why it is important.
   c. The Board will not meet on the first Friday in September. The next meeting will take place on September 15.

4. Sheriff Elias Diggins responded to the Board’s questions on several topics:
   a. The DSD’s current staffing level for uniformed personnel is 64.96%, which is adjusted to 60.88% when it accounts for people on various types of leave or modified duty.
   b. The DSD has seen a 165% growth in eligible candidates after switching their intake test away from the National Testing Network (NTN) to a self-created assessment. There has been no discernable change in candidate quality, although the department will be analyzing the performance of the current academy class of 30 recruits to identify any potential impacts of the change and whether additional changes need to be made to the test for future classes.
   c. Contact visitation has not yet begun in the County Jail, but will likely start in October or November. The visitation program will start small and prioritize inmates who exhibit good behavior and those who are going to be released soon. A DSD Captain or Major will make eligibility determinations for each inmate request.
   d. The DSD’s body camera program has experienced delays, and Diggins now believes that all deputies will be fully trained on their use by the end of October. Body worn cameras are not legally required in the jail context, but Diggins believes they are one of the best innovations in law enforcement in decades.
      i. The delays were partially attributed to the need to coordinate overtime for deputies to participate in the training, as well as coordination with the City Attorney’s Office to participate in the training sessions and explain the requirements.
e. Diggins discussed several aspects of the Criminal Investigations Unit (CIU):
   i. The DSD has not received any delegation of authority from the Executive Director of Public Safety to file criminal charges or conduct criminal investigations and interrogations.
   ii. The CIU currently operates with a limited scope of work, primarily preparing cases to be handed over to the Denver Police Department (DPD). The work they are doing is not new to the DSD and is now being taken over by this unit rather than being done by regular deputies.
   iii. It is composed of seven deputies and one sergeant. Four deputies are investigators, two deputies are gang unit investigators who continue to do the same work as before but have simply been moved into the unit. The seventh deputy is an intelligence analyst.
   iv. The CIU has not itself arrested anyone, but has assisted the DSD’s fugitive warrant unit in arresting individuals with outstanding criminal warrants from the Denver District Court.
   v. The CIU does not conduct interrogations, but does perform cursory interviews in preparation for the DPD’s involvement in matters. Diggins clarified that an interrogation differs from an interview in that interrogations occur in isolation and feature more pointed questions trying to collect information related to a criminal case. An interview is akin to a witness statement and typically consists of asking people to tell you what happened.
   vi. The CIU operated outside of the jails on one occasion in December 2022, when they assisted the DPD’s Narcotics Unit in arresting subjects who were attempting to smuggle drugs into the Downtown Detention Center (DDC).
   vii. Diggins does not have an estimate for when the CIU’s policies might be finalized, as it is highly dependent on ongoing conversations with the Executive Director of Public Safety, the Mayor’s Office, and the City Attorney’s Office.
   viii. Diggins shared that part of the reason for the CIU’s creation was to provide deputies with more law enforcement experiences and make working for the DSD more attractive. He is continuing to look for new ways for the DSD to help with public safety in the city.
   ix. Diggins stated that creating a unit like this is something that the DSD has wanted to do over its history, and it is important to him to take it slowly and get it right. Although the CIU is small, it gives DSD deputies a belief that their roles in law enforcement is going to be supported and grow.
   x. Diggins does not believe that expanding the DSD’s ability to do things like file criminal charges would compete with DPD, as there is plenty of law enforcement work to do.
   xi. Diggins asked the COB and public to acknowledge the progress that DSD has made and continues to make, to not be overly critical when issues arise, and to support their desire to grow into these new responsibilities.
   xii. When CIU deputies are not working on criminal investigations, they will be reassigned to floor duties. In order to preserve the relational dynamics with
inmates, CIU deputies will not conduct criminal investigations involving the pods they are otherwise working in.

xiii. Diggins stated that he is aware of the community’s concerns with the DPD’s use of “show-ups” for identification purposes and has based the CIU show-up policy on the DPD’s new policies.

f. Diggins discussed several aspects of the proposed Bike Patrol Unit:
   i. Diggins recently de-activated the policy regarding the Bike Patrol Unit and is considering potential changes to it.
   ii. The DSD has not received a delegation of authority from the Executive Director of Public Safety for the Bike Patrol Unit, and the City Attorney’s Office is being consulted about whether such a delegation is necessary.
   iii. The Bike Patrol Unit is not currently operational, and they have not determined how many deputies will be assigned to it.
   iv. DSD deputies are authorized to make stops or arrests under specific circumstances, and the Bike Patrol Unit would share those abilities. Bike Patrol deputies would have to be in-uniform, on-duty, and inside the City and County of Denver to have arrest authority.
   v. Diggins shared that the geographic limits on the Bike Patrol Unit are still under discussion, but the initial thought is that their area of operations would start at Fox Street (to the west of the Lindsey-Flanigan Courthouse) and proceed east through the DDC and to the City and County Building.

g. Diggins discussed a process through which DSD deputies can internally appeal written reprimands and potentially have them overturned without the involvement of the OIM.
   i. The grievance process is described in Career Service Rule 18 and language about the ability to file such a grievance is included on every written reprimand that is issued to deputies.
   ii. Diggins does not know why the OIM was excluded from the process, but expressed a willingness to change the process and include the OIM moving forward.

h. The DSD has not yet hired a new medical administrator, but they have at least one promising candidate and are working on interviewing others. At the invitation of the DSD, a Citizen Oversight Board member has participated in the interview process.

i. After the DSD implemented their tablet program on March 12, inmates made significantly more phone calls and they have continued to do so.
   i. March 12 – 30: 27,000 calls from DDC; 12,000 calls from County Jail
   ii. April: 33,000 calls from DDC; 19,000 calls from County Jail
   iii. May: 47,000 calls from DDC; 18,000 calls from County Jail
   iv. June: 41,000 calls from DDC; 20,000 calls from County Jail

j. The DSD’s transition to a new food service provider at the start of July has overcome some challenges but has gone fairly well overall and the quality of food for both inmates and DSD staff has improved.
5. Without objection, the Board entered executive session at approximately 11:12 a.m. to discuss ongoing investigations and related confidential matters.

6. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 11:42 a.m.

New Action Items: N/A
Board member Stefan Stein called the meeting to order at approximately 10:02 a.m.

Stein made a few announcements:

a. City Council has officially opened applications for the vacant seat on the Board. Applications are due by September 17 and a link to the application form is available on the Board’s website.

b. Mayor Mike Johnston published his proposed budget for 2024 yesterday, and it includes both the Board’s requests for $13,800 in additional funds and the OIM’s request for an additional deputy monitor position.

Chief Ron Thomas responded to the Board’s questions on several topics:

a. From 2021 through 2023 year to date, the DPD has responded to calls from the Denver Sheriff Department (DSD) about potential criminal offenses occurring in the jails the following number of times, which resulted in the following number of criminal charges:

   i. 2021: 307 calls, 221 resulted in criminal charges
   ii. 2022: 328 calls, 261 resulted in criminal charges
   iii. 2023 to date: 392 calls, 322 resulted in criminal charges

b. Thomas provided information about changes to the DPD’s Domestic Violence Unit, which experienced very high caseloads and detective burnout last year:

   i. The unit is still staffed with 11 detectives, 1 sergeant, and 1 Lieutenant, but its active caseload has been reduced from 1000 to 600.
   
   ii. A public safety cadet has been assigned to the unit to perform clerical work and 1-2 officers are typically on rotation assisting the unit at any given time. Thomas has also used vacancy savings to pay other trained investigators to help with lower-level cases on a temporary basis.
   
   iii. The DPD has made use of an automatic transcription service provided by the body worn camera vendor, which lessens the workload for detectives.
   
   iv. Detectives in the unit are no longer required to review all of the available body worn camera footage prior to sending a potential criminal case to the District Attorney. They must now review all available footage before the case goes to court. As many cases never make it to court, this will lessen the workload on the detectives.
   
   v. Detectives in the unit now have the ability to direct file cases to court, which can lessen their workload as well.
c. Thomas described the process for requesting mutual aid from other jurisdictions:
   i. The DPD has mutual aid agreements with three jurisdictions: Colorado State Patrol, Arapahoe County, and Douglas County.
   ii. The DPD utilized their agreement with Arapahoe County for the first time during the Denver Nuggets championship parade this summer.
   iii. When the DPD identifies events or situations that they do not have the capacity to effectively manage by themselves, the Special Operations Unit creates a plan that identifies where they want other law enforcement jurisdictions to be assigned as well as their duties. DPD then makes a request to that jurisdiction and Chief Thomas confers with their agency head.
   iv. When other jurisdictions respond, they agree to abide by DPD’s rules concerning use of force, etc. and must provide DPD with a roster of their officers. DPD officers are also embedded in those units to ensure that they remain compliant. Officers from other jurisdictions are not indemnified if they violate Denver’s rules.

d. Thomas provided an overview of newly initiated Community Homicide Review events, which he hopes to conduct quarterly with the goal of building an interdisciplinary violence prevention network that can assist in creating environmental and social changes to address patterns of crime in specific areas.

e. Thomas discussed the DPD’s planned drone program:
   i. If approved, it would enable the DPD to use drones to:
      1. Quickly find people with arrest warrants who may be running or hiding from the police outdoors;
      2. Identify any potential threats inside a building when DPD has a search warrant;
      3. Support search and rescue operations during emergencies and in circumstances involving missing children or individuals with Alzheimer’s or dementia; and
      4. Survey calls for service to better inform the size and priority of a police response, including identifying if a reported incident remains ongoing, the number of people involved, and whether a weapon is present.

f. Thomas provided updates related to progress in implementing or otherwise addressing recommendations in the COB Annual Report concerning the DPD:
   i. Thomas has not made any changes to the DPD’s Use of Force Review Board, but he does plan to implement a new process for selecting representatives for the two community seats. He will ask members of City Council to nominate community members who will then be interviewed by DPD and OIM, and then participate in training on DPD policies and practices.
   ii. The DPD has created a dashboard of all community engagement events along with several other dashboards. The DPD is not currently working on additional dashboards, but is considering a dashboard related to School Resource Officers.
   iii. Thomas has not made any changes to DPD’s form letters related to disciplinary case closures. He is not currently considering any changes, but is open to considering suggestions from the COB.
iv. The City’s Assessment-Intake-Diversion Center (AID Center) has served over 800 individuals, of which approximately 80 were referred by the DPD. Thomas would like to see that number increase.

1. Since 2021, the DPD has also diverted individuals through the Substance Use Navigators and Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion programs, which have contacted 3,000 people and referred 1,200 to services.

2. Denver does not currently have a Drug Court, but Mayor Johnston is considering the possibility of creating one.

3. Thomas believes that while extending the AID Center’s hours would be helpful, there are other less burdensome ways that the DPD can work to increase the extent to which the Center is used during the day. Those might include helping officers better describe the services available at the Center and potentially following up with outreach case coordinators.

g. Thomas addressed several recommendations from the City Auditor’s June report examining DPD operations and staffing.

i. The DPD is still working on a more detailed overall strategic plan. Once it is complete, it will be made available to the public.

ii. The DPD has made several changes to their recruiting and retention practices:

1. They have created a specific strategic plan related to staffing efforts.

2. They have expanded advertising for their open positions, especially online and in social media.

3. They have simplified the interest form for applicants, which has resulted in more forms being submitted.

4. They have created candidate management software to help increase visibility into the applicant pipeline.

5. They have created online training modules to help applicants complete and perform well on the test.

6. They have created a morale committee to address issues that may drive people to leave.

7. They have created a talent review process to improve career development for staff.

8. They have re-started exit interviews to identify potential problems that need to be addressed. One such issue that was identified is the need for childcare for working mothers. The DPD is exploring the possibility of a daycare center for the children of Public Safety employees.

9. They have utilized a $200,000 grant from the State to create the Before the Badge and Beyond the Blue program, hire a professional marketing firm, and increase Spanish-language advertising, including on Telemundo.

10. Thomas is not currently considering expanding the use of in-house physical therapists or mental health services due to budget constraints.

11. The DPD is working on a more comprehensive early warning system that will include wellness, performance, and compassion fatigue. The risk of
compassion fatigue may be identified based on particular calls or call types to which officers have responded.

4. The Board approved the minutes from the August 25 meeting.

5. Board Business
   a. The Board discussed rescheduling Chief Thomas’s October 20 meeting with the Board to December 15. The Board expressed an interest in scheduling 911 Director Andrew Dameron for October 20.
   b. Board Administrator Daniel Van Schooten presented a draft COB promotional brochure which was well received.
   c. Van Schooten identified several upcoming events for Board members to participate:
      i. On October 14, the District Attorney is hosting a Citizen’s Academy. Individuals interested in participating must apply online.
      ii. On October 26, the Far East Center is hosting a “Trunk-or-Treat” community event in which the Board may be interested in participating and hosting a trunk/table.
      iii. Van Schooten offered to help Board members coordinate police ride-alongs.

6. Without objection, the Board voted to enter executive session at approximately 11:04 a.m. to discuss ongoing investigations and related confidential matters.

7. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 11:44 a.m.

New Action Items:

1. Draft a letter with the Board’s suggestions related to DPD form letters for complainants (Van Schooten)
2. Coordinate police ride-alongs with individual Board members (Van Schooten)
Citizen Oversight Board (COB)
Meeting Minutes – October 6, 2023

Members Present: Terrance Carroll, Karen Collier, David Martinez, Julia Richman, Stefan Stein, Tymesha Watkins, Nick Webber

Members Absent: Larry Martinez

Invited Guests: Daniel Van Schooten, Citizen Oversight Board, Administrator
Lisabeth (Liz) Castle, Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM), Independent Monitor

1. Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at approximately 10:20 a.m.

2. The Board approved the minutes from the September 15 meeting.

3. Richman made several announcements:
   a. City Council is actively interviewing candidates for the vacant Board seat. A final appointment is likely in mid- to late November.
   b. The Denver Police Department (DPD) will be hosting their second Community Homicide Review on Monday, October 23, from 1-3 pm.
   c. The 8-year anniversary of Michael Marshall’s death is coming up in November.
   d. The Denver Sheriff Department (DSD) has hired their new medical administrator, and she is expected to start next week.

4. The Board reviewed its recent progress towards the goals established in the strategic plan.
   a. Goal 1: Adequate Funding and Operational Resources
      i. The Board is working with the Denver Office of Human Resources to finalize the process for submitting Liz Castle’s performance plan and determining potential merit increases for various OIM staff.
      ii. Given the Mayor’s proposed budget for 2024, the OIM will likely be able to add an additional deputy monitor position next year.
      iii. Nick Webber is working with Karen Collier to propose standardized onboarding and exit interview processes for Board members.
      iv. Stefan Stein, with the assistance of Administrator Daniel Van Schooten, finalized amendments to the Board bylaws which were approved by the Board. The amended bylaws are posted on the COB website and Van Schooten will confer with the City Attorney’s Office to revise the city ordinance to be consistent with the amended bylaws.
   b. Goal 2: Sustained Stakeholder Support: Community Outreach and Involvement
      i. Van Schooten has continued to expand the list of community events for Board members to potentially participate in.
      ii. Van Schooten has continued to expand the list of community resources available on the COB website, including several new dashboards that the City has created.
      iii. Richman is almost finished meeting with each of the new city council members in which she is describing the COB and its priorities.
   c. Goal 3: Unfettered Access to Records and Facilities; Public Reporting and Transparency
i. The Board discussed their willingness to lead news cycles by publishing press releases, statements, and other reports.

ii. The Board discussed the ongoing state-level process to create common standards for all jails in Colorado. How those standards will be enforced remains unclear, and the Board discussed the possibility of the OIM playing a role in auditing the DSD’s compliance.

iii. DPD Chief Ron Thomas recently told the Board that he is in the process of changing the selection process for community members on the Use of Force Review Board.

iv. The DSD’s new medical administrator should help improve transparency of Denver Health’s performance in the jails.

5. The Board discussed preparations for the 2023 Annual Report
   a. Van Schooten shared that he will likely be on paternity leave starting in January, and that his ability to assist in the creation of the report in the new year will be limited.
   b. Van Schooten provided an overview of the report creation process and asked the Board to consider how they want to assess the OIM’s effectiveness and what they would need in order to confidently do so.
   c. Tymesha Watkins volunteered to assist in the initial drafting process.

6. In response to Board questions, Independent Monitor Liz Castle stated that the OIM does not generally have visibility into the settlements of civil lawsuits. They do have legal authority to review any settlement that would result in the closure of a disciplinary case, but most lawsuits are resolved separately from any related disciplinary cases.

7. The Board reviewed and discussed the draft COB brochure that Van Schooten created.

8. The Board reviewed and discussed a draft letter to DPD Chief Ron Thomas related to the template for complaint closure letters.

9. Watkins, along with David Martinez, Nick Webber, and Terrance Carroll confirmed their desire to attend the upcoming conference hosted by the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE).

10. Van Schooten shared a request from the DPD for the Board to provide feedback on a potential pilot program that would equip certain officers with a BolaWrap device.

11. Without objection, the Board entered executive session at approximately 11:40 a.m. to discuss ongoing investigations and related confidential matters.

12. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 12:07 p.m.
New Action Items:

1. Revise draft letter to Chief Thomas and incorporate Board edits (Van Schooten)
2. Revise draft brochure design and language per Board suggestions (Van Schooten)
3. Reach out to the Department of Public Safety for details related to the Michael Marshall settlement (Van Schooten)
4. Provide feedback on the DPD’s proposed BolaWrap pilot program (All)
5. Invite the DSD’s new medical administrator to meet with Board (Van Schooten)
Citizen Oversight Board (COB)
Meeting Minutes – October 20, 2023

Members Present: Terrance Carroll, Karen Collier, Larry Martinez, Julia Richman, Stefan Stein, Tymesha Watkins, Nick Webber (open session only)

Members Absent: David Martinez

Invited Guests: Daniel Van Schooten, Citizen Oversight Board, Administrator
Lisabeth (Liz) Castle, Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM), Independent Monitor
Andrew Dameron, Denver 911, Director

1. Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at approximately 10:02 a.m.

2. The Board approved the minutes from the October 6 meeting.

3. Richman made several announcements:
   a. Board Member Larry Martinez has completed his four-month sabbatical and is re-engaging with the Board.
   b. City Council has introduced a resolution to appoint Alfredo Reyes, Executive Director of the Latino Cultural Arts Center, to the Board’s vacant seat. The resolution is on the Finance & Governance Committee consent agenda for next week, after which it will go before the full council.

4. The Board discussed the following topics with Denver 911 Director Andrew Dameron:
   a. Dameron discussed the importance of location-based routing of 911 calls. When people in Colorado call 911, their call goes to a state-run network that routes their call to the appropriate 911 Call Center based on their location. By default, their call is routed based on the location of the cell tower nearest them. Denver has worked with the major telecommunications carriers to switch to a more accurate location identification process that is based on the cell phone’s location, rather than the location of the tower. While this new system is enabled in Denver, the surrounding jurisdictions are still in the process of implementing it, which may result in some calls near city borders still being misrouted.
   b. Dameron explained the call-taking process at the Denver 911 Call Center. Calls are answered by emergency communication technicians, who gather information to create an entry in the dispatch system. That entry is immediately shared with the relevant dispatchers, who work with police, fire, or Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to send the appropriate resources. The dispatch system allows the potentially multiple dispatchers and the call-taker to communicate with each other while the call-taker can remain on the line with the caller. Both call-takers and dispatchers are trained to only communicate the facts and avoid inserting their opinions or speculation into the information flow.
   c. The non-emergency line is typically routed to the same call-takers, but with a lower priority in the queue than 911 calls. Non-emergency calls make up approximately 60% of the Call Center’s volume. There is a remote team of non-emergency call takers who require less training to handle some non-emergency calls.
i. Dameron is working with Denver’s 311 team to explore the possibility of merging the non-emergency line with 311. This would reduce confusion and make it easier for residents to remember and use the non-emergency line. It would also centralize the flow of a wide variety of information into the city.

d. For calls related to non-emergency medical concerns, 911 is working with Denver Health to expand the nurse line capacity so individuals can speak to a registered nurse. The nurse can provide advice, connect the individuals to a primary care provider, and send a city-paid Uber to take individuals to an urgent care facility instead of sending an ambulance to take them to an Emergency Department. Many non-emergency medical calls come from lower-income neighborhoods, and ambulances and emergency room visits can be very expensive for the caller.

e. There are ongoing conversations between 911 and assisted living facilities about their frequent use of 911 in non-emergency situations, but those conversations have not yet resulted in significant changes.

f. Denver does not handle calls to the 988 mental health crisis hotline, as that is operated at the state level through Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners. Both 988 and 911 call centers can refer calls to each other if needed.

g. Dameron shared how there has been a significant learning curve for dispatchers to understand when and how to use the Support Team Assisted Response (STAR) vans. Initially, dispatchers would sometimes send police alongside STAR to a call because they didn’t feel comfortable sending STAR by itself. Dameron is continuing to address this issue through training and discussions with dispatchers and there has been a decline in the frequency of STAR and police being dispatched in response to the same calls.

h. Currently, the dispatch system treats STAR as a sub-category of police response. Dameron is working to create an independent dispatching system for STAR calls with its own dedicated dispatcher that would be equivalent to police, fire, or EMS.

i. Currently, because STAR is included within the police dispatching system, police officers can “jump” or claim calls for service that have been dispatched to STAR. It is uncommon for that to happen, but when it does, 911 defers to the judgment of the first responders.

ii. In the near future, STAR vans will be equipped with Mobile Data Terminals that connect to the dispatching system and allow them to see significantly more information about pending calls for service across the city.

i. Denver 911 is aware of a lawsuit and recent settlement involving Seattle 911’s misuse of “caution notes” that are attached to addresses in the dispatching system, and has begun an audit of all the notes in Denver’s system to ensure that they are not being misused. These notes can include door codes, the locations of defibrillators, or notes to first responders about potentially aggressive or violent persons. To Dameron’s knowledge, Denver does not have caution notes that instruct medical staff to wait for a police response before entering a building.

j. Dameron is not aware of any cell coverage gaps in Denver that would prevent individuals from being able to call 911 in an emergency.

k. In the past few months, Denver 911 has been piloting a new capability that allows call-takers to send callers a text message requesting access to the phone’s precise GPS
location and the phone’s camera. If callers click the link in the message and grant permissions, they can stream live video directly to the 911 Call Center, which can allow Denver 911 to better understand the situation, send the most appropriate response, and better inform first responders before they arrive. The precise location information is particularly valuable when calls are transferred to 911 from another source.

1. Wait times for people calling Denver 911 have decreased by 70% after the first half of a mega-academy class of new call-takers graduated a few weeks ago. In the next month, they will be at 100% of their authorized staffing levels. This is the result of a lot of work that was put in by many parts of the city after massive turnover in 2021 and 2022, when 911 lost almost half and then about third of their staff. In addition to increasing pay, Dameron has overseen significant improvements to the wellness programs for his staff, including ways to identify and help call-takers who are exposed to higher levels of traumatic situations. These efforts have been effective in reducing the turnover rate to 12.5% so far this year.

5. Without objection, the Board entered executive session at approximately 11:02 a.m. to discuss ongoing investigations and related confidential matters.

6. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 11:40 a.m.

New Action Items:

1. Follow up with Director Dameron to obtain data requested by the COB (Van Schooten)
1. Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at approximately 10:03 a.m.

2. The Board approved the minutes from the October 20 meeting.

3. Richman made several announcements:
   a. The Denver Health contract for 2024 was presented to City Council’s Safety Committee on Wednesday, and did not include any substantive changes to policies or processes.
   b. The OIM published their 2023 Semi-Annual Report last week.
   c. The Sheriff is no longer able to meet with the Board on November 17, and we will meet with him on December 1 instead.

4. The Board discussed the following administrative matters:
   a. The Board approved a draft letter to send to Denver Police Department (DPD) Chief Ron Thomas about case closure letters.
   b. The Board approved a draft COB brochure to be printed.
   c. Some Board members expressed their approval of a draft letter to the Mayor and City Council about legal settlements, but not all members have reviewed it yet. The letter will not be finalized until all Board members have an opportunity to do so and provide any comments.
   d. Board members are interested in converting the upcoming December 1 meeting with Sheriff Diggins into an in-person visit of the County Jail facility.
   e. Board members are interested in exploring converting the upcoming November 17 meeting to an in-person visit to the 911 Call Center.

5. The Board discussed the following topics with Executive Director of Public Safety Armando Saldate:
   a. The DOS has not yet purchased a license to provide a public portal for the IAPro disciplinary case management database. Saldate stated that the primary barrier is financial due to budget constraints related to the influx of migrants and the Mayor’s House 1,000 program. The early adopter cost of the service would have been about $20,000, but it is likely higher now.
   b. Saldate mentioned several issues but nothing new related to the Denver Health contract.
   c. Saldate shared that in cooperation with the DPD, the DOS engaged in three Place Network Investigations (PNI) about two years ago. (PNI involves a collaborative gun-
violence reduction strategy involving certain locations.) They've also created a PNI Board with City executives of many different agencies, including the Department of Transportation & Infrastructure as well as the Department of Economic Development & Opportunity. The goal is to be able to quickly prioritize any necessary City action in those locations, from streetlight repair to nuisance abatement and blight designations. Across the three locations, the program has prevented an estimated 19 shootings:

i. Alameda & Federal: Previously there was an average of 66 days between shootings, and we would have expected approximately 10 shootings in the past two years since the project began. There have only been three shootings there in that time.

ii. 45th St. & Peoria: Previously there was an average of 97 days between shootings, which has now risen to 187 days. About 7.6 shootings would have been expected in the past 2 years, but only 3 have taken place in that time.

iii. Colfax & Uinta: Previously there was an average of 31 days between shootings, which has now risen to 44 days. About 23 shootings would have been expected in the past 2 years, and 16 have taken place in that time. Saldate attributed part of the limited success of this location to its proximity with Aurora.

iv. Saldate stated that the goal is to expand the program to include three additional project sites.

d. Saldate stated that the compliance reports required by the City’s 2018 settlement with Michael Marshall’s family have been sent to the plaintiff’s counsel via email, but the City cannot locate the actual records of what was sent due to a former employee’s email records being purged.

e. Saldate shared that while Denver typically does provide notification to the Colorado Peace Officer Standards and Training (P.O.S.T.) Board of sustained misconduct findings for law enforcement officers, they did not do so in the case of former DPD Officer Shane Madrigal, whose case was recently highlighted by local media as an example of an officer who maintained a clean online record upon resigning prior to the completion of the internal investigation against him.

i. For years, Denver has publicly released Departmental Orders of Discipline each month to news organizations and others via email, but it does not do so for resignations prior to discipline being imposed and does share any such records in a way that is publicly available online.

ii. Saldate is open to considering the pros and cons of creating a discipline database that is publicly available.

iii. Internal investigations of allegations of misconduct are completed even if the subject of the investigation resigns. However, there is an ongoing legal process to determine whether such officers who resign prior to the completion of an internal investigation have standing to appeal the results of that investigation.

f. Saldate provided several updates related to the Assessment-Intake-Diversion (AID) Center:

i. They have made efforts to improve the cooperation between DPD officers and AID Center staff, including through ride-alongs and direct outreach to officers.
Increasing the usage of the AID Center and the number of individuals deflected or diverted from arrest is a major priority for the Mayor’s administration.

ii. The AID Center has received two grants that would help it expand services, but the grants still need to be approved by City Council prior to them being implemented.

iii. The AID Center hosted a warrant-clearing event last weekend at which 91 individuals were able to address 145 pending cases. Another 43 individuals were ineligible for this event due to circumstance such as their warrants being issued by a different jurisdiction.

g. Saldate shared that he does not want police officers stationed at the Mayor’s new micro-housing communities and that if security services are needed he would rather have them provided by contracted security guards. The existing data shows that well-managed sites with wrap-around services do not attract crime or degrade the neighborhoods around them, and result in far fewer calls for emergency services than an unregulated encampment.

6. The executive session agenda was postponed to the next meeting.
7. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 11:53 a.m.

New Action Items:

1. Follow up with Emily Lauck to obtain additional information about PNI Board membership and community involvement (Van Schooten)
2. Provide feedback and revisions on draft letter to the Mayor and City Council regarding settlements (All)