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

2. The Board approved the minutes from the December 15, 2023 meeting.

3. Richman made several announcements:
   a. Board Administrator Daniel Van Schooten will be out of the office for most of the month on paternity leave.
   b. Board member Tymesha Watkins is working on a first run through of the draft annual report, but everyone is encouraged to start reviewing the draft and particularly spend time thinking about potential recommendations and the assessment of the OIM’s effectiveness.
   c. Richman shared that she has very limited capacity in the coming months to dedicate towards Board work and asked for assistance from other Board members.

4. The Board discussed the following topics:
   a. The Board discussed follow-up actions related to its November 24 open letter concerning oversight of the City’s compliance with non-monetary terms of settlements involving law enforcement conduct.
      i. Board members discussed an upcoming meeting with members of City Council, civil rights attorneys, and local activist organizations.
      ii. Vice-Chair Nick Webber debriefed the Board on a preliminary meeting he and Van Schooten attended with City Auditor Timothy O’Brien about auditing the City’s compliance with settlement terms. O’Brien described his audit planning process and emphasized that prioritization decisions are based on a risk analysis.
      iii. Richman highlighted that some of the key factors to pay attention to include ensuring compliance with past and ongoing settlements, increased transparency for future settlements, and ensuring that there is clarity around the specific roles of each City entity involved in the settlement agreement and compliance process.
   b. Board member David Martinez led the Board in a discussion of Board members’ personal priorities, motivations, and goals for 2024. He also expressed a desire for the Board to serve as a coalition-builder and leader on public safety matters in Denver.
      i. Van Schooten described a potential opportunity for the Board to host a large-scale public safety forum featuring all members of public safety leadership in early April after the Board and safety departments issue their annual reports.
The Board responded positively to the potential for hosting such an event and will move forward with reaching out to public safety leadership.

ii. The Board also discussed publicity strategies to ensure that its annual report gets enhanced visibility.

c. Board member Larry Martinez shared about his recent experience participating in a ride-along with the Denver Police Department.

5. Without objection, the Board entered executive session at approximately 11:17 a.m. to discuss confidential matters related to disciplinary cases, pursuant to DRMC 2-34(a)(8).

6. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 11:50 a.m.

New Action Items:

- Begin outreach and planning for a potential public safety forum in April (Richman and Van Schooten)
- Review initial draft of Annual Report and provide feedback to Van Schooten (All)
1. Board member Stefan Stein called the meeting to order at approximately 10:05 a.m.

2. The Board approved the minutes from the January 5, 2024 meeting.

3. Stein made several announcements:
   a. He is leading the meeting as both board Chair Julia Richman and Vice-Chair Nick Webber are unavailable. Independent Monitor Lisabeth Pérez Castle is also out of town, and the Board’s administrator, Daniel Van Schooten is currently on paternity leave.
   b. Terrance Carroll, who joined the Citizen Oversight Board in 2020, has completed his appointed term and following that milestone submitted his resignation from the Board. He was a valued member of the Board and will be missed.

4. The Board discussed the following topics with Executive Director of Public Safety (EDOS) Armando Saldate:
   a. Saldate shared that the DOS and its constituent departments have all stopped using the term “excited delirium.” The term has been controversial, and medical authorities recommend moving away from it. The state-level Peace Officer Standards & Training (POST) Board that certifies police officers also determined in late 2023 that it should not be used in training or as a diagnosis. Saldate is working not only to eliminate the term’s use, but also re-evaluate training and practices to ensure that Denver’s public safety employees respond in the most appropriate way.
   b. The DOS does not play a significant role in the new “Yellow Vest” Ambassadors to Downtown Denver program or the “Clean and Safe Denver” app. The DOS is partnering with the Downtown Denver Partnership and the Denver Dream Center to provide three services:
      i. Provide visitors to downtown with easily identifiable (via yellow vests) points of contact for any questions or concerns, creating a more welcoming atmosphere.
      ii. Monitor the sites of decommissioned encampments to ensure that anyone who attempts to start camping there is connected with support services and that the City is promptly notified (via both ambassadors and the app).
      iii. Allow members of the public to easily report trash and graffiti so that they can quickly be remediated.
   c. Saldate spoke with the Board about the role of private security guards, including the extent of their authority, licensing requirements, and their role in the Yellow Vest program.
d. Saldate stated that the DOS does not have a permanent presence at any of the micro-communities or hotels associated with the Mayor’s House 1,000 initiative.

e. Saldate shared that the Assessment-Intake-Diversion (AID) Center served 1,217 people in the year since its soft opening in November 2022. The Aid Center has helped connect:
   i. 603 individuals with identification documents and vital records
   ii. 513 individuals with supplies for basic needs (hygiene kits, diapers, etc.)
   iii. 375 individuals with housing navigation services
   iv. 248 individuals with employment training
   v. 156 individuals with resources for food insecurity
   vi. 150 individuals with transportation to shelter or other locations
   vii. 84 individuals with substance misuse treatment
   viii. 58 individuals with medical services through Denver Health
   ix. 55 individuals with mental health services via WellPower
   x. 45 individuals with dental care
   xl. 43 individuals with veteran-specific services
   xii. 148 individuals with warrant-clearing services through two “Fresh Start” events coordinated with the District Attorney’s office and the County Court.

f. Saldate did not have data on hand about the number of diversions that the AID Center has facilitated, but promised to provide it to the Board.
   i. The AID Center is looking to expand its scope by having police officers voluntary provide referrals to the AID Center in lieu of arrest and thereby motivate officers to do that more often.
   ii. The DOS is working with the Mayor’s office to identify core at-risk populations and then create a more strategic diversion program for those individuals.

g. Saldate shared information about three grants for the AID Center that will likely be finalized in 2024:
   i. A Caring for Denver grant that will allow the AID Center to provide programming focused on trauma recovery for justice-involved women.
   ii. A grant to expand the AID Center’s ability to provide substance abuse treatment services by partnering with the Denver Department of Public Health and Environment’s (DDPHE) Substance Use Navigator (SUN) program.
   iii. A grant focused on helping the City integrate services across agencies in order to provide better early intervention services for people in crisis. This grant could potentially allow the AID Center to extend its operating hours into the evenings.

h. Saldate addressed several questions that have been pending from the last meeting:
   i. In the case of former DPD officer Shane Madrigal, the DPD failed to promptly notify the POST Board about serious and sustained disciplinary findings in a case that was completed following his resignation. There is a process in place for notifying the POST Board in those circumstances, but it was not followed in that case.
   ii. The DOS’s Place Network Investigation Boards are composed of leaders from a wide variety of City agencies and not members of the community, although representatives from Regional Neighborhood Organizations can sometimes participate in meetings.
iii. In 2022, only one arrest was made during formal encampment clean-ups. In 2023, there were eight arrests made during formal encampment clean-ups.

iv. Denver no longer has any encampments in the downtown area, and does not have an official number of encampments city-wide as there is no official definition of what constitutes an encampment.

i. The DOS does not have a specific policy on where to wear body cameras, although Saldate stated that he was open to further discussions about the subject.

j. Saldate was supportive of the Board’s efforts to create a consistent city-wide process to improve transparency around compliance with non-monetary terms in legal settlements involving the conduct of public safety officers.

5. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 11:50 a.m.

New Action Items:

- Follow up on AID Center diversion data (Van Schooten)
- Schedule an introductory meeting between Alfredo Reyes and Director Saldate (Reyes, Van Schooten)
- Request data on number of private security guards licensed in Denver, number of complaints about them, and number of license removals (Van Schooten)
1. Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at approximately 10:05 a.m.

2. The Board postponed the approval of draft minutes from the January 19 meeting.

3. Richman made several announcements:
   a. Due to the upcoming President’s Day holiday weekend, the February 16 board meeting will be cancelled. The next Board meeting will be on March 1.
   b. Due to the continued costs of responding to migrant arrivals, Mayor Johnston has asked all City agencies to identify ways to cut their budgets by 15% in 2024. Independent agencies, such as the OIM and COB, are being asked to cut their budgets by 5%.

4. The Board discussed the following topics with Chief Ron Thomas:
   a. The DPD does not have data about the number of times DPD officers refer or deflect (in lieu of arrest) people to the Assessment-Intake-Diversion (AID) Center.
   b. The DPD will not be producing its own annual report for 2023. The Department of Public Safety (DOS) will be producing an annual report for 2023 that will include data and statistics from the DPD.
   c. The DPD has reduced average response times to high priority 911 calls by about 30 seconds compared to a year ago.
   d. The DPD has launched a new campaign to reduce auto theft in Denver. The campaign will include making a DPD auto theft task force permanent and installing 111 automatic license plate readers across the City.
      i. Although 2023 saw a 20% reduction in car theft compared to 2022—over 1,000 fewer cases—levels are still 60% higher than rates from 2018 and 2019.
      ii. Thomas provided assurances that the license plate readers will not be photographing the interior of vehicles and will only be used to identify vehicles that have been reported as stolen, involved in violent crime, or involved in a hit-and-run incident.
      iii. The license plate tracking data will be deleted after 30 days unless it is intentionally preserved as part of a criminal case.
   e. All DPD officers receive annual performance evaluations and may be given performance improvement plans based on those ratings. Supervisors can also place officers on those plans throughout the year.
   f. The DPD chooses topics for its quarterly trainings based on recent complaint trends. Officers who have violated policy are also frequently required to perform remedial
training modules to ensure that they know what they did wrong and can make improvements.

i. Thomas shared data about the length of internal affairs investigations. Since the beginning of 2022, 782 cases have been opened, of which 623 are closed and 159 remain open.

ii. The distribution of case closures is:
   1. 44% - less than 90 days
   2. 14% - between 90-120 days
   3. 14% - between 120-180 days
   4. 22% - between 180-365 days
   5. 6% - over a year

iii. Of the 159 open cases, the distribution of their length is:
   1. 35% (56) have been open less than 90 days
   2. 6% (10) are between 90 – 120 days
   3. 17% (27) are between 120-180 days
   4. 30% (47) are between 180 – 365 days
   5. 12% (19) are open over 1 year

   g. Thomas expressed a willingness to provide additional details to the COB about training that follows disciplinary orders.
   h. Thomas discussed the DPD’s experience as it relates to the influx of migrants to the City. Thomas stated that new encampments have been created around migrant shelters, but that the DPD has not seen any significant increase in violent crime due to the migrants.
   i. The largest criminal nexus involves labor and sex trafficking of migrants, who are often reluctant to go to the police.

5. Without objection, the Board entered executive session at approximately 10:56 a.m. to discuss confidential matters related to disciplinary cases, pursuant to DRMC 2-34(a)(8).

6. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 11:50 a.m.

New Action Items:

- Clarify the extent of COB interest in training of officers following discipline (All)
1. Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at approximately 10:02 a.m.

2. The Board discussed the following topics with Sheriff Elias Diggins:
   a. Diggins doesn’t believe that anticipated budget cuts will cause significant operational changes at the DSD. Diggins is limited in what he can discuss about the specifics of proposed budget cuts but expects to know soon which proposed reductions the Mayor will move forward with.
   b. Diggins stated that as the Denver Police Department (DPD) is working to update their discipline matrix, Executive Director of Public Safety Armando Saldate has included Diggins in that process to identify where the DSD and DPD might be able to better align their discipline matrices.
      i. The DSD has recently added new items to their discipline matrix—such as discipline procedures for violations of their new body worn camera policy—but the matrix itself has not been revised in many years.
      ii. Diggins believes there is significant value in aligning the DPD and DSD’s discipline matrices, as DSD deputies believe that DPD staff receive lighter punishments for similar behavior.
   c. Diggins shared that deputies deploy Narcan for suspected overdoses on average two and a half times each month. However, the DSD does not know how many of those medical incidents were actual overdoses, as deputies are encouraged to use Narcan for any potential overdose.
      i. The DSD does not run toxicology screens after every medical incident but is in discussions with Denver Health to do so whenever an inmate with a suspected overdose is transported via ambulance to Denver Health Medical Center.
      ii. The Medical Examiner does conduct a toxicology screen after every in-custody death.
      iii. Overdoses are rising in the general public and in jails across America.
      iv. Diggins shared information about the DSD’s efforts to reduce the flow of drugs into Denver’s jails:
         1. The DSD has purchased body scanners to use when inmates go through the intake process and is increasing the number of searches that are performed.
         2. The DSD is increasing its surveillance of mail service, as Weld County has discovered that drugs are sometimes mailed into jails in envelopes that are made to appear like legal mail, which can only be searched in front of the inmate to whom it is addressed.
3. The DSD has trained drug-detecting dogs to detect fentanyl and the dogs patrol throughout the DSD’s facilities.

4. Diggins stated that there are additional actions the DSD is using to attempt to stop drugs from coming into the jails but he cannot share details publicly.

d. Diggins shared that the DSD was very involved in the work of the General Assembly’s Jail Standards Commission and believes that the DSD currently meets or exceeds the standards proposed by that commission.

e. Diggins stated that plans for a Bike Patrol Unit and Criminal Investigations Unit have been paused, but he plans to meet with EDOS Saldate in the near future to discuss how and when to move forward with those units.

f. Diggins explained that the artwork for the contact visitation space at the Denver County Jail will be completed in eight weeks and that the space will open for visitation shortly afterwards.

g. A DSD deputy who had been involved in a single-car accident, fled the scene, and then lied to authorities that the car had been stolen was placed and remains on investigatory leave. (Diggins initially said the deputy had been terminated but informed the Board that he misspoke shortly after he left the meeting.)

3. The Board approved the minutes from the January 19 and February 2 meetings.

4. The Board discussed the remaining steps they need to take prior to publication of their 2023 Annual Report on March 15.

5. Board members discussed the upcoming March 15 COB meeting and expressed a preference for an in-person administrative meeting with no invited speakers.

6. Without objection, the Board entered executive session at approximately 10:47 a.m. to discuss confidential matters related to disciplinary cases, pursuant to DRMC 2-34(a)(8).

7. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 11:56 a.m.

**New Action Items:**

- Review the draft annual report and provide feedback by Monday, March 4, if possible (All)
- Send a clean version of the drafted annual report to the Department of Public Safety and OIM for their feedback (Van Schooten)
Citizen Oversight Board (COB)
Meeting Minutes – March 15, 2024

Members Present: Karen Collier, David Martinez, Larry Martinez, Alfredo Reyes, Julia Richman, Stefan Stein, Tymesha Watkins, Nick Webber

Members Absent: N/A

Invited Guests: Daniel Van Schooten, Citizen Oversight Board, Administrator
Gregg Crittenden, Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM), Deputy Director

1. Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at approximately 10:03 a.m.

2. The Board approved the minutes from the March 1 meeting.

3. Richman announced the publication of the Board’s 2023 Annual Report and thanked Board members for their hard work on it. She then provided a summary of several sections in the report.
   a. The Board discussed hosting a community forum to present the annual report within 30 days, as well as preparing additional shareable graphics or materials about the annual report to help get the information into the community.

4. Vice-Chair Nick Webber shared that after an attempt to purchase a home in Denver fell through last year, he has now purchased a house in Westminster, and will no longer be a Denver resident. As Denver residency is required to serve on the Citizen Oversight Board, Webber offered his resignation. At the Board’s request, he will continue to serve on the Board until his replacement is appointed by City Council.

5. Stefan Stein provided an overview of the Board’s activities related to the oversight of legal settlements involving law enforcement conduct, including meetings with local attorneys, members of City Council, the City Attorney, and the City Auditor. Based on information shared in those meetings, the Board remains concerned about the issue and believes that system-level changes should be made to monitor compliance with the non-monetary terms of such settlements.
   a. The Board has so far been unable to obtain an accurate understanding of the scope of the issue, as to how many settlements mandating changes to policies, practices, or the creation of reports or other deliverables exist.
   b. Local attorneys have shared their concerns about potential violations of other settlements, and shared that they are not in a position to monitor compliance with non-monetary terms on an ongoing basis.
   c. The Board agreed that any high-level stakeholder meetings like what the Board requested in its November 2023 letter will not be productive without a clear understanding of the matter’s scope.

6. Richman reminded the Board to be thinking about the progress against the current 2023 – 2024 Strategic Plan, and to consider the possibility of doing another round of strategic planning this fall.
The Board meeting concluded at approximately 10:53 a.m.

**New Action Items:**

- Identify a date and time for a community forum at which the Board will present their annual report (All)
- Begin the City Council appointment process for a new member to fill Nick Webber’s seat (Van Schooten)
- Continue efforts to identify all law enforcement-related settlements the City has entered into that include non-monetary terms (Van Schooten)
1. Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at approximately 10:02 a.m.

2. Richman disclosed that as an employee of another university in the area, she has a potential conflict of interest as it relates to the upcoming discussion of the DPD’s involvement in arresting protesters on the Auraria Campus, and may step back from that conversation, depending on the direction it takes.

3. The Board discussed the following topics with Chief of Police Ron Thomas:
   a. Thomas stated that City Council’s delayed confirmation of his appointment to Chief of Police did not cause any significant impact, and that he will lead the DPD in the same way now as he did before.
   b. Thomas provided additional details about his plan to update the DPD’s Discipline Matrix, including that his primary focus was on updating the penalty table, changing how progressive discipline works, and implementing a form of training-based discipline.
      i. The review effort began at the start of the year, and he hopes to complete the process in the third quarter.
      ii. The review process has so far been internal to the Department of Public Safety, but Thomas expressed a willingness to engage with other stakeholders on potential changes to the matrix both during and after this particular update.
      iii. He provided examples of several changes he would like to make, including increasing discipline for certain offenses, such as failure to pass semi-annual firearms qualifications or activate body worn cameras.
      iv. He described how he believes the current system of progressive discipline can unnecessarily penalize officers if they commit completely unrelated low-level offenses. In his opinion, progressively greater discipline should be reserved for repeated or related instances of misconduct.
      v. Thomas also shared that he wants to create new “training-based discipline” options for certain offenses that he would consider a “mistake of the head.” He believes that in those circumstances, the DPD’s primary goal should be ensuring that the officer knows what they did wrong, why it was wrong, and how to correct that behavior in the future. Thomas suggested that the use of customized training modules would better serve the DPD’s goals as opposed to simply penalizing officers.
   c. Thomas answered a variety of Board member questions related to the DPD’s involvement in arresting protesters at the Auraria campus on April 26.
i. Thomas stated that while several officers were assaulted, no one was injured during the operation.

ii. While officers did push or shove protesters who got too close to them, no uses of force such as punches, kicks, or baton strikes were reported and no less lethal tools such as OC (pepper) spray or pepper balls were used.

iii. Thomas stated that campus police arrested 40 people for trespassing and that DPD arrested 5 people for either assaulting or interfering with police.

iv. Thomas explained that the DPD’s SWAT unit wears a green military-style uniform and that they were utilized in order to avoid pulling other officers from their 911 response duties. Thomas stated that he is aware of how the military-style uniform can escalate confrontations with protesters and that the SWAT team tries to stay out of sight until it is necessary for them to engage.

v. Approximately 25 deputies from the Denver Sheriff Department (DSD) were present as well and served in two distinct roles. Members of the DSD’s Emergency Response Unit (ERU) provided crowd-control support while the rest of the deputies assisted with processing and transporting those who were arrested.

1. Thomas stated that the DPD conducts crowd control trainings with the DSD’s ERU and has used them before in these types of situations in order to minimize the impact to 911 call response times.

vi. In addition to quarterly trainings on crowd control policies, officers attend a pre-operation briefing to ensure that everyone is clear about the identified law violations and the difference between protected speech and an unlawful assembly.

vii. Thomas authorized the operation on April 24, but declined a later request from campus leadership to participate in a similar follow up operation when protesters’ tents were not confiscated and quickly re-erected. Thomas stated that the DPD will not engage in that sort of operation again as long as the protesters remain peaceful. Given the very limited capacity of campus police, Thomas was confident that no similar operation would happen on the campus without the approval of Thomas and Mayor Mike Johnston.

1. While Auraria is state-owned land and State Patrol has the authority to patrol the campus, they have not been delegated the authority by Denver to make arrests for municipal offenses.

viii. Although the DPD positively identified all of the individuals arrested and provided that information to campus leadership, the DPD does not know what proportion of those they arrested are students.

d. Thomas stated that he believes ShotSpotter arrays exist where they need to be and that while there are neighborhoods where gun crime is increasing, they haven’t yet reached the threshold of justifying the expansion of the ShotSpotter network.

4. Board Administrator Daniel Van Schooten made several announcements:
a. The Board still has two vacant seats, and while City Council has closed their applications and are evaluating candidates, the Mayor’s Office is continuing to accept applications for the second seat until the position is filled.

b. Executive Director of Public Safety Armando Saldate needed to reschedule his meeting with the Board last month and he has been successfully rescheduled to June 21.

c. The Mayor is hosting a variety of community meetings around the subject of safety in the coming weeks.

d. The Board’s June 7 meeting does not currently have any scheduled guests. If the Board wants to invite someone to speak with them, it would be best to do so in the next week or so.

e. In July, the Board will hold its annual elections for Chair and Vice Chair. With the anticipated departure of Nick Webber, there will be at least one vacant leadership position to fill.

f. Together Colorado has extended an invitation for partners to participate in the DPD’s next “Before the Blue, Beyond the Badge” community orientation program from July 8 – 19. Any Board members interested in participating in part or whole should reach out promptly.

g. If the Board wants to do another round of strategic planning efforts this fall, it would be beneficial to get the ball rolling soon so that we can ensure it gets on our calendars and any consultant’s calendars before they start filling up.

5. The Board postponed the approval of the meeting minutes from March 15.

6. The Board adjourned to executive session at around 11:19 a.m. in order to discuss confidential matters related to disciplinary cases, pursuant to DRMC 2-34(a)(8).

7. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 11:52 a.m.

New Action Items:

- Consider potential guests for June 7 COB meeting (All)
- Consider whether the Board wishes to hire a consultant for another round of strategic planning this fall (All)
- Consider whether Board members want to participate in the July “Before the Blue, Beyond the Badge” program and inform Van Schooten. (All)
1. Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at approximately 10:05 a.m.

2. Board Administrator Daniel Van Schooten made the following announcements:
   a. The Board still has a vacancy, and interested members of the community are encouraged to apply for it. Additional information is on the COB website.
   b. We received copies of City settlements that took place over the past 7 years from the City Attorney’s Office and Department of Public Safety. We were given roughly 150 settlements, so we’re still working on reviewing them, but it does appear that only a very small number of them contain non-monetary terms related to policy/practice changes involving law enforcement conduct.
   c. On Monday, the Mayor announced the creation of a new Office of Neighborhood Safety. We’ll monitor the role and activities of that Office.
   d. Board leadership elections are coming up in July and Board members should consider their interest and capacity to help lead the Board.
   e. There is an opportunity to observe/participate in the Denver Police Department’s (DPD) next Before the Badge, Beyond the Blue community orientation program. It will run on weekdays from July 8 - 19. Board members do not have to attend entire sessions but should inform Van Schooten if they want to attend a portion of the program.

3. The Board discussed the following topics with Sheriff Elias Diggins:
   a. Richman congratulated Diggins on the opening of the County Jail’s new contact visitation center.
   b. Diggins provided an overview of “Project S.A.F.E.” which will provide an increased emphasis on helping connect people leaving jail to Shelter, Access to healthcare, Food, and Employment.
   c. Diggins shared how the DSD has begun immediately offering jobs to deputies who are accepted into the academy, rather than having them wait for the academy’s start date. For several weeks before each academy class starts, these recruits work in positions that do not involve contact with inmates. Examples include documentation, warehousing, food reception, and other duties.
      i. The first set of recruits to experience pre-academy hiring were very grateful for this process change.
      ii. In the past year, the DSD has slowly improved their staffing levels and is now short by approximately 250 deputies down from a high of about 300 vacancies.
   d. Diggins explained that the new Prevention, Detection and Prosecution Task Force is being created in response to the recurring presence of Fentanyl in the jails.
e. Diggins shared that the new co-responder program at the Lindsey Flanigan Courthouse will be an expansion of the DSD’s pre-existing Crisis Response Team, which sends mental health clinicians to individuals experiencing mental or behavioral crises while in custody.

f. Diggins said that the focus on updating the DSD’s Field Training Officer program was not driven by any particular event or challenge, but that the program is something the DSD believes is important and periodically reviews.

g. Diggins stated that since March, there have been approximately 2.5 medical emergencies where Narcan was deployed in the jails each week. Most of these incidents occur at the Downtown Detention Center.

   i. The DSD has installed new body scanners at both jails and has increased the frequency of K-9 patrols as well as random searches.

h. The DSD’s Emergency Response Unit (ERU) is composed of up to 40 people, including deputies, sergeants, and a captain. The ERU provides crowd control support outside the jails to back up the Denver Police Department, in circumstances such as providing security during City Council meetings with large numbers of protesters.

   i. The ERU participates in 10 hours of training each month, including on the job training and unit-wide training. All deputies are required to perform 40 hours of in-service training each year.

   ii. The DSD did not use any chemical weapons to disperse crowds that gathered at the Downtown Detention Center after the arrests of pro-Palestine protesters at Auraria Campus on April 26.

4. The Board approved the meeting minutes from March 15 and May 3.

5. The Board heard public comment from community member Johanna Holy Elk Face and several others regarding the death of Holy Elk Face’s son, Waylon Jones, while he was in the DSD’s custody last November. Their concerns included the conduct of the arresting police officers, access to medical care while in the DSD’s custody, and the conduct of Denver Health and Hospital Authority at the time of and following his death. They also stated that the Denver Police Department and Office of the Medical Examiner were withholding records from the family.

6. The Board decided to invite leaders from the Office of Social Equity and Innovation and its new Office of Neighborhood Safety to join the Board during either the Board’s June 7 or July 19 meetings.

7. The Board postponed discussion of potential actions related to updating the DPD’s Discipline Matrix and the oversight of non-financial terms in legal settlements related to the Department of Public Safety.

8. The Board adjourned to executive session at around 11:22 a.m. in order to discuss confidential matters related to disciplinary cases, pursuant to DRMC 2-34(a)(8).

9. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 12:00 p.m.
New Action Items:

- Invite leadership from the Office of Social Equity and Innovation and the Office of Neighborhood Safety to join the Board on June 7 or July 19. (Van Schooten)
- Follow up with Sheriff Diggins to identify the specific number of annual in-service training hours dedicated to de-escalation. (Van Schooten)
- Provide the Board with a summary of the non-financial terms in Public Safety settlements that the City has agreed to in the past 7 years. (Van Schooten)
Citizen Oversight Board (COB)
Meeting Minutes – June 21, 2024

**Members Present:** Karen Collier, David Martinez, Larry Martinez, Julia Richman, Stefan Stein, Nick Webber

**MembersAbsent:** Alfredo Reyes, Tymesha Watkins

**Invited Guests:** Daniel Van Schooten, Citizen Oversight Board, Administrator
Emily Lauck, Department of Public Safety (DOS), Legislation & Policy Director
Armando Saldate, DOS, Executive Director
Lisabeth Pérez Castle, Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM), Independent Monitor

1. Board Administrator Daniel Van Schooten called the meeting to order at approximately 10:02 a.m.

2. The Board approved the meeting minutes from May 17.

3. Van Schooten made the following announcements:
   a. The Board still has two vacancies, and interested members of the community are encouraged to apply for them.
   b. The Board will not meet on July 5 due to the holiday. The next meeting will be on July 19, and the Board will be meeting with leaders from the city’s new Office of Neighborhood Safety.
   c. There is a new registration process for joining the Board’s Zoom meeting. The new process will send reminders about Board meetings as well as provide direct notification of cancelled meetings.
   d. Board leadership elections are coming up in July and Board members should consider their interest and capacity to help lead the Board.
   e. There is an opportunity to observe/participate in the Denver Police Department’s (DPD) next Before the Badge, Beyond the Blue community orientation program. It will run on weekdays from July 8 - 19. Board members do not have to attend entire sessions but should inform Van Schooten if they want to attend a portion of the program.

4. The Board discussed the following topics with Executive Director of Public Safety Armando Saldate:
   a. Saldate stated that while re-taking the oath of office is always a significant moment, he does not anticipate any differences in his leadership of the DOS now that his appointment has been confirmed by City Council. Mayor Mike Johnston has cast an ambitious vision for addressing complex problems in Denver and Saldate is excited to work towards those multiple important goals with a focus on public health and root causes rather than arresting more people.
   b. Saldate stated that it is good to have an independent third party ensuring that only high-quality candidates are hired as law enforcement officers. However, the DOS has been frustrated by the length of the Civil Service Commission’s (CSC) hiring process and their lack of flexibility as it relates to updating the process to meet the expectations of a modern workforce. Saldate further opined as follows:
      i. It can take up to six months to hire a candidate.
ii. The DOS and CSC engaged in a process improvement project hosted by PEAK Academy. Unfortunately, it ended up with more fault-finding and finger pointing rather than being focused on improving the process.

iii. The DOS is particularly focused on changing the initial test for applicants. DOS recently moved away from a nationally standardized and proctored test and saw significant improvements in completion rates for deputy candidates. DOS also improved application rates by using more digital marketing tools and speeding up the overall application process.

iv. Saldate believes that a new and less burdensome test, when coupled with a faster overall application process, will help DOS recruit a more diverse pool of police and fire department candidates with valuable lived experiences outside the usual law enforcement recruiting paths such as the military.

v. Saldate stated that he has no role in the selection process for the Civil Service Commission’s new Executive Director, but that if asked for feedback from the Commission, he would be happy to provide it.

c. Saldate shared his thoughts on the appropriateness of performing an administrative investigation of alleged misconduct by a law enforcement officer concurrently with a criminal investigation being conducted by the Denver District Attorney’s Office. He believes the issue is complex and does not have a black and white answer. While Denver does not typically conduct parallel investigations, Saldate is open to finding ways to doing so, provided the criminal investigation is not impacted.

i. Saldate stated that he is amenable to having conversations with various stakeholders, including the OIM and the newly elected District Attorney about parallel investigations.

d. Saldate stated that he anticipates that the City will soon approve a settlement of a lawsuit involving law enforcement conduct that includes a non-monetary term related to DOS policies, practices, or deliverables. Once it is approved, he will ensure that the relevant terms are published on the DOS’s website, and that evidence of compliance with the terms are also provided.

e. Saldate continues to be concerned about the tension between transparency and officer’s privacy rights when it comes to a public database of disciplinary orders.

f. Saldate would like to include the launch of a public IAPro portal in his budget request for 2025. The vendor was acquired by another company in 2023 and he is waiting for information about the cost of the portal.

g. The City’s halfway houses can currently house 273 individuals. The City is about to open a new halfway house facility called the MORE Center. Once it opens, residents of the Dahlia facility will be transferred to the MORE Center while the Dahlia facility undergoes significant renovations that will expand its capacity. Once the Dahlia facility has been renovated, total halfway house capacity in Denver will increase to 363 individuals.

h. Saldate stated that he has been a longtime supporter of the creation of an Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS) as an independent entity outside of the DOS. The Mayor did not provide additional funding for ONS in 2024 but hopes to do so in 2025. Even without additional funding, Saldate worked to create the ONS mid-year by transferring several DOS-owned programs (and their current funding) to the ONS.
i. The DOS’s Assessment-Intake-Diversion (AID) Center is being transferred to the ONS. The AID Center is still working on expanding its hours and services through multiple grants. The AID Center will also be playing a significant role in the Mayor’s Roads to Recovery initiative, which has an initial goal of moving 200 frequently arrested individuals.

j. The DOS doesn’t specifically track how many people get dropped off at the AID Center by DPD. They do, however, collect self-reported referral data:
   a. This year, 20 people said they were referred to the AID Center by the DPD
   b. This year, 12 people said they were referred by the Street Engagement Team (SET)
   c. This year, 4 people said they were referred by the Support Team Assisted Response (STAR) program.
   d. This year, 14 people said they were referred by the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program.

k. The LEAD program, which has an office in the AID Center, has received 27 referrals from the DPD this year. Of those, 14 were a warm handoff, where LEAD case managers were able to go out into the field and meet with people wherever the police had contacted them. The DPD’s District 6 Homeless Outreach Team was responsible for 20 referrals.

5. Van Schooten presented the following subjects for Board members to provide input on:
   a. The Task Force to Reimagine Policing and Public Safety is hosting a movie screening on the evening of July 11. The film is titled “Reimagining Safety” and they have an open invitation to partner with them to help promote the event and then table at the event.
   b. This year’s annual conference hosted by the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) will be held from October 13 – 17, in Tucson, Arizona. Board member attendance at the conference will determine how much budget is available for other events, such as strategic planning.
   c. The Board’s current strategic plan runs through the end of the year, creating an opportunity to renew the strategic planning process.
   d. The 20th anniversary of the ordinance creating the Citizen Oversight Board and the OIM is on October 4th of this year. Depending on the scale of the event, it would be helpful to have a Board member volunteer to assist in event planning.

6. The Board adjourned to executive session at approximately 11:42 a.m. in order to discuss confidential matters related to disciplinary cases, pursuant to DRMC 2-34(a)(8).

7. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 12:03 p.m.

New Action Items:
- Follow up with DOS to request a list of all recommendations related to the CSC (Van Schooten)
- Prepare for Board leadership elections on July 19 (All)
- Provide input to Van Schooten on how to move forward in relation to the upcoming “Reimaging Safety” movie screening, annual NACOLE conference, strategic planning, and a potential 20th anniversary event for the Board. (All)
1. Board Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at approximately 10:03 a.m.

2. Richman made the following announcements:
   a. City Council has introduced a resolution appointing Rufina Hernández to the Citizen Oversight Board. It is expected to pass on August 5, at which point Nick Webber’s resignation will take effect.
   b. There is still one vacancy that the Mayor’s Office is working to fill. Interested members of the community are encouraged to apply for it.

3. The Board approved the meeting minutes from June 21.

4. The Board re-elected Julia Richman to the position of Chair for a one-year term.

5. The Board elected Tymesha Watkins to the position of Vice-Chair for a one-year term.

6. The Board discussed the following topics with OSEI Executive Director Dr. Ben Sanders and OSEI Deputy Director Daelene Mix:
   a. OSEI is a standalone agency that reports up to the Mayor but is not part of the Mayor’s Office. It had 16 employees and focused on conducting trainings for city staff and helping each department create equity action plans.
   b. The Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS) is being created within OSEI by transferring 65 staff from non-enforcement programs and $11 million dollars from the Department of Public Safety (DOS). As a result, OSEI will expand to have approximately 80 personnel.
   c. Four programs are shifting to the ONS from the DOS:
      i. The Office of Community Violence Solutions, formerly known as the Gang Reduction Initiative of Denver (GRID), which consists of 15 – 20 full-time staff.
      ii. The Public Safety Youth Programs team, which consists of 35 – 40 full-time staff.
      iii. The Assessment, Intake, and Diversion (AID) Center, which consists of 2 full-time staff.
      iv. Part of the Support Team Assisted Response (STAR) program, specifically the STAR 911 Operations Manager who is responsible for policies and practices concerning how STAR takes and responds to calls.
   d. The COB discussed the importance of the STAR program and the need for additional clarity around its dispatching process.
e. The OSEI is still working through the process to integrate ONS staff and programming into OSEI’s structure and mission. They are paying close attention to the need for a cultural shift among staff, and Sanders stated that if needed, they will rebrand and restructure teams to ensure that they are aligned with the OSEI’s mission of expanding equity.

f. OSEI has contacted 120 different community groups and will be holding four town halls to provide input on what is working and what isn’t.

g. The ONS is working closely with the Denver Police Department on their Place-Network Investigation Boards, which serve as inter-departmental action teams to address crime hotspots.

h. The planned 12 – 15-member Community Advisory Board will be appointed by the Mayor and City Council and will serve to advise and shape work of the ONS. The Board will not have its own mission statement.

i. No ONS staff will have the authority to issue citations or engage in enforcement or policing work.

j. As head of the OSEI, Sanders is responsible for high-level strategic direction-setting and for external-facing discussions and collaboration. Mix, as the head of the ONS, will be responsible for operations, management, and other internal functions.

k. Sanders stated that it is still too early to discuss the 2025 budget or expansion plans for the ONS, given that they are still working through the integration process. Once that process is complete, there should be additional clarity around how to shape and enhance its programs over the coming years.

   i. Sanders wants to expand the ONS’s work and has recognized the importance of working not just with at-risk youth, but also their families, as well as working with the families or children of people with mental health or substance misuse issues.

l. The ONS does not have a physical office space available for all of its new staff but is working towards that goal.

m. Sanders has received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the community around the ONS’s creation.

n. Sanders is open to working with the Denver Task Force to Reimagine Policing and Public Safety and has invited them to stakeholder meetings. He does not see his office as being inherently in conflict with their community-led initiative, although the two organizations will have different approaches.

o. Sanders expressed a willingness to meet with the COB on a regular basis moving forward.

7. Independent Monitor Lisabeth Pérez Castle described a new process for communicating with individuals who submitted complainants of law enforcement misconduct once their cases have been closed. Historically, the OIM would bundle the public safety agency’s closure letter alongside a cover letter from the OIM and send both to the complainant. That process resulted in confusion and the incorrect perception that the OIM managed the process. Public safety agencies are now sending their own letters directly and the OIM is separately sending their own letter to complainants once a case has been closed.
8. The Board adjourned to executive session at approximately 11:29 a.m. in order to discuss confidential matters related to disciplinary cases and/or deliberative information, pursuant to DRMC 2-34(a)(8).

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

New Action Items:
- N/A