

LETAC Progress Report:

Where are we now? Where are we heading?

3/24/2021

What is our purpose? Formed by City Council in 2020, the purpose of the 13-member Law Enforcement Transparency and Accountability Commission (LETAC) is to make recommendations to Council to promote improved understanding and relationships between the Colorado Springs Police Department and the public. To do this, LETAC will 1) provide a conduit for concerns and needs of both citizens and CSPD; 2) analyze and provide feedback to the Council with policy recommendations; and 3) assist Council with budget, appropriation, and resource allocation recommendations. LETAC does not have oversight over CSPD, nor does LETAC investigate police-involved incidents or propose actions against department personnel.

Where are we now? LETAC is engaged in a “Listening and Learning” phase during which we have identified four broad areas for preliminary exploration. These are:

- *Communications between CSPD and citizens*
- *Racial bias*
- *Crisis response*
- *Use of force*

LETAC regular meetings are:
1st and 3rd Monday of every month, 6-8 PM,
held virtually via Microsoft Teams:
[Click to Join Meeting\(link is external\)](#)
Telephone: 720-617-3426
Conference ID: 629 946 63#

In addition to our regular meetings listed in the box, we are also hosting listening sessions (town halls) once per month for citizens to comment on any/all aspects of public safety and policing. Visit LETAC’s page for more information: [Law Enforcement Transparency and Accountability Commission | Colorado Springs](#). **Our next town hall is March 29, 6PM.**

The focus at our March 15 meeting was Crisis Response

This phrase “Crisis Response” refers to calls for service related to behavioral health, substance abuse, etc., that might not require an armed response. The questions we are exploring are:

1. *What approaches to crisis response (procedures, policies, models, etc.) have been adopted by CSPD? How do we know they are effective?*
2. *From the perspective of overall public safety, how do we effectively allocate resources between traditional policing (which would require an armed response to a call for service) and crisis response (which would not)?*

During the first part of the meeting, CSPD summarized our City’s approach to Crisis Response. The current model is a partnership between the Police Department, the Fire Department, and Diversus Health (formerly known as Aspen Pointe). Commissioners asked follow-up questions and requested additional information, and Commissioners took comments from citizens. Commissioners tasked with looking into CSPD’s approach to communications with citizens also provided an update.

Where are we headed? During our next regular meeting on April 5, the Commission continues its focus on Crisis Response with Commissioners commenting on what we feel we’ve learned from the March 15 meeting, the March 29 town hall, and what next steps we should take in this area. On April 29 and May 3 we will shift to policies and practices related to use of force. These initial examinations of the four areas listed above are not intended to be the only time a given area receives Commission attention; nor is it expected that recommendations for City Council will be made—for now. Instead, this **Listening and Learning** phase is about getting our bearings and developing a shared understanding among Commissioners about these complex areas.

Subcommittees of commissioners are also following up in specific areas such as communications, best practices related to minimizing racial bias, and analyzing police department data across a range of areas. These teams report their findings and suggestions for next steps at our regular meetings.

At the conclusion of our **Listening and Learning** phase, LETAC anticipates setting an agenda that may include making specific recommendations to City Council, especially regarding budget and resource allocation for public safety and policing.