



City of Colorado Springs

City Hall
107 N. Nevada Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO
80903

Meeting Minutes Council Work Session

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Thursday, June 11, 2020

4:15 PM

Council Chambers

Special Work Session Meeting

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- CenturyLink Channel 18

1. Call to Order

Present 9 - Councilmember Yolanda Avila, Councilmember Jill Gaebler, Councilmember David Geislinger, Councilmember Don Knight, Councilmember Bill Murray, Councilmember Andy Pico, President Richard Skorman, President Pro Tem Tom Strand, and Councilmember Wayne Williams

2. Items Under Study

2.A. [20-282](#) Formation of a Colorado Springs Police Department Accountability Advisory Committee

Presenter:

Richard Skorman, City Council President and Third District Representative

Wayne Williams, City Council At-Large Representative

Attachments: [Citizens Accountability Advisory Board](#)

[ADVISORY-Application Process now open for new Police Accountability Advisory Committee](#)

President Skorman stated the purpose of the discussion on the formation of a Colorado Springs Police Department (CSPD) Advisory Committee is to focus on the rules and transparency of the CSPD.

Councilmember Williams gave a brief overview of an exploratory panel on police transparency and accountability, general purpose, City Council options, and proposal for Citizens Accountability Advisory Committee.

Reverend Promise Lee requested the City listen to what is being said and

be accountable for every citizen regardless of their race.

Citizen Jody Allen introduced the group that attended the exploratory panel on police transparency and accountability symposium that was held in Austin, TX, their goals, and requested more time to bring forward recommendations.

Citizen Hannah Hotchkiss spoke regarding her son, Rain, and requested the formation of a citizen review board.

Renee Alexander spoke on behalf of her community and requested a postponement of a week to collaborate with everyone regarding solutions.

Councilmember Geislinger asked if a proposal will be presented to City Council for approval next week. Ms. Allen stated she would need to meet with the group and is not certain if they will be seeking an approval or an endorsement from City Council because they want to remain independent. Councilmember Geislinger asked if they would be open to City Council, the Mayor, and the public to be engaged in the process. Ms. Allen stated they want to be sure it is community led and not manipulated.

Councilmember Murray asked who she is representing. Ms. Allen stated she represents the communities and people who have been out demonstrating the peaceful protests and the neighborhoods most affected. Councilmember Murray stated there needs to be more structure to the resolution of these issues. Ms. Allen agreed and said they were dealing with a roadblock that was not anticipated.

Councilmember Williams expressed support of the request for postponement to allow time for additional input.

Mayor Suthers stated the Mayor's Office and CSPD support the creation of a formal City Council appointed advisory committee because if done right, it can result in broader community trust in the police department. He stated in regards to transparency, he feels it could be very constructive to hear from citizens as to what information they want and how they want to receive it. Mayor Suthers stated they welcome comparisons of processes and procedures in contrast to other police departments, as well as recommendations, but in order to do that correctly, the committee would need to fully explore and research what the department does, City Charter

provisions, Civil Service Commission, and many other considerations which would require City staff resources.

Councilmember Murray asked what action will be taken in regards to choke holds and officers who have had issues reported against them. Mayor Suthers stated the department is changing procedures to bar any kind of choke-holds and there are procedures in compliance with best practice in regards to how complaints from the public are received.

Councilmember Pico stated he would be very comfortable with the protester group called "The People" starting this committee right away with it eventually receiving a formal designation.

Councilmember Geislinger commended The People on their mission, vision, and proposal and expressed support of a citizen-wide committee as a formal board or commission.

Councilmember Gaebler stated she supports a one-week postponement, but does not want it to wait any longer than that because she believes the proposal from The People aligns with what the City wants.

Councilmember Avila spoke about the denial of the Human Relations Committee recommendation for a City Department to address the housing shortage and the lack of trust in the community. She identified the strengths of both committee groups and stated they need to talk with each other.

Councilmember Knight stated The People's proposal would allow recommendations directly to the CSPD without having to come before City Council or the Mayor.

Councilmember Pico asked what the obstacles were that Ms. Allen referenced.

Councilmember Geislinger stated the authority needs to stand with elected officials to address these issues and take responsibility.

Ms. Allen stated she is happy to turn leadership of the committee over to The People and share the wisdom she has gained with them and she spoke about how to make the process fair to the minority.

President Skorman stated there will be another Work Session regarding this item is scheduled for next Tuesday, June 16, 2020.

3. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before City Council, Council adjourned.

Sarah B. Johnson, City Clerk