



City of Boston, Massachusetts
Office of Police Accountability and Transparency
Stephanie Everett, Executive Director

OPAT Commission Community Meeting

Minutes

Tuesday, June 14, 2022 | Scheduled for 11:00 a.m.

Virtual Meeting held remotely via Zoom due to COVID-19 Pandemic

Call to order at 11:07 a.m

OPAT Commission Members Present: Chair Stephanie Everett; Judge Leslie Harris (ret.); E. Peter Alvarez.

Chair Stephanie Everett opened the meeting by welcoming attendees.

The Mayor's Office of Language and Communication Access facilitated language services for this meeting. The verbal language interpretation services were provided in Spanish, Haitian Creole, Mandarin, Vietnamese, and Cantonese. American Sign Language services were also provided.

All attendees were informed that during the meeting: automatic closed captioning could be turned on through Zoom; there were 5 spoken language channels that members of the public could use; all members of the public would have their cameras turned off; this meeting was public and was being recorded.

Chair Everett introduced herself as the OPAT Commission Chair and provided brief introductions of the OPAT Commissioners.

Approval of April 19, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Chair Everett introduced the draft minutes from the Commission's April 19, 2022 meeting. The minutes were accepted and approved unanimously.

OPAT Commission Public Report



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Chair Everett moved the meeting into the OPAT Commission's Public Report. Chair Everett noted that this public report is mandated by OPAT's ordinance and will be posted publicly following the Commission meeting.

Chair Everett reported that the FY23 budget was published by the Mayor in April 2022 and that the City Council, empowered by the new Charter amendment, has offered an amended version of that budget. On Monday, June 13th, the Mayor amended the City Council's proposed budget, accepting some of the Council's investments. The final budget for FY23 must be voted on by June 29th.

Chair Everett reported that OPAT's proposed budget for FY23 is approximately \$1,488,000.00, with an estimated \$165,000 for three (3) new investments proposed for FY23: the creation of a community mediator position, a year-long, paid internship program for high school and college students, and funds to retain a consultant to examine BIPOC hiring, promotion and retention practices within the Boston Police Department. Chair Everett explained that the internship program will help develop OPAT's relationships with Boston's youth and will center youth in conversations about policing. High school interns will be paid \$18 per hour and college interns will be paid \$22 per hour. Chair Everett also reported that OPAT will have a summer youth internship through YEE that starts in late June 2022 and will be the foundation for continued youth engagement.

Chair Everett reported on the POST Commission's recent work and conversations with OPAT. The POST Commission recently approved a 90-day timeframe for law enforcement bodies to complete case investigations. Chair Everett stated that she contacted the POST Commission's Executive Director and explained that OPAT's complaint and investigation process would conflict with the newly approved 90-day limit. OPAT is able to request an extension from the POST Commission but could possibly request an extension in almost every case due to the fact that OPAT's Civilian Review Board (CRB) only meets four (4) times per year.

Commissioner Alvarez asked if OPAT investigations could be completed in 90 days, not including the period between when an investigation concludes and when the case is heard by the CRB. Chair Everett explained that the POST Commission's existing regulations



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require an entire case to be resolved within 90 days. OPAT's internal structure and manuals currently plan for 45 days to complete the intake process. The intake process can take longer than expected due to the variability of contact with complainants. Chair Everett stated that OPAT does not want to rush through the complaint process or make the complainant feel pressured to complete the process in a short period of time. Chair Everett explained that OPAT would still need to inform the Boston Police Department (BPD) Commissioner of the CRB's recommendation as part of the process.

Commissioner Alvarez asked if OPAT could adopt the 90-day timeframe for smaller investigations that may not need extensions from the POST Commission. Chair Everett explained OPAT is still working with the POST Commission on this issue.

Commissioner Alvarez asked about the consequences if an investigation is not completed within 90 days. Chair Everett explained that the OPAT ordinance provides a timeline of one (1) year to complete investigations. According to POST's statutes, after one (1) year the body has the authority to intervene and take over the stalled case. The POST Commission is still crafting regulations around this issue and it is unclear if fines or penalties will be attached. By statute, OPAT does not qualify as a law enforcement body but has been following the same timeline that BPD must follow from the POST Commission for the sake of accountability.

Chair Everett reported that the POST Commission is in the process of recertifying police officers. The POST Commission has started with last names A – H. The recertification process, includes a questionnaire and attestation that the POST Commission requires officers and their superiors to complete. This recertification process is similar to the new certification process used earlier this year for the new recruit classes. The statute states that police officers should go before the POST Commission to complete an interview, but due to limited capacity, the POST Commission has requested police departments conduct these interviews. Chair Everett explained that documents related to the recertification process are posted online on the POST Commission's website. The POST Commission has been meeting almost weekly over the past couple of weeks to establish these procedures and guidelines and to create a way that agencies can ask for an extension of time. As of last week, BPD had not submitted any attestations or questionnaires. These documents are due



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by Wednesday, June 15th, 2022, for officers with last names A – H. Chair Everett reported that she spoke with BPD last week and was told that BPD would likely not meet the POST Commission's deadline of June 15th; BPD has 932 officers with last names A – H. Once the POST Commission has completed the recertification process, this information will be publicly available on their website. Members of the public are also able to sign up to participate in POST Commission meetings. There are also two (2) BPD officers serving as Commissioners on the POST Commission. OPAT is also present at POST Commission meetings and can provide updates when requested.

Chair Everett provided further updates on case demographics according to the requirements. OPAT's complaint dashboard is updated at the end of each month with demographic information. Once recommendations of discipline are recommended by an OPAT board, this information will be included in the OPAT complaint dashboard. Since Quarter 2, which runs from April 2022 - June 2022, one (1) case has been referred to the Civilian Review Board. The CRB ruled this case to be out of scope and recommended referring the complainant to the appropriate City department. No cases have been referred to the Internal Affairs Oversight Panel. No disciplinary actions have been referred to the BPD Commissioner in Quarter 2. OPAT has received nine (9) complaints during Quarter 2: 2 alleged racial profiling, one (1) alleged unlawful detention, two (2) alleged disrespectful interactions, one (1) alleged unresponsiveness regarding a BPD case, two (2) were regarding the BRIC gang database, and one (1) is miscellaneous/out of scope. All nine (9) complaints received during Quarter 2 have a pending investigatory status. The demographics of the complainants are as follows: one (1) Asian, one (1) Cape Verdean, two (2) Latino, one (1) white, and four (4) declined to answer. Two (2) of the complainants were between the age of 18-24, one (1) complainant was between the ages of 36-39, and six (6) chose not to answer. Three (3) complaints were straight/heterosexual and six (6) declined to answer. Five (5) complainants identified as male, one (1) identified as female, and three (3) declined to answer.

Chair Everett reported that OPAT has completed significant foundational work in its first operational year. There are now two (2) fully seated boards, staff and now it's continuing the work after the marches. Chair Everett stated that bringing in youth is instrumental to the work of the office and it is important to keep them included and engaged in the work.



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OPAT's internship programs are intended to teach youth the tools to build a board and to provide them with the tools to be able to continue this work afterwards. The office is excited to welcome these youth workers and hopes to have speakers in each week to keep them engaged. Chair Everett stated that OPAT wants to build up its youth programs to make sure that youth have a voice within OPAT and will be developing a Youth Advisory Council (YAC).

Chair Everett reported that OPAT has been attending the Mayor's Coffee Hours to meet the community, introduce the office and its location, explain how OPAT can help and engage with the community. OPAT will continue to expand its website and find different ways to let the public know who we are and where we exist. OPAT is also working to partner with organizations within and outside of Boston.

Chair Everett concluded the public report by stating that the OPAT office is located at 2201 Washington Street in Nubian Square and that the OPAT office would begin distributing free at-home COVID-19 rapid tests in July. This is intended to help the surrounding community and those who need access to testing. Roxbury was one of the communities hit hardest by the pandemic and OPAT wants to continue to be a positive, contributing partner of the community and will work to expand testing access to Roxbury specifically.

Commissioner Harris asked if it would be possible to create and distribute small printed pamphlets with information on what OPAT is, its duties, and its limitations. Chair Everett stated that OPAT staff had already put together an informational flyer. Commissioner Alvarez suggested including an OPAT flyer in the Mayor's newsletter or email blasts. Commissioner Harris suggested that OPAT put flyers in local churches and businesses to reach as many members of the community as possible. Chair Everett provided a brief overview of the informational flyer and explained that another version of the flyer had been created with information specific to the Internal Affairs Oversight Panel (IAOP); the IAOP-specific flyer will now be included with the documents sent to IAD complainants from BPD on how complainants can appeal an IAD decision to the IAOP. Chair Everett stated that OPAT intended to create a more detailed informational handout.

Public Comment Period



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Chair Everett opened up the community meeting to the audience for public comment. Chair Everett responded to a question about the reported complaint numbers and clarified that OPAT had received nine (9) complaints during Quarter 2 (April 2022 - June 2022) and the one (1) case heard by the CRB was received prior to Quarter 2.

Chair Everett responded to a question about decisions regarding BPD officers and explained that the next step forward is to create a discipline matrix. The matrix will determine how decisions about discipline are made and is a requirement for the CRB to fulfill its responsibilities. The discipline matrix will be created by the BPD Commissioner.

Chair Everett responded to a question about how long the Boston Police Commissioner has to act on OPAT board recommendations and if the discipline matrix was available to the public. There is nothing in the OPAT ordinance that outlines how long the BPD Commissioner has to respond; BPD would determine this. The discipline matrix does not currently exist, but once available, it will be accessible to the public. Chair Everett explained that OPAT can still resolve cases without the discipline matrix and that OPAT is engaged in conversations about moving those cases forward. The cases reported earlier are all currently pending in their investigations and are not halted by the lack of the discipline matrix.

Chair Everett thanked the OPAT Commissioners and audience for attending the meeting and noted that the next OPAT Commission meeting will take place in September 2022.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:10pm