

Diversity, Racial Equity, and Inclusion Committee  
Town of Chelmsford, MA  
January 19, 2021

Members in attendance (remote via Microsoft Teams):

Phil Hicks, Chair

Latosha Dixon, Co-Chair

Susan Mackinnon, Clerk

Lauren Cochran, Rachel Donovan, Tricia Dzuris, Jennifer Giannino, Cherrice Lattimore, Joseph Mason, Brian Petro-Roy, Carly Reim

Absent: J. Dave, M. Feeney

Also present: John Tubridy, Police Chief James Spinney

**Meeting Called to Order at 7:00 pm.**

**Acceptance of minutes of 1-12-21 meeting**

T. Dzuris made a motion to accept with one amendment to add R. Donovan to Culture Working Group. Second by L. Dixon Unanimously Approved

**Fireside Chat with Chelmsford Chief of Police**

Phil Hicks welcomed Chief James Spinney.

The Chief reported that he grew up in Chelmsford. His father was a 35-year firefighter. Chief Spinney has served on the Chelmsford Police Department since 1990. He has been Chief for six and a half years.

The Diversity, Racial Equity, and Inclusion Committee had previously submitted a list of questions to Chief Spinney. His presentation was accompanied by a slide show. A link to the slide show is as follows:

<https://www.townofchelmsford.us/DocumentCenter/View/12031/2021-01-19-CPD-Presentation-Chief-Spinney>

Highlights:

Mission Statement

Code of Ethics - above door every officer enters before roll call

Operational Priorities

Diversity Statement

Approaches for achieving diversity goals:

Enhanced Officer Training

Implicit Bias Training

De-escalation Training

40 hours Crisis Intervention Training

Community Outreach Initiatives

Police Athletic League

Tow Drunk to Drive Program

Safety program for places of worship

TIPS 411 – for anonymous questions to police

CPD Operational Modifications

Choke Holds prohibited!!

Real time response with a medical clinician of mental health

(new) Diversity Committee to review incidents

Moving forward the Chelmsford Police Department will continue to prioritize EMPATHY, RESPECT, DIVERSITY, and INCLUSION with all that we do. The dedicated women and men of the Chelmsford Police Department look forward to working with all entities to help keep our community a great place to live, work, and visit.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS posed by L. Dixon, T. Dzuris, and P. Hicks.

Please tell us about the current demographics of the Chelmsford Police Department. The majority live in Chelmsford, or one or two communities away.

54 sworn officers, 9 dispatchers, 15 auxiliary, handful of clerical staff.

White, Asian-American, LBGTO, BIPOC on aux., 5 female officers(9%)

Chelmsford is a civil service community (some are not, i.e., Tyngsboro) New hires come from state civil service exam pool. People who take the test can choose where they wish to work. High scores and residential preference take priority. The goal of this was is to attract people who live in the community. Military service brings you up in the list. Two years ago, NO One of color in Chelmsford had taken the exam!

Please tell us more about the Wellness Division within the Police Department.

Mental health professionals are now available for calls, provided by a grant from the Greater Lowell Health Alliance. There are two people, shared among five towns. Person in crisis can talk to clinician via phone while waiting for other people to arrive on scene.

Trainings: CPD participates in the One Mind campaign. The initiative focuses on uniting local communities, public safety organizations, and mental health organizations so that the three become "of one mind." The goal is for every officer to attend the 40-hour mental health awareness course.

Body cams being researched. Pilot program coming for 2021. Cameras will help. New officers want them! There are MANY policies, such as public record, that must be reviewed.

Cost- \$200,000

What does your Diversity committee do? It is a new committee charged with developing strategies to improve services. Consists of 5 patrol officers, a Sergeant, and a dispatcher.

Is there a neutral board to review discipline? No neutral review board. There are policies and procedures for civilian complaints, also for internal affairs. Chief and Dep Chief have final say.

The new State Police reform bill has a built-in citizen complaint committee.

What is a "Strong Chief?" Chief has final say in how the department is set up and run.

He answers directly to Town Manager, who would get involved if chief were not getting the job done well.

Spinney is the appointing authority – hires, fires, promotes with final approval from Town Manager.

What Police organizations is CPD part of?

NE Law Enforcement Council coordinates mutual aid, incl SWAT who are trained negotiators ( 2 of whom are Chelmsford officers). NELEC is a great resource whose goals are aligned with CPD

Rapid Response Team for incidents such as the missing woman last year. Brings in officers from all over.

Are there mental health checkups for officers? They are required physicals every year. Officers can reach out for help, can reach out for each other, utilize the Employee Assistance Program. CPD is a small department. We notice when someone is having difficulty.

Police officers are 1 ½ times more likely to take their own lives than the general public. Training includes recognizing signs of possible suicide.

Tell us about policies regarding use of force. CPD has never trained in choke hold. Spinney has never seen them used. They are now forbidden.

De-escalation has been part of training for years.

Level of force is clearly detailed based on type of incident. There has never been a complaint about mistreatment.

What happens if an officer is involved in shooting (death)? There have been two in recent years, not fatal. The Middlesex District Attorney's office takes over and investigates.

Officer is usually put on Administrative leave. There is an internal review of policies. The DA looks for violation of law.

Citation requirements quota – is that real? NO! Officers are encouraged to stop cars to deter motor vehicle crime, but no expectation for outcome, i.e., ticket, warning, nothing.

Incident data is reviewed by chief once year, more regularly by lieutenants. In the past three years approximately 7000 citations were issued, 63% to white, 5% black, 1% Indian, 6% Hispanic, 7% Asian, 3% Mid-eastern, 15% unknown.

Arrests and Criminal charges. With 1535 charges, 60% were to white individuals, 11% black, 1% Indian, 13% Hispanic, 4% Asian, 1% Mid-eastern.

How do you deal with youth? Age 18 is considered adult. Trend is \_diversion\_ to minimize juvenile charged with crime. Reports written, then coordinate with DA office. In 2020 Chelmsford had zero Juvenile arrests.

Community outreach –

PAL takes donations, such as bicycles, runs fundraisers.

If businesses ask for security training, the police will help them out.

TIPS411 – Download app, choose Chelmsford. It is an anonymous texting option. Someone even reported possible involvement in capitol crime. CPD reported to FBI.

Chief Spinney offers us tour of station, ride-alongs, scenario trainer -- after pandemic!

P. Hicks offered continued partnership with CPD.

### **Next meetings**

January 26, 2021 at 7 pm

February 9, 2021 – with Lisa Marrone, Director of Business Development

### **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned 8:08 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Susan Mackinnon, Clerk,  
Diversity, Racial Equity, and Inclusion Committee