



# *Town of Stillwater Police Department*

## *Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative*

### Meeting Minutes

**Location:** Stillwater Community Center

**Date:** 02/08/2021

**Time:** 7:00pm-8:00pm

**Attendees:** John Nett, Commissioner and Co-Chair; Jennifer Weaver, Commissioner; Ray Cordani (Commissioner of Police), Supervisor Ed Kinowski; Justin McFarlane, Stillwater Area Community Center. (via Zoom) DA Karen Heggen, Frank Tatum, Community Representative; Judy Wood-Shaw, Mayor Village of Stillwater. Excused: Sara Kipp, Stillwater Public Library.

#### **Agenda Items:**

Agenda Item	Owner	Time Allocated
Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative Overview and review of Key Questions and Insights for Consideration		
Review Survey Results		
Review PD/ Commission Insights		
Questions/Comments/Open Discussion		

#### **Community Survey Questionnaire Review**

John:

- 111 responses were received from the community (more than Mechanicville and the County)
- the data was reviewed as to how it pertains to writing the plans- Frank and Jimel (pgs. 6 & 7).
- eye-opening and encouraging
- there were 3 responses not positive
- if read in-depth, department functions, and services—offers more of a personal note
- not discounting negative but isn't inaccurate read of entire questionnaire

Survey responses (out of the 31 questions) :

Question: "Select the top 5 issues you think are the greatest problems within your community".

Note: The percentages listed are relative to the responses received for each individual question and not cumulative percentages. There are 6 listed as there were two of the questions that were tied in responses.

1. Drug abuse (e.g., manufacture, sale, or use of illegal/prescription drugs). **52.34%**
2. Traffic issues / residential speeding **52.34%**



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3. Driving under the influence (i.e., alcohol or drugs)	<b>43.93%</b>
4. Domestic violence (adult)	<b>30.84%</b>
5. School safety (e.g., bullying, fighting, or weapons)	<b>28.97%</b>
6. Disorderly conduct / public intoxication / noise violations	<b>28.97%</b>

#### To review: Police Reform, Survey, Commission, Data

- Q1: important what's was said and answered
- Q2 communication
- Q3 mixed, still positive range, learning, more use of social media
- Q4 can see results
- Q5 mixed but within range
- will focus on aggregate numbers when get there within range
- do have things to work for but compared to other communities have things to be proud of
- Q6 IMPORTANT to read through
- common threads with surrounding communities
- Nobody seems to register the vehicle anymore
- drug abuse includes individual sale and promotion of drugs not just use
- hate crimes not so much
- school safety still a concern
- traffic issues big one and underage drinking

#### What do the responses tell us and what are the biggest issues we're dealing with?

- confident in saying we have a lot of data

Frank: How does survey compare to actual arrests, etc.?

Ray: lot of complaints for speeding; exhaust complaints; domestic issues; V&T offenses on the rise; race numbers are in line with what he sees

Ed: raw data from Ray's monthly reports correlate with study; drugs don't seem as high as survey

Ray: drugs continue to be an issue and our community and surroundings everywhere

John: Fentanyl/heroin drug uses is up along with prescription drugs.

- monthly report given to police commission to review and year-end summaries
- helps guide us and data is consistent, no glaring inconsistencies

Ed to Karen: are there reports established by the school resource officers?



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Karen: Due to 16 to 18 age increase rarely sees anything unless a violent crime committed, they are referred to youth Court; school resource officers not primarily engaged in arrest but interaction with students.

Ed:  
-helps develop relationships  
-what type of information is being gathered / documented to show how well the program is working

Karen:  
-concur getting data not characterized and skewed by media source  
-great benefits but might be hard to measure  
-sense it's positive throughout community, not just Stillwater

John and Ray: The department self-identified the need to review and update and approve existing policies. The need for additional policies was also self-identified and confirmed when the mandate was published.  
- felt most important in public eye specifically identifying what's pertinent to the community  
- then to the town board to approve  
- how often are updates needed for ex: bi-annual  
-police manual also being updated  
-Important to get (this groups) feedback to help developing plans moving forward

Policies reviewed and approved to date by the Police Commission:

- Use of Force Policy
- Use of Taser Policy
- Domestic Violence Policy
- Emotionally Disturbed/Mental Health Crisis Policy
- Body Worn Camera Policy
- Mobile Audio Policy
- Body Armor Policy
- Town of Stillwater Police Commission Charter

Ray: added that current policies bar all choke holds; added de-escalation as part of training, and not just reviewed but updated.

Ed:  
"action and reaction"  
- because of public input  
-impact /social implications how do police now feel encountering general public?  
-Are they being respected?  
- What is the impact to those enacting change -there must be a give and take



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-look at the whole picture not just one aspect

John: asks group "what do you think-are we on the right track?"

Frank: " It is worthwhile".

John:

- He felt the reform initiative is more indicative of the concerns of larger, urban communities and not of the issues and concern of smaller and more rural communities.
- what can we do now for the Town and Village so we don't lose our own?

Ray: civilian police commission engaged in officer classroom and training-- taser, firing range

-feels it is a positive engagement

John:

- working with Paul on the Executive Summary
- how we got here and where we are going
- survey
- how we feel as a group
- feedback from group

John:

- how do we engage/empower officers with good training and resources. We need to include town and village board members so they have a good working knowledge of what we are dealing with?
- It's a balancing act

Ed: Public outreach

- via a local newspaper (Express) publish part of questionnaire
- who do you call if not happy with police
- number of people don't have computers or know how to look on website
- psychology applied to questionnaire
- need something by April how best to explain to public what we're doing

Karen: large part of Governor's executive order talks about issue with race, equality

-Stillwater results don't show much need in this area; however, the state is looking for it

**\*\*she offers this as an observation\*\***

**\*\*County Committee submitted last week and included a link to two Albany law School Round Tables: one tomorrow and one on February 18th on "rural communities unique challenges".**

John: Round Table would be beneficial



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Karen: will send links.

Ray: did self-audit and determined need to start with diversity training

Karen:

- no required time for public comment
- advised not to call it a "hearing" to avoid procedural requirements
- any kind of public meetings can be held via zoom per Covid 19 recommendations.
- town of Stillwater could adopt a similar plan

John: Time frames:

- Frank and Jimel -please put together draft by first meeting in March.
- John and Paul will make every effort possible to assist as needed
- would like to post it online for public comment
- send to supervisor the second week of March
- submit plan electronically and my USPS prior to April 1.

Karen: We are well on the way

Frank: The format is in the workbook

Karen: online: published city of Saratoga Springs; county of Saratoga Springs; and some smaller communities in capital region-- Google "203"

[Police Reform Task Force | Saratoga Springs, NY \(saratoga-springs.org\)](https://saratoga-springs.org)

[Executive Order 203 Compliance Group – Saratoga County New York \(saratogacountyny.gov\)](https://saratogacountyny.gov)

John: Please send comments and will send out notes ASAP