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REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CITY COUNCIL
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

October 13, 2020
6:00 p.m.

Call to Order & Roll Call

Mayor Eriksson reconvened the October 12, 2020 City Council meeting at 6:06 p.m. in the Mike Balkman Council Chambers at City Hall via Webex.

Present: Göran Eriksson, Mayor
Alex Fisch, Vice Mayor
Daniel Lee, Council Member
Meghan Sahli-Wells, Council Member
Thomas Small, Council Member

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Action Items

Item A-1
(Continued)

CC - (1) Discussion of Findings and Recommendations from the City Manager's Office Related to the Public Safety Review; and (2) Provide Direction to the City Manager as Deemed Appropriate

Mayor Eriksson invited public comment and explained that those who spoke last night should not speak again as the current meeting is a continuation of the meeting held on October 12, 2020.

The following members of the audience addressed the City Council:

Akari Johnston discussed the lack of non-BIPOC (Black, Indigenous People of Color) data in the report; the focus on BIPOC crime and arrests; and felt that data was skewed.

Dennis Page thanked staff for the recommendations; quoted the report from Dr. Hernandez regarding misdemeanors and their detrimental impacts to the disproportionate number of Black people affected; he quoted the staff report regarding community intervention programs; asserted that a person's freedom should never depend solely on monetary payment; expressed support for "care first, jails last" and demands to defund the police by 50%; discussed citizen police interaction; white people who order armed weaponry upon Black and Brown people to ensure their comfort; weaponized discomfort; whether armed officers are needed to resolve every situation; he noted that 85% of the Culver City Police Department (CCPD) budget is allocated to sworn officers; and he indicated that in order to achieve a 50% budget reduction, all sworn officers would have to be eliminated and that would not work.

Kerri Payne was called to speak, but did not respond.

Jeff Cooper expressed disappointment in the presentation made by Saul Sarabia at the previous meeting; discussed speakers from Mar Vista Gardens; bias; and he felt that a problem was being created that did not exist.

Bill Gallagher was called to speak but did not respond.

Kelli Estes wanted to see the City Council meeting held in Council Chambers rather than via Webex; expressed concern with not being able to see Council Member Lee on video; discussed the inability of the Center for Public Safety Management (CPSM) to provide the report by October 12; she felt that the City management team had acted per Council instructions and the suggestions would increase costs in the long-run; she stated that the issue of jailers was separate; she wanted to see funds released to ensure that CCPD was not short-staffed; acknowledged good ideas and approaches to reform from the report that require more research prior to implementation; discussed outreach; and difficulty moving forward due to the divisiveness of the City Council.

Heather Wollin indicated that she was running for City Council; thanked staff and the Committees who worked on the item during the short timeframe; discussed insurance considerations; the experience of other cities; addressing concerns with non-sworn response to seemingly benign calls that turn violent; acknowledgement of issues by CCPD; concern with the potential for harming the City financially by making unnecessary changes;

felt that defunding would jeopardize safety, insurability, fiscal stability, residents, businesses, and the City; and she encouraged the City Council to work with CCPD instead of against them.

Ben Adam Climer, CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets) for Southern California, reported making multiple presentations throughout the process; indicated that CAHOOTS did not respond to violent, dangerous or criminal 911 calls;; indicated that they respond to non-emergency calls including substance use, homelessness and mental health issues; reported that not one person had been injured in hundreds of thousands of calls over 31 years; discussed the co-responder incident in Berkeley referred to at the previous meeting; Fire Department and EMS (Emergency Medical Services) response; felt that the program would work well in the City; and he indicated that they were available to help.

Thanassis Tetradis expressed concern with the direction of the conversation; discussed the push for a 50% reallocation of the CCPD budget to other places in the City; the assignment of the Committee to investigate the matter; comments made by Heather Wollin to work with CCPD; recognizing that those on the Committee were not interested in seeing anything fundamentally change; he pointed out that those in the community who asked for change were not invited to be part of the process; and he felt a new Committee should be made with prioritization given to those who did not get what they wanted in July.

Laura Stuart acknowledged the complexity of the issue; felt many discussions should be held with the entire community with openness to figuring out what makes sense for everyone; she asked that there not be a rush to judgement; discussed unions, legal and social repercussions; and insurance carriers who left the state.

David Hoyt provided background on himself; expressed opposition to defunding CCPD in any way; support for those looking into ways to improve rather than dismantle CCPD; the audit by CPSM; the baseline report that must be maintained as public safety is reimagined; the report by Saul Sarabia; concern with many questions, but no solid answers; lack of precedent for ideas presented; he asserted it was the responsibility of the City to take the time to go through a careful process; and he cited Portland and Seattle as examples irresponsible change.

Keith Jones provided background on himself; commented on the frustration of Council Member Lee with the report from CPSM; discussed the September 29 meeting of the Finance Advisory Committee (FAC) and the Chief's Advisory Panel (CAP); favorable findings regarding CCPD from CPSM; email expressing concerns sent to Council Members and Serena Wright-Black, but not to the Mayor; the highly inaccurate salary analysis; fulfillment of the contract by CPSM; and he asserted that there had not been a vote to defund CCPD at the June 22, 2020 City Council meeting and that Council Member Lee owed John Nachbar and Serena Wright-Black an apology.

Council Member Lee clarified that he had not stated that there was a vote to defund, but rather, there was a vote to have an option of defunding by 50% in the report.

Ron Bassilian thanked staff for ensuring that the City maintained obligations to residents; discussed staffing; car insurance; parking tickets; paid advocates; lawn signs; stated that policing had become an election issue and Protect Culver City supported CCPD; and he asserted that City Council candidates Puza, McMorris and Menthe supported defunding CCPD.

Bitania Beniam thanked Council Member Lee for combating aggressiveness toward Black Council Members and future candidates in both meetings; she discussed direction to the City Task Force to examine the CCPD through a racial equity lens; the unprofessional report presented with a lack of consideration for BIPOC living or passing through Culver City; those given a chance to speak; length of the meeting; late release of incomplete data; lack of information on dispatch calls; services targeted for reallocation; and she rejected the report noting that the Task Force should be disbanded.

Paula Amezola expressed condolences to Council Member Sahli-Wells for the death of her family member; provided background on herself noting that she was running for the School Board; expressed concern with youth safety; discussed the militarization of CCPD; the importance of considering what safety means during the pandemic; concern with staff recommendations to reduce funding to the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department; she cited the value of parks; and noted the importance of putting money into what is valued in the City.

Ana Gonzalez did not respond when called upon.

Jeremy Green, City Clerk, indicated that anyone who spoke last night and wanted to speak again would have an opportunity during public comment at the end of the meeting.

Mayor Eriksson thanked those who came back to the meeting today and he apologized for the inconvenience but noted the lateness of the hour last night.

Council Member Sahli-Wells reported seeing messages from several members of the public who had attempted to address the City Council.

Discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding procedures for public speaking and those who had registered to speak yesterday.

Ana Gonzalez felt it was backward that important topics were left for the end of the meeting with speakers unable to address the City Council; she expressed disappointment that insurance was more important than the lives of POC individuals in Culver City; and she hoped that scheduling would be addressed for future meetings.

Sami Shanman expressed disappointment in the report; discussed the lack of different opinions expressed; support for comments made by Council Member Lee; other communities with oversight or advisory committees; her service on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee; she asked that before Council Members are termed out, that they agendaize a discussion of creating an advisory committee to oversee CCPD; and she wanted to ensure that officers did not go unchecked any longer, with all perspectives, opinions and experiences considered at all times.

Miles LaViolette discussed the prestige of Culver City; the importance of reallocating funds to fulfill standards the City is held up to; the importance of ensuring that BIPOC residents could also find Culver City to be the best place to grow up in and to grow old in; the need to consider funding more services for marginalized communities; continued repercussions with failing to take action; the need for more transparency; and the need for more regard for the entire community.

Lizbeth Mendez expressed appreciation for the discussion; provided background on herself; supported defunding the police; questioned the need for so many police officers; pointed out the need to support education during the pandemic; discussed the salary of the Police Chief; concern with negative statements

made against Council Member Lee; and the need for funding for the entire community.

Donna Kent thanked the Mayor and City Council for the process; noted that resolution of the complex topic in three months was unrealistic and the item required additional consideration; discussed the June 22, 2020 meeting where staff was directed by four Council Members to examine a 50% reduction; and she reported receipt of an email from the Chamber of Commerce that listed potential changes as a result of defunding the police that could impact businesses, with no evidence to back them up.

Discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding the need for additional time to consider how to move forward; agreement at the June 22 meeting to return with a set of options, including 50% defunding; exploration of the consequences of each option with consideration of data; concern that if the purpose of employing CPSM was to provide a baseline, that it was inappropriate for them to also provide recommendations; the unavailability of data to show what their recommendations were based on; the need to base recommendations on data; the need to provide Saul Sarabia with access to the data from CPSM; investigation into what a 50% reduction would look like; determination by a future City Council on how to move forward; appreciation to staff for the huge amount of work completed in a short amount of time; the need to have three options with different levels of reduction and varied time frames to consider; the insurance issue; California Government Code Section 845; liability; the impetus for taking on the conversation due to material effects to Black and POC residents and stakeholders travelling through the City; clarification that no one has suggested getting rid of CCPD; reexamination of all services that fall under Public Safety; services being defunded by the state and federal government for the last 30 years; clarification that services provided would not be eliminated without providing alternatives; the need for different reports with data; justification for recommendations based on data to be considered by a future City Council; the need to prioritize providing services and housing to the unhoused communities and address safety concerns; conversations with Mike Bonin indicating that if Culver City can provide space, they would provide tiny houses; services; hotel/motel reuse; the Home Key project; changes as a result of the pandemic; potential funding; exploration of relationships with the non-profit, SHARE; the potential for housing people under the 405 and connecting them with services; consideration of the safety of the unhoused population; conditions under the 405; people who would like to

be housed and people who want the encampment to relocate; the significant number of calls received by CCPD and the Fire Department related to homelessness; the pilot project; the CAHOOTS model; costs for calls handled by CAHOOTS vs. calls handled by the police department or co-response; deployment of social workers without law enforcement on a daily basis; the need for data presented to a new City Council with additional options; and the inability to make a decision based on incomplete data.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding minimal reallocation of CCPD funding in the passage of the budget; outreach; diverse stakeholders involved in the process; information included in the staff report; the focus on engagement; continued conversations; encouragement to those not part of the direct conversations to get involved; available information; the disconnect between data and input received; the need to have CCPD respond only to calls where there is immediate danger and a gun is appropriate; the LA County Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) report; ways to provide true community safety without bringing armed response; the feeling that the non-armed response makes more people safe; distinct sides that have come into the conversation; entrenched ideas; the intention to have a safe City; ensuring that the safety of some is not at the expense of others; listening to lived experiences of past and present residents; bodycam footage; datapoints from CCPD arrest data; disparities in how people in Culver City are being treated and in their safety; the common goal to keep everyone safe; the difficulty of admitting where there is an issue; time spent working on reform from within; installation of dashcams on every police vehicle; transparency tools; training; ensuring that youth are not being incarcerated; work with the county; important progress made within CCPD; the wakeup call with the murder of George Floyd; policing complaints received over the years; listening carefully with a different perspective; acknowledgement of the work of CCPD to evolve and become a diverse organization; systemic bias; the culture of policing; the failure of society to provide social services; "no call too small"; placing too many responsibilities on the police department; over-dependence on policing; the need for well-trained, well-prepared, well-educated, diverse police officers to respond to dangerous calls; taking the report and preliminary recommendations of Paul Sarabia to heart; integrating data points into an equity lens; formulating a more cohesive response; acting as a pilot City to implement ATI recommendations; the Westside Cities Council of Governments; work to address homelessness done at the regional level; looking

at care first and jail last; minimizing contacts with law enforcement; bringing in services that respond to the issue at hand; restorative justice before police are involved; various degrees of safety considerations; improved outcomes for small crimes being dealt with justice, not handcuffs; a request that the City Attorney investigate legal barriers to alternatives to CCPD Traffic Enforcement; due diligence with regard to insurance; unintended consequences; appreciation for the CAHOOTS model; the CPSM report; allowing public access to information as soon as possible; dispatch training; taking a regional approach; outreach to critical partners; appreciation for those working through the difficulty of considering the complex issue of racism and biases and taking a critical look at the City; making well-thought-out, considered, decisive systemic change; having Culver City be a model; the culture of service in the City; and the deep and necessary change.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding support for the process; determining how to move forward; the tipping point; meeting the challenge; completion of a year's worth of work in 90 days; the need for the report; comparing CCPD to industry standards as the basis to make recommendations; recommendations from Mr. Sarabia's report; improving efficiencies; costs; substantive decisions to be made by the next City Council; finding consensus to move forward; ensuring that recommendations in the staff report are deemed to be sufficient to address issues; and the feeling that action should not be taken now, but the stage is set for action by the next City Council.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding the emerging consensus; the inability to bind the next Council; the inability of the next City Council to avoid considering the matter; predictions made in Mr. Sarabia's report and encouragement to people to read it; setting aside initial reactions to reject change; systems of oppression; the need for systemic and self-evaluation at every level of government; the decision to stop avoiding uncomfortable conversations; releasing raw data; the current practice of spending time and money to produce racial injustice; addressing disparities; finding a cheaper and more just way to proceed; using ATI as a road map; the situation in Portland and Seattle; acting as a regional leader; outreach to the Venice Family Clinic, St. Joseph's Center, the county and other cities; insurability; reassuring the carrier that actions are being taken in an intelligent way and will save money; getting buy-in from the business and legal side; potential impediments to the CAHOOTS

program; rallying others to implement change; working regionally; automated enforcement; speed cameras; removing the potential for profiling; researching the obstacles to transforming Traffic Enforcement; creation of an Oversight Committee; and the need for the next City Council to take action.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding appreciation to staff; the timeline for moving forward; availability of information; changes proposed by CCPD; addressing issues on a regional level with the Independent Cities Association; incorporating Saint Josephs into the process; and hiring a jailer to bring the City up to code.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding the goal of hiring jailers; transitioning away from traditional jailing toward a more care-based model; the importance of having jails properly staffed as part of the status quo; examination of the jail as part of the process to reimagine policing; the budget; the importance of coming into compliance as quickly as possible; the recommendation in the CPSM report for three jailers vs. the previous staff recommendation for five; transportation; best practices; supervision and staffing of the jail facility; adding to the workload of sworn police officers; costs; operational impacts; exploration of converting officers to jailers; data regarding costs and time; controversy around LAPD; concern with making a decision that is not on the agenda; the budget decision; and staff direction to return with actual numbers.

Jackie Gomez-Whiteley, CPSM, discussed the disparity with the recommendation for the jail; the preliminary report; exposure with the jail; best practices to use armed transport; and additional information that is pending.

Discussion ensued between Jackie Gomez-Whiteley, staff and Council Members regarding confidence that numbers would remain the same; the analysis and reasoning behind three jailers vs. more; experience in custody operations; challenges with expediency; fact detail patterns; providing the platform for better decision making; City Council consensus to direct the City Manager to return as soon as possible with information to enable the City Council to make a determination; concern with the condition of the jail; and the importance of addressing the situation.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding appreciation to Manny Cid for his efforts; ensuring

that everyone is heard; acknowledgement of email comments received; encouragement to those frustrated with the process to continue; concern with dehumanization of Council Members; appreciation to staff and the community for their efforts in the process; hope for a presentation of short, medium and long term options for moving forward; and encouragement for everyone to vote and to continue to stay involved in the process.

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Public Comment - Items Not on the Agenda

Mayor invited public comment.

The following members of the public were called to speak:

Noah Zatz offered observations on the process of making good public policy grounded in data and committed to equity and social justice; discussed ensuring that data does not come before thinking about equity; using racial equity and harm from policing to determine which data is collected and what questions are asked; underlying goals; the essential concern of downsides to police/civilian interactions; data gathering when considering the possibility of structural change in CCPD operations and the budget; the decision of CPSM to use traditional policing as its benchmark rather than reimagining public safety; and the need to center equity in the process from the start and throughout the process.

Mark Lipman asserted that nearly 30% of the CCPD budget is spent on Other Pay, rather than Base Pay, with the average police officer receiving \$165,000 per year; he discussed budget negotiations; ways to make cuts without reducing staffing levels; public service; costs per year to end homelessness vs. the amount spent to have police address the problem; and he asked whether a report on the cross jurisdiction work done by Council Member Lee with Los Angeles could be made to the Committee on Homelessness.

Shelley Rosekelly felt that much of the conversation during the process seemed centered toward coddling white fear over what might come with change rather than considering those currently living in an unjust reality; she asked that those fighting for their lives not be tone-policed; discussed systemic racism designed to hold back Black and Brown people; misguided statements made that young officers would bring about change; the aspirational, but not impossible goal of a 50% cut to the

CCPD budget; the need for imagination, commitment and political courage to create real change; and hope for the next City Council.

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Items from Council Members

None.

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Council Member Requests to Agendize Future Items

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Adjournment

There being no further business, at 8:42 p.m., the City Council adjourned.

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Jeremy Green
CITY CLERK of Culver City, California
Culver City, California

GÖRAN ERIKSSON
MAYOR of Culver City, California

Date: _____