

Washington County Sheriff's Office Latino Advisory Commission
March 3, 2021
Meeting Minutes

Commission Members Present: Olga Acuña, Maria Caballero-Rubio, Juan Carlos Gonzalez, Pat Garrett, Daniel Guzman-Catarina, Ricardo Moreno, Mark Shah, Pablo Valenzuela, Fernando Lira, Fernanda Pantoja

Commission Members Absent: Joann Hoffman

Moderating: Brandon Lee with Training for Transformation (T4T)

Guests: Marcy Allie, Accreditation Manager, Chief Deputy John Koch, Sharon Gray, Consul Quesnel Melendez, Paola Martinez Torres

Meeting via Zoom

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Acuña called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Introductions

Co-Chair Acuña welcomed Fernanda Pantoja and Fernando Lira, who were attending their first meeting with the commission and filling the last two vacancies for student members.

Consul Carlos Quesnel Melendez was recently appointed as head of the Mexican Consulate of Portland in October of 2021. Consul thanked the commission for being part of today's session and to learn more about what the commission does. The hope is to collaborate with the commission in the future and the opportunity to work with Latino community and be a part of the solutions.

Paola Martinez Torres is the Protection Officer at Consulate of the Mexico in Portland. She appreciates the opportunity to attend the meeting this afternoon and looks forward to ways to collaborate for the Mexican community.

Approval Meeting Minutes

The members present constituted a quorum. Maria Caballero-Rubio made a motion to approve the February 3, 2021 minutes with the correction to delete the "Native Lands Acknowledgement", Ricardo Moreno seconded, the minutes were approved.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Priorities and Strategies

The Latino Advisory Commission came together with the vision and intention to help the Latino community and with the purpose of sharing information with the individually respected roles in the community. In previous meetings the commission has covered Body Worn Cameras and gave recommendations for policy changes. Going forward what priorities/strategies does the commission what to look at next.

ICE – Co-Chair Garrett cannot over communicate the Sheriff’s Office’s clear separation from ICE and he is happy to have that conversation. Commissioners discussed how ICE changed the patch on the back of their uniforms from “Federal Agent” to “Police”. Because of this community members see police and automatically think ICE. We need to have the conversations and initiatives to separate the two and reclaim the word “Police” and rebuild the trust within our community with law enforcement and the Sheriff’s Office. This is high on the priority list.

Commissioner Caballero-Rubio supports Grassroots and the idea bringing in community voices we can learn from and help shape our work around those conversations involving community engagement and Grassroots. We could possibly hold a virtual gathering in June or July, or gather in-person, and give community members the opportunity to share. Also need to recognize for in-person meetings we need to create a space where people feel safe to speak freely and feel comfortable to meet, possible at Centro Cultural in Cornelius. Co-Chair Acuña agrees it is critical to have community engagement and build the trust of key members and to share/learn from each other. Another option is to create town halls for the community to hear about the work the commission is doing.

The commission is concerned for all communities of color and recently the Asian communities have been seeing an increase in violence. Would it be of interest to invite some community members to speak out on this, possibly a panel, and ask how can we help with their struggle? Co-Chair Garrett suggested we reach out to community members and T4T volunteered to assist and has connections to the community (APANO) as well.

Fernando Lira provided a link to a video “A Conversation with the Police – Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man” the concept of the series is to create a space for individuals to simply talk about how we can all come together as a community.

List of topics/presentations:

- Separate Law Enforcement from ICE
- Grassroots (Community Engagement)
- Violence in the Asian Communities
- Community Policing
- CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out on the Streets) Model
- Ballot Measure 110 (Sheriff’s Office Implementation)

Policy Presentation

Co-Chair Garrett introduced Senior Management Analyst and Accreditation Manager Marcy Allie with the Washington County Sheriff’s Office.

Marcy was hired by Washington County HR and transferred to the Sheriff’s Office in 2004 with the primary goal to help create and build accreditation for the Commission of Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). The Sheriff’s Office is proud of its national accreditation since July 1, 2004. Sr. MA Allie provided a presentation and answered questions regarding the policy development and update process at the Sheriff’s Office.

Key points from the presentation:

- Policies in Place for the Sheriff's Office
 - WCSO Policies 207
 - WCSO Ops Manuals 29
 - Jail Policies 124
- Oregon law, federal acts, or professional standards are the drivers for policy change.
 - Jail Policy current drivers:
 - Americans with Disabilities Act
 - Prison Rape Elimination Act
- Policy development consult stakeholders such as:
 - Mental Health
 - Juvenile Department
 - Human Resources
 - Washington County Police Officers Association
- Changes to policy are communicated via the chain of command, training, and PowerDMS.
- Policies that do not pose safety risks are published on the Sheriff's Office website for public viewing and can be viewed free of charge without a records request.
- Past policies are maintained electronically per Oregon Public Records law.
- CALEA and Oregon Jail Standards annually audit the operations and adherence of policies.

Commissioner Moreno inquired as updates and new policies are pushed out to staff how is the public notified of the changes? We can never over communicate, and it is incredibly important the information gets to the community. The Sheriff's Office website policy page is a good place to start for all new and updated policies, we also have a page "Policy Changes of Community Interest" that highlights change in policies of community interest. If we have missed important topics that the commission feels are important to the community, please bring those to our attention.

Co-Chair Acuña commented along the lines of how the policy changes gets communicated a great portion of the community has not received the opportunity of a formal education. How do we ensure they receive the information and the knowledge from the policing community to help reduce the number of repeat offenses? Commissioner Moreno mentioned the Sheriff's Office has an active twitter account where they communicate accidents, media releases, and weather-related information. Perhaps they could message updates/changes to policies through social media to reach more people. Co-Chair Garrett explained Washington County has launched a Spanish based Facebook page and they received their first Spanish tweet. The Sheriff's Office is starting to record messages in Spanish for Facebook to help with community messaging. Traffic alerts, arrests, and releases are currently on Facebook and are hoping to have this information available on the Spanish version in the future.

The commission appreciated the knowledge and the overview of the policy presentation and welcomes the opportunity to review and critique policies looking through an infused racial equity lens in the future.

Discussion on Article “Can Faith in Police be Restored?”

Commissioner Caballero-Rubio provided the article “Can faith in police be restored? A former Portland chief thinks so.” by Tom Potter a former Portland mayor and retired police chief. Commissioner Caballero-Rubio worked for Tom Potter who was a servant leader and brought that to policing and working with the community. He often told officers their first loyalty is to the community and the second is to each other. The article mentioned a goal of police officers at the end of the day is they want to go home; this is also true for black males. Even though they fear each other, everyone has the same goal.

Key Points taken Away from the Article:

- The idea of community partnerships and community coming first really hit home and coincides with the mind set the commission is trying to align for ourselves.
- How mentally police still work under the mind set of militarized.
- It is not them and us but **we**.
- Hiring more officers of color.
- How many people have an unconscionced bias and do not realize it?
- Training and Hiring to diversify our work force

Next steps

April Agenda

Agenda items for future meetings:

- WCSO trainers address “time and distance” and “de-escalation”.
- Tour of the Public Service Training Center (PSTC).
- Discussion of issues from other Communities of Color.

Meeting adjourned at 5:35 PM