PUBLIC SAFETY
COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING
JUNE 20, 2020
11:30 AM
VIDEOCONFERENCE

Members Present:	Councilmember Melissa Cabello Havrda, *Chair, District 6* Councilmember Jada Andrews-Sullivan, *District 2* Councilmember Rebecca Viagran, *District 3* Councilmember Ana Sandoval, *District 7* Councilmember Clayton Perry, *District 10*
Members Absent:	None
Staff Present:	Tina Flores, *Acting City Clerk*

Call to order

Chairwoman Cabello Havrda called the meeting to order.

1. Invocation

The Invocation was delivered by Pastor Charles E. Flowers, of the Faith Outreach Center, International.

Item 3 was addressed at this time.

3. Public Comments

Chairwoman Cabello Havrda called upon the citizens registered to speak.

Lexy Garcia spoke in support of divesting the police Budget and requested a line item police Budget.

Christopher Cunningham stated that he wanted to see violence reduced in our City. He encouraged the commission to remove the imposed investigation waiting periods from next year's contract with the Police Union.

Debra Bush stated that there should be no paid administrative leave for disciplined Police Officers

Michael Pena spoke in support of divesting funds in SAPD and reinvesting them back in our community.

Doshie Piper stated that an independent review board of officer's investigating infractions was needed to insure a fair process.

Josh Avila stated that the Reliable Revolutionaries organization was designing a website to help the community but required input from the City and Police. He thanked the Mayor and the Police Chief for taking the time to talk to the organization.

Joanna Pena spoke on behalf of the Texas Organizing Project and stated that SAPD offered incentives to individuals with military experience. She expressed her concerns over the health and mental evaluation and appeal process provided to Police Officers.

Isabela Briseño suggested more rules and reform for police. She stated that there should be stricter consequences for police who have a disregard for the rules. She expressed support for defunding the police.

Josephina Fernandez expressed support for defunding the Police. She stated the funds could be better utilized by providing basic human needs to keep the community safe.

Acting City Clerk Tina J. Flores read the following comments:

Janet Byrnes - I am appalled at what has happened at the hands of our Police Officers across the country, and I'm glad to see our city taking steps to remediate issues. One point that I've heard little or no discussion about was that the vast majority of the police violence was occurring by the hands of white, male officers. In fact, I haven't heard of a single instance of a female officer's perpetrating excessive force or murdering a citizen. I'd like to see more female officers hired and promoted into leadership. We hear suggestions in many areas for racial and ethnic diversity and that organizations of leadership and authority should resemblance the racial and ethnic make up of the population. Those organizations should also resemble the gender balance of the population. If 51% of law enforcement organizations were female, with an equal percentage in leadership positions, and especially if male officers were paired with a female partner, much of the violence would stop immediately. Try it and see what happens.

Chelsey Goswick - I fully support the blue and all funding that goes towards SAPD and all public safety measures. We need continued support for our police department and that included providing all necessary funding.

Lauren Torres - On behalf of our SAPD officers I ask you to please continue to support them. Our officers are some of the finest, most disciplined and committed, and they deserve to be taken care of. They care for the community they serve and were committed to protect all those in need. I support our SAPD officers and am thankful for their service to us.

Tamisine Neal - I want our police force numbers to remain the same and/or increased. I also want changes made so that officers who do not follow the policies and code of ethics with the public are removed. The 5% that make the 95% look bad, have no place in a high stress, dangerous job.

Rachel Walker - I absolutely believe in the police department and would be horrified if they were defunded.

April Duvall – Chapter 143 sets up unreasonable standards for due process, then creates a loophole for an officer to avoid culpability if any of a myriad of mistakes are made during the investigative process. (143.123(k)). Chapter 174 sets up a one-sided dispute resolution process, where arbitrators and judges are instructed to consider certain conditions affecting police jobs but does not require them to consider the city's concerns regarding public accountability and public safety. (174.156) It's disgusting that SAPD has officers on the force who have fed a homeless man feces and watched while another officer pulled out a woman's tampon while she stood on a curb. The City Council should be ashamed for standing by doing nothing. They must put their full weight behind citizens efforts to gain signatures for referendums to end Chapters 143 and 174.

Abby Fernandez - There is a difference between accountability and funding. In fact, they have nothing to do with one another. Defunding police puts their lives as well as the lives of citizens at risk. Holding law enforcement officers accountable for their actions is absolutely necessary, and ensuring they have the proper training is the first step toward supporting LEOs. It is asinine for any city government to reduce financial support as a means to better protect the community. The city council has proposing that we reduce resources for police so that we can better serve our communities by limiting police presence which could result in the mistreatment of a citizen.

Dora Morales - City Council we need changes to our SAPD departments. We need to pledge to sign the petition to repeal chapters 143 and 174 of the state local government. Our citizens are aware of the officers being fired by Police Chief and rehired again. We need to stop these types of actions. It affects our good Police officers and degrades our strong force. We as citizens will vote for these changes and our Citizens Council needs to step up. History can be repeated, for example the City of Camden, New Jersey disbanded its police department 7 years ago. Camden was routinely named one of the most violent cities in the USA by CNN.

Benjamin Miele - To ensure public safety in San Antonio, police officers need to be held accountable for their actions. Members of the City Council must pledge to sign the petition to repeal chapters 143 and 174 of the state local government code. They also must prioritize disciplinary reform in the new contract negotiations for next year.

Zoe Russell - I'm a criminal defense lawyer, and I take appointed misdemeanor cases. I have dealt with a lot of clients affected by mental health in my short time in this job. We need to have a different way of dealing with people who have a mental health diagnosis; other than throwing them in jail for something they didn't even understand. We do not need police for these people, we need social workers. On one case I had, 5-6 officers came to the scene for a criminal trespassing violation. That's what I think about when I hear police demanding greater and greater shares of the budget. We also need to change the collective bargaining agreement.

2. **Briefing on the San Antonio Police Department's Legal Framework for Investigation and Discipline of Police Conduct to Provide the Public Safety Committee and the Community a Foundation to Develop and Evaluate Potential Reforms.** [William McManus, Chief of Police]

Chairwoman Cabello Havrda stated that this item would be presented at a future meeting.

Councilmember Viagran announced that citizens would have the opportunity provide comments at the virtual town hall Budget meetings.

Adjourn

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 12:05 pm.

Melissa Cabello Havrda, Chair

Respectfully Submitted

Denice F. Trevino, Office of the City Clerk