

A Police Advisory Board meeting was held on the above date via Zoom conference call, with the following members in attendance: Salahudin Bin-Yusif, Debbie Harrington, Billy Warrick, Emy Diaz, Michael Harpe, Linda LaRue, Joyce Kidd, Jason Hunt, and Wanda Dean. Police Chief Bill Texter and FOP Representative Michael Hilliard were also in attendance. The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Chairman Bin-Yusif.

**AMENDED MINUTES:** Emy Diaz asked that the October minutes be amended to reflect that she is going to remain on the Middletown Police Advisory Board until further notice, not just until the end of this year, which was the wording in the minutes. She said, in fact, her term limit goes through the end of 2023, so she will remain on the board until an appropriate replacement for her seat can be found.

**MAYOR & COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

Bin-Yusif said there were some comments made at the Nov. 7, 2022, meeting of the Mayor & Council that he wanted to share. He said Vice-Mayor Jim Reynolds questioned why the MPAB has not begun meeting in person, as all of the other Town commissions are back in open forums. Bin-Yusif said he explained to the Council that he has brought this up several times over the last year and each time, there are members who are still not comfortable with meeting in person. He said Mr. Reynolds mentioned that perhaps the attendance would be better if the meetings were in person.

Bin-Yusif said he spoke to the Mayor following the meeting about doing a hybrid version of the meeting since that version is being done right now for the Citizens Police Academy at the MPD and it seems to be going very well. He said the Mayor said we should try to do whatever is best for the MPAB, so he would like to recommend moving toward working with the MPD and finding out how they are able to make it work so successfully. Bin-Yusif said no matter what, he would like to make sure the public is still able to be involved virtually in the meetings as we move forward.

Debbie Harrington questioned the Vice-Mayor's comments about the MPAB making quorum. She said she would like to state for the record that the group has made quorum most meetings and it should be pointed out to the Mayor & Council, so the misinformation does not continue being talked about every month.

Bin-Yusif said there have been several meetings over the two years where the board didn't meet quorum, but more often than not, it does make quorum. He said the problem is right now that we are down a few members, so it's going to be more difficult to make quorum.

He said Mr. Reynolds questioned at the November meeting whether or not there should "even be an MPAB" and Bin-Yusif said he argued that during the accreditation process for the MPD, the MPAB was looked at as being an important part of the process and it's very valuable for the Town to have.

He said the MPAB is looked upon in a favorable manner by CALEA in their evaluations. However, he said the MPAB does have some work to do to hold up their end of the bargain and do some more things to prove their important role in the community.

## **CHAIR'S REPORT:**

- **BYLAWS:** Bin-Yusif said he and Jerry Kissel have sent emails to the group with the proposed bylaws changes and reminded the board to review them and make comments for discussion at the next meeting.
- **CITIZENS POLICE ACADEMY:** If you have the opportunity to go to the next one, please do so. He is attending the program right now and highly recommends the academy.

## **Police Chief Report**

Chief Bill Texter gave the Police Report that was delivered at the November 7 meeting of the Mayor and Council from data that occurred in the month of October. The following questions were asked following the report:

Emy Diaz asked when the next Citizens Police Academy would be held. Chief Texter said the next session would most likely be in the spring. Diaz also asked if the police officers involved with the academy are paid for their work in the evening sessions. Chief said they are paid or receive comp time for the work.

Bin-Yusif asked if the Chief had any reports about the recent hiring process for officers.

Chief Texter said the department is in the middle of a process right now and didn't have an update, however, he pleaded with the MPAB to bring members of the community in to talk to the MPD anytime. He said that would be the most beneficial work the MPAB can do for the community is to talk up the department and anyone, and he means anyone, who might be interested in becoming a police officer, they should get them in touch with the recruitment staff.

Chief Texter said the reality is that most of the MPD workforce comes from the immediate area, so it's imperative to get the candidates from the community in the door and get talking to them. He said they are soon going to be posting the job for the summer seasonal program. He said this program is a great opportunity for those who are not sure, they can try out policework on a level of a summer job and it's been tremendously successful recruitment tool for us in the past.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

### **A. Police Report Evaluation Committee**

No report.

### **B. Community Connections Committee**

Jason Hunt reported there have been several followers joining the MPAB Twitter, Facebook and Instagram social media pages. He reminded the group that he will accept any flyers from the community to help promote any events happening to engage the community.

FOP President Mike Hilliard said he wanted to thank the MPAB for spreading the word about the "No Shave November" fundraiser to benefit MSgt. Mark Miller in his battle with brain cancer. He said the campaign has raised more than \$27,000 and he wanted to thank the group for help in the effort. He said the donations would be closed off in the next week or so, to be able to give them to MSgt. Miller and his family.

### **C. Research Committee**

Debbie Harrington and Wanda Dean presented a list of survey questions they would like to submit for the community survey. They sent the lists of questions out to the group and would like feedback on them.

The next step will be to add the questions into a survey platform that can be sent out to the community and they will be asking Kristen Krenzer for help with that part.

Harrington said the research committee is also continuing to look into the 911 Center and a formula for how large the police department should be in Middletown.

### **D. Strategic Planning Committee**

No report.

### **APPLICATION FOR BOARD:**

Bin-Yusif said he wanted to open up the floor for discussion about whether an application would be needed for the board.

Emy Diaz said her opinion would be for a continuation of the nomination process as is done now. She said her main question regarding the application would be about who is reviewing these applications and making the decisions on board appointments?

Bin-Yusif said the idea for an application came from his research into other boards like this one, and many have an application process.

Debbie Harrington said this board should not be deciding whether an application is needed. She said the authority stands with the Mayor & Council to make appointments overall, so they should be making this decision about an application form, not the MPAB.

Wanda Dean said the bylaws work as long as we work them. She there are better ways to examine individuals, such as face-to-face interactions. Once appointed, the board member needs to understand their commitment and what is expected of them to be on this board.

Dean also asked when Mayor & Council would be filling their open appointments on the board.

Bin-Yusif said he's been told that the Mayor and Council would like to wait until the next Mayor & Council election, so the new council members can make their own appointments.

Dean said the Council just had three new council members come on this March and they should be fulfilling their obligation because it will benefit us if they are so worried about having a quorum.

Joyce Kidd agreed that this needs to be addressed at the next Mayor & Council meeting since it keeps being brought up at the meeting, that we can't make quorum, but here we are with no appointment members from the Mayor & Council at this time.

### **BRAINSTORMING:**

Billy Warrick said he has been trying to recruit officers to Middletown in his own circles and he still believes we are barking up the wrong tree going to all of the universities and trying to get people with all these degrees. He said we need to look into getting people from the projects or those who don't have money for college.

Chief Texter said there are ways to work for MPD without a college degree. He said work experience, military experience and various ways to "get there." He said the issues about pay and college education needed for advancement in the department is all part of the collective bargaining agreement and that can't be negotiated.

**NEXT MEETING:** December 19, 2022