

A Police Advisory Board meeting was held on the above date via Zoom conference call, with the following members in attendance: Salahudin Bin-Yusif, John Carwell, Sue Mitchell, Wanda Dean, Michael Harpe, Jason Hunt, Yvette Santiago, Emy Diaz, Joyce Kidd and Billy Warrick. Middletown Police Chief Bill Texter, Capt. Ron Davis and FOP Representative Michael Hilliard were also in attendance.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chairman Bin-Yusif.

The agenda and minutes for April meeting were approved after a motion by John Carwell and seconded by Joyce Kidd. Moved 9-1 (Billy Warrick opposed the agenda including the Police Bill of Rights discussion).

Bin-Yusif reviewed the following items in his Chair Report:

1. **Quarterly Report:** Bin-Yusif said the PAB has prepared one quarterly report since the group was established 20 months ago and he said he has taken that report and updated it with everything the group has been working on since the first quarter. He will be sending out the report to everyone for comments to be added to his summary. He would like to submit the report to Mayor & Council in July. He asked each member to respond with comments, or at least say there are no comments and that it's OK to move forward.
2. **PAL Center / PAL Program:** Bin-Yusif said, along with MSgt. Scott Saunders, he has been in contact with the first vice-chair of the National PAL organization and discussed what it would take to develop a PAL Center in our area.

In talking to the chairman, he recommended the group, or some group in M.O.T., consider looking into starting with a "PAL Program" to get the PAL initiatives going in the area and then later take a look at creating a Center down the road. As part of the discussion, they also recommended attending the PAL convention, which is being held the week of May 31.

Bin-Yusif asked for permission from the Mayor to be able to attend the convention on behalf of the Town and PAB and his request was granted. He said he looks forward to gleaning a lot of information from the convention. He said one thing they found out was that there is a lot of grant funding available to do PAL programs because the programs are proven crime-reduction programs. Bin-Yusif and Saunders plan to make a report at the Mayor & Council meeting on June 6 and the next PAB meeting on June 20 about what they saw and heard.

3. **ATTENDANCE:** If you can't make the meetings, please give the chairman a heads up. He reminded the group that three unexcused absences from the meeting could result in removal from the board. He said if members don't have the time and ability to make the meetings, perhaps they should step back and the PAB will work to find members to fill the seats if necessary. He will be calling individuals to discuss their attendance issues.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS:

### A. Police Report Evaluation Committee

Michael Harpe reported he and Chair Bin-Yusif would get together after the meeting and input the data from recent police reports into the database he created.

### Community Connections Committee

John Carwell reported that the Facebook account was not working correctly, so he has set up a new account and has forwarded the draft to Bin-Yusif and Jason Hunt, and asked for some advice on how to make all of the content fit on the page. He said he still needs to add the bylaws to the site.

The Committee hasn't been able to meet outside of the PAB meeting due to conflicts in his schedule and the scheduling of an outside meeting is being considered. He said he would like to have six months' worth of content to rotate on the Facebook page to generate interest and get the word out about the PAB.

Bin-Yusif added that as the PAB continues to work to get a community survey together, the Facebook page would be a great avenue to get the survey out to the community, so we will continue to work on that project.

### B. Research Committee

Sue Mitchell reported that the only update she has regarding the research committee is that she got the chance to send over the City of Newark's community survey that was done in 2016 to Kristen Krenzer, so she could share it with the PAB and the Committee can take a look at the survey and see if it can help in the development of our own community survey.

**FORCE STRENGTH:** Bin-Yusif said he wanted to mention the PAB's role in helping get the police department's numbers up, so down the road there would be the possibility to get the PAL program up and running. Without having officers filling the crucial police positions, there won't be officers available to help with the PAL programs.

**STRATEGIC PLANNING:** Bin-Yusif said the PAB needs to look at its future. Half of the board members will fall off at the end of this year, so we need to start looking at who would like to stay on the board and if members want to step down, we have to find replacements. Also, he suggested the plan include two or three major things the PAB wants to accomplish and try to get the strategic plan completed by the end of the summer.

**POLICE STAFFING ANALYSIS:** Wanda Dean reported that she has been doing some research about police staffing and would like to report out on what she found. She said she believes the PAB's main focus should be on staffing the department and she found a couple of reports, one by the FBI and one by the ICMA organization (International City/County Management Association).

She said the reports discuss police allocation and deployments, and about staffing models, giving several ideas in regards to staffing models to maximize officers. She said the ICMA

report did extensive research on these models over five years using the public safety management system and CAD systems. She said the research breaks down department size and models for each size.

Dean said the reports break down descriptions of population versus force size, service times, weekends, holidays and the 60 guidelines that evaluate a department's staffing allocation and deployment.

She said she will be disseminating the reports to the group and it can use the reports as a guideline to see if the numbers the PAB is asking for regarding staff size, are manageable and feasible according to these guidelines.

### **Police Chief Report**

Chief Texter shared the police report for the month of April that was given at the May meeting of the Mayor and Council. He also discussed the hiring program ongoing for the summer seasonal program as well as full-time police officers.

He said the process has them down to about nine interested parties that are going into the background check process. He again asked the PAB to spread the word to their friends and families about the openings in the department because any feedback or help in the recruitment would be helpful.

*The following discussion was had after the report:*

Bin-Yusif asked if the MPD ever hired interns at the department to help with calls or setting up appointments, or even helping out the Community Services department. Texter said it hasn't been done before, but that doesn't mean it can't be considered, and he would be happy to sit down and discuss it.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**POLICE OFFICER BILL OF RIGHTS:** Bin-Yusif said Senate Bill 149 comments are still being accepted and he has sent the Bill to the PAB for any comments or suggestions. He said the Bill has been pulled back for more discussion, so there is time and opportunity to submit to the authors of the Bill to assist them in the work they are doing.

John Carwell asked if anyone knew if there was an update on the differentiation in the Bill regarding Citizens Review Boards vs. Advisory Boards. Bin-Yusif said one of the concerns is that when there are concerns or complaints lodged against an officer, an Advisory Board most likely will not get that information.

He said the Bill is concerned about these complaints getting out about an officer when they are innocent or when the complaints are unfounded. But, how do you then find out and keep track of an officer who should have been reviewed due to the amount of complaints about them?

“We don’t want to have one of those incidents that we heard about several years ago in other states, where that particular officer had multiple complaints against him and there wasn’t anything done about it, so everyone in the law enforcement and in the community were shaking their heads and saying, “Man, I wish we could have done something earlier.” Bin-Yusif said.

He added that advisory board and review boards feel it’s their duty to look out for these officers and situations, but there is still some push back on all of it due to the rights of officers who may be wrongfully targeted, which is understandable. There’s a lot of discussion that needs to be had about this subject at the state level, he said.

He said to please take the time to give feedback on the Bill, it’s important work.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Emy Diaz asked if our PAB monthly meetings could be put on a YouTube channel so members could go back and watch them later. Bin-Yusif asked Kristen Krenzer to look into doing this.

Bin-Yusif said the PAB could use an intern. He said Yvette Santiago has put together a nice write-up on what this student / intern could work on for us. He said he is going to work on putting something together before the next meeting, so it can be on the street before the summer.

Capt. Davis reported that the Citizens Police Academy will be scheduled for September. He said all those interested in participating should keep the proposed schedule in mind as we go into the summer.

Chief Texter suggested the PAB have a liaison between the PAB and the MPD regarding recruitment. Bin-Yusif said he would be happy to do that and it would probably be very helpful.

John Carwell asked Chief Texter if the MPD has had much luck recruiting from the Tri-State area. Chief said they have had some success this time, although he doesn’t have the exact breakdown since the process is still ongoing, but we usually draw from Maryland, southeastern PA and southern New Jersey in every process. Carwell said he noticed the Delaware public school system has been placing ads during the NCAA games and wondered if police departments could do the same thing.

Bin-Yusif asked if the MPD has a video that can be shared regarding recruitment. Texter said they do not, as they have had more success with one-on-one contact with people. He said he is open to doing a video since he believes we are going to be in a constant recruiting processes for a long time to come.

Carwell asked the Chief to give his “elevator speech” that explains how MPD is better than other departments and why they should come here. Texter said they talk about how MPD is like a second home, a second family. He said the current contract allows new officers to

get vacation time their first summer right out of the academy, which is unheard of in the larger departments where new officers are required to work a long time before getting vacation time.

He said he also tells people how well supported we are, by both the community and the Mayor & Council. “We have a nice facility and everything we need. Some departments struggle to fund uniforms and needed items. We don’t have that problem. There’s no quota, no required number of tickets to be written to survive,” he said. There’s a lot of opportunities to move around in the department. In the large departments, officers can wait like 10 years to move up, waiting on someone to retire. There’s a lot of great opportunities and “you’re not just a number,” Chief added.

Carwell also asked the Chief to consider adding an element to his elevator speech about marketing to people of color and how they could specifically thrive in MPD, over other departments. Chief thanked him for that suggestion.

**NEXT MEETING:** June 20, 2022 via Zoom.

Moved by Joyce Kidd and seconded by Mitchell to adjourn at 8:29 p.m. Moved unanimously.