

Oxford Police Community Relations and Review Commission Report

Thursday, August 18th, 2022

The PCRRC was established in December of 2015. The goals of the commission are as follows: 1) Improve communication between the community and the Oxford Police Division, 2) Increase police accountability and credibility with the public, 3) Create a fair and impartial complaint process, and 4) Advise the Chief of Police, City Manager, and City Council about division policies and procedures regarding matters that affect the public, and public perception, of the OPD.

This report is a summary of the meetings held by the PCRRC over the past year.

August 19, 2021

Location: Council Chambers

The first order of business for the commission was to approve the Yearly Report. The majority of the rest of the meeting was OPD officers expressing concerns about the PCRRC. Officers brought up a number of issues. They feel the PCRRC has focused on police accountability over relationships. Officers feel the pressure of outside criticism while trying to complete their duties. They also felt members of the PCRRC should do more ride alongs, take part in the Citizens Police Academy, and be assigned a number of officers to get to know. Another issue brought up was staffing; they feel there should be more officers on duty each shift. There was also concern about the "localization of national issues". The PCRRC promised to discuss these concerns at a future meeting.

November 18, 2021

Location: Council Chambers

The November meeting of the PCRRC was held on the 18th at the Oxford Courthouse and, except for Mr. Nadler, all Commission members were present, as were Chief Jones and Lt. Robinson of the Oxford Police Department and City Manager Elliott.

There was a discussion of the concerns presented by the officers during our August meeting, focusing on relationships, staffing, and nationalization. Ms. Stohry spoke of the larger issues of social justice and power while Mr. Wang mentioned the good relationships with the police officers. Ms. Hillman advocated getting to know the officers and Chairman Meade commented on how the data collection has provided proof that policing is not biased. Mr. Kraan voiced his support of

A final question from Aimin Wang was about the distinction between minor and serious drug abuse, to which SRO Butler stated that it depends on the totality of the circumstances and the level of discretion involved.

May 12, 2022

Location: Council Chambers

The PCRRC met on May 12, 2022. All commission members were in attendance along with Police Chief John Jones. The agenda was approved, the minutes of the February, 2022 meeting were approved, and, in terms old business, a list prepared by LaTricia Hillman which matched Commission members to police officers to promote these relationships was distributed with the intention of being discussed at the August, 2022 Commission meeting.

The primary agenda item was a presentation by Chief Jones of the Yearly Data Report. This report included statistical information regarding charges and arrests by race from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021; historical data of these breakdowns each year from 2017-2021; criminal charges by category (e.g., felony, minor misdemeanor); traffic citations by type and race; Use of Force incidents; Display of Force (firearm) incidents; formal complaints; positive feedback; on-line feedback (positive and negative); and self-initiated traffic and pedestrian (first-time reporting) stop data.

The charging data involved the following breakdown: 5.93% Asian, 9.81% Black, and 79.79% White. 64.10% of all charges were in the 16-25 age range. The arrest data had the following delineation: 2.43% Asian, 10.95%, and 83.52% White. For traffic citations, the breakdown was 9.1% Asian, 11.6% Black, and 76.30% White. Historical data from 2017-2021 showed a decrease in Asian arrests and citations (from a range of 9.50-17.45% to 5.93% in 2021). Arrests and citations for Black residents exhibited an increase (from a range of 6.26%-8.30% to 9.81% in 2021). Arrests and citations for White residents increased from a range of 61.79%-78.30% to 79.79% IN 2021.

There were 9 use of force reports and 8 display of force reports in 2021. All 17 incidents involved male subjects and were distributed widely across police officers (identified in the report by badge number). 2 formal complaints were made in 2021 and were resolved by exoneration in one case and a finding of unfounded in the second instance. Fifteen instances of positive feedback were recorded in the form of e-mails, thank you cards, voicemails, and a feedback form. 5 negative experiences were reported on-line.

The collection of self-initiated stop data started in 2020 and the 2021 data showed 1941 total stops, with the following breakdown: 1618 White, 213 Black, 77 Asian and 30 Pacific Islanders. There were 320 traffic crashes, with 180 at-fault and 140 no-fault accidents. The breakdown by race was as follows for at-fault and no-fault crashes:

White 81% and 91%, Black 9% and 4%, and Asian 6% and 4%. Finally pedestrian stop data was added to the report for the first time. These stops were delineated into Arrest and No Action categories. The racial breakdown was as follows for these two categories: White 91% and 89%, Black 6% and 8%, and Asian 1% and 3%.

Conclusion

The PCRRC has completed five years of service to the City of Oxford and its citizens. This year showed that the commission has some work to do to determine the best way to interact with OPD Officers. The commission looks forward to the addition of a Social Worker to the OPD as we all continue to learn how to serve the public. The commission welcomes new members and thanks them for their willingness to serve. As always we want to thank the city administration, city council, Chief Jones and the OPD for their openness and cooperation. The PCRRC looks forward to serving the citizens of Oxford in the next year.