

DULUTH CITIZEN REVIEW BOARD MEETING MINUTES

MEETING: Wednesday March 26, 2025

Present board members: VP Blair Powless, Bobbie Underthun, Todd Maas, Leah Hansen

Others in attendance: Human Rights Officer representative Marsha Lue, citizens Kathleen Spencer, and Betty Greene

1. Call to Order and introductions:

The meeting was called to order at 5:36 PM

2. Approval of Minutes: Betty Greene asked about minutes from February regarding “Weekend March 8-May 1st. This was in response to board member Underthun asking if there was an idea as to when our board get together would be. President Franklin stated it would be on a weekend between March 8/9 and May 1st. Minutes approved by board member Maas, and seconded by Underthun.

3. Public Comments: None

4. Police Liaison Report: Lt. Ring mentioned there was a correction to complaint C014. The disposition was incorrect, and should be changed to “Not Sustained”.

* Hired 3 new officers for the off season.

* One is a lateral hire from Burnsville, MN, who liked our opportunities and training standards.

* The other hire is newly graduated

* One CSO with 18 months experience. The trend hiring out of the CSO program continues, as there is very strong recruiting there.

* 6 new CSO officers start next week.

* People were allowed to apply earlier than normal, and normal hiring season starts again in April.

* There was a commendation ceremony on March 21, 2025, to recognize the work of individuals within the department.

* Two weeks ago, Lt. Ring went to Anaheim for the annual IACP conference. He mentioned the Duluth Police Department had never attended before. There were approximately 1000 international officers in attendance. Lt. Ring said it was found to be very valuable information, and builds on things the department is already doing. Some examples include: re-entry to get officers back on the job, how to handle working night shift, as many officers working this shift have cardiovascular and sleep issues. Lt. Ring mentions many officers die young due to medical issues, and the constant release of cortisol in the body.

* Chief Ceynowa was attending a community meeting regarding Safe Bay at the Damiano Center, which is a program that offers a safe place to rest for people living in their vehicles.

* Kathleen asked what CSO meant. Lt. Ring explained, CSO stands for Community Service Officer. This is paid internship with the police department, and is a recruiting tool that allows the CSO to work 30 hours

per week, taking low level calls, providing desk coverage, and gaining experience. This program is managed by Sgt. Rob Hurst.

* VP Powless asked about Wellness efforts being led in the department. Lt. Ring explained, "Reactivating"- which is a mental health check in program where an officer can take advantage of a 1-hour session one time per year with a licensed mental health provider. This had been on pause while looking for a new provider, and will resume in April 2025. Some of the challenges with finding a new provider included: having an understanding of law enforcement culture, understanding trauma based after care, and the capacity for the provider to add these appointments to their schedules annually.

Board member Maas inquired if this included debriefs, and VP Powless asked if once a year was best practice. Lt. Ring this is an industry norm to have mental health check ins and provide education. These conversations are private, and the provider can direct if additional resources are needed.

5. Other Business: none

6. Announcements and Community Correspondence: none

7. Additional Public Comments: Citizen Betty Greene asked about the process for reviewing the CRB bylaws since the current ones are dated 2013. VP Powless mentioned there was discussion to review initially, and board member Underthun brings them weekly if needed for reference.

* Citizen Kathleen Spencer mentioned a friend of hers was driving in Duluth with spouse, and were pulled over by an officer asking for ID to prove they are legally allowed to live in the country (USA). Kathleen reports this was upsetting, and heard by other sources. She reports a complaint was filed with DPD. Lt. Ring had not seen or heard of any complaints regarding this.

* The question was asked, what the policy is for asking about immigration status? Lt. Ring reported, there is not a policy, and the department does not do anything with immigration status as this is a federal issue, but it is expected the officers do not do this, and their only role would be scene assistance.

* Citizen Betty Greene stated that if someone lodged a complaint, this should be looked into. Lt. Ring expressed he would be happy to learn more about this. It was mentioned the current community climate has people scared, which gives an increased negative experience with officers. Both citizens asked if there was education about this. Lt. Ring reports the department has internal conversations, but they do not enforce immigration laws.

8. Board Member Questions: VP Powless is hoping to get a CRB website or page for the public to view, and board member Leah Hansen offered to assist based on what is appropriate according to the bylaws.

9. Adjourn: board member Hansen made motion – Maas second – Adjourned 6: 08 pm

Minutes taken by board member Underthun during meeting and typed by Underthun.