

**City of Syracuse  
 Citizen Review Board  
 Meeting Minutes  
 Thursday, July 9, 2020  
 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM  
 Video Conference Meeting  
 Public Comment - 20 minutes at 6:30 PM**

<b>Name</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>A</b>
Carter, Mae		X	Nilsson, Lori	X				
Brunson, Cynthia	X		Natale, Dana	X				
Nelson, Mary	X		Ryan, Clifford	X				
Holmes, Hatisha		X	Grinnals, R. Daniels	X				
Kutz, Ruth	X							
McCarthy, Peter	X		Releford, Ranette	X				

On Thursday, July 9, 2020, the City of Syracuse Citizen Review Board (CRB) held a virtual meeting due to COVID-19 social distancing restrictions.

Peter McCarthy, Board Chair, called the meeting to order and announced that the meeting was being held pursuant to notice and that a quorum was present.

1. Board Action Items: Mr. Grinnals moves to approve the June meeting minutes, Ms. Nelson seconds, all agree.
2. Chairperson’s Items:
  - a. People’s Agenda for Policing is here to speak in favor of the CRB releasing a statement supporting the enactment of legislation to strengthen and enhance the CRB.
  - b. Mayor Ben Walsh enacted the Right to Know Law, for which the CRB has been advocating.
  - c. Governor Cuomo issued two important proclamations:
    - i. Repealed Article 50a, which will take effect 120 days from the date of proclamation.
      1. We will get legal advice to see how this affects our proposed Confidentiality Agreement.
      2. Ms. Nilsson wants to know if we will have to FOIL the information about police discipline and Ms. Ranette advised “no” because the information is necessary to our duties.
    - ii. Directed all municipalities to redesign their law enforcement system by next year. The CRB needs to be a part of this process.

### 3. Administrator's Report

- a. The Board will be reviewing 5 cases this evening.
- b. One new case was received in June.
- c. 5 or 6 packets were sent out and have not been returned yet.
- d. CRB received five (5) 2017 cases from OPS. They were all previously investigated by OPS but not turned over to the CRB. Ms. Releford will find out if discipline was initiated without CRB recommendations.
- e. SPD is adding another Sergeant and a civilian to OPS.
- f. CRB is looking into way to start holding hearings remotely.
- g. CRB has two new interns from CNY Works: Vianne Yagayandi and Tatyana Flores. Vianne attended the meeting. They are working ½ day in the office and ½ day remotely.

### 4. Committees

#### a. Community Relations

- i. Ms. Releford notes again that we need to get out with banner and pamphlets. Board members need to find places to do this and arrange it.
- ii. Westcott Cultural Festival is canceled.

#### b. Board Development and Training

- i. Ms. Releford is looking into online training with Bob Stewart.
- ii. Mr. Grinnals believes it should be mandatory for CRB members to do ride-alongs.

#### c. Government Relations

- i. There was a meeting on July 1, 2020.
- ii. Went over repeal of 50a.
- iii. Kristen Smith, Corporation Counsel, will find out when City Hall and City Hall Commons will reopen.
- iv. Sealing orders were discussed.

- v. OPS is using the new checklist for items that are turned over to the CRB with each case and finds it helpful.
- vi. Deadlines were discussed.
- vii. Will be looking at what policies and procedures are legislated and which are CRB created,
- viii. CRB attorney, Ryan Suser, Corporation Counsel, Kristen Smith, representatives from the Common Council and OPS and the Chief attend these meetings.
- ix. The next meeting is August 19, 2020, at 2PM.

d. Police Liaison Committee – the CRB will meet with new SPD recruits on July 31, 2020 at 8AM.

## 5. New Business

- a. Representatives from SPAARC and the People’s Agenda for Policing are here to speak.
- b. Yusuf Abdul-Qadir believes that the CRB’s oversight should be enhanced. He says that Section 4 of Article 50a always gave the CRB the authority to get information.
- c. Twiggy Billue says that the CRB needs more funding and more investigators. She says the City should cut funding to the Syracuse Police Department and give it to the CRB.
- d. Mered Billue from Rebirth Syracuse wants to strengthen the CRB as he believes it has been co-opted by the Police Department.
- e. TJ is not accepting anything less from the City than the demands they put on paper at the meeting last week and the Mayor is an obstacle.
- f. Linda Malik from SPAARC says that over 1,000 people are interested in making this happen.
- g. Yusuf Abdul-Qadir says that over 3 million people have seen the video from the meeting with the City last Thursday. He believes this is a powerful moment in history and Syracuse has an opportunity to become a model.
- h. Mr. McCarthy suggests that the CRB discuss making a recommendation to the Common Council to “pass legislation to strengthen and enhance the Syracuse Citizens Review Board such that its recommendations for sustained findings are enforceable, while maintaining the board as a citizen driven accountability board”.
- i. Ms. Brunson makes a motion and Ms. Nilsson seconds.

- j. Mr. Grinnals says that we should table the motion for more discussion and to find a compromise.
  - k. Ms. Nilsson, Mr. Ryan, Ms. Nelson and Mr. McCarthy all disagree with tabling the motion.
  - l. A vote is taken on whether the CRB should make the recommendation above to the Common Council. Seven vote yes, one votes no, motion passes.
6. Public Comment (6:30 PM)
- a. Yusuf Abdul-Qadir does not agree with Mr. Grinnals that there is a compromise.
  - b. Patrick Lohman says that per SPD, there are 47 cases that are past the 18-month discipline period.
  - c. Ms. Releford says there are 48 for which we don't have Ops reports and that some of these are the most egregious cases that we have seen.
7. Ms. Nilsson moves to move to Executive Session, Mr. Ryan seconds. Meeting continued in Executive Session.

During the Executive Session, the Board voted on the following cases to determine whether to forward the case to a CRB hearing. Ms. Nilsson left before the voting:

**Case Number 17-091:** Table for further OPS investigation.

**Case Number 17-109:** HEARING

**Case Number 18-075:** HEARING

**Case Number 19-018:** HEARING

Ms. Nelson left the meeting at this point.

**Case Number 19-025:** HEARING

Ms. Brunson makes a motion to return to Public Session, Ms. Natale seconds, all agree. Meeting goes back into Public Session.

On motion duly made by Mr. Grinnals, seconded by Mr. Ryan and unanimously adopted, the Board adjourned its meeting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dana Natale, 1<sup>st</sup> District Appointee