



Student Advisory Committee
to the Auraria Board

SACAB Meeting Minutes

Date: 10/09/2020

Time: 11:00-12:00pm

Location: zoom

ATTENDEES

Community College of Denver

- Taylor Hibbs, SACAB – present
- Vacant, SACAB
- Kathryn Mahoney, Ex-Officio - present

Metropolitan State University of Denver

- Dominique Perez, SACAB – present
- Birungi Balijhe, SACAB – present
- Guillermo Ramirez, Ex-Officio – present
- Cynthia Baron, MSU Denver Staff – present
- Diana Ibarra, MSU Denver Staff – present
- Dave Bourassa, MSU Denver Staff – present
- Antwaun Johnson, MSU Denver Student - present

University of Colorado Denver

- Olivia Neece, SACAB – present
- Marlena Harwood, SACAB, Chair – present
- Tierza Watts, Ex-Officio – present
- Genia Herndon, CU Denver Staff – present
- Samuel Kim, CU Denver Staff – present
- Melanie Crawford, CU Denver Staff – present

Auraria Higher Education Center

- Angela LeValley, Tivoli Director – present
- Cody Phelps, AHEC Staff – present
- Chris Herr, ASCP – present
- Jackie Slocombe, ASCP – present
- Colleen Walker, AHEC CEO – present
- Raeanna Morgan, AHEC Marketing – present

Others Present

- Michael Phibbs, Chief of Police, ACPD
- Jason Mollendor, Patrol Division Commander, ACPD

AGENDA

- ☐ Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Meeting called to order at 11:08AM, approval for last week's minutes was tabled to following meeting for sake of time.

- ☐ Guest Speaker(s):

- Chief Michael Phibbs and Commander Jason Mollendor, Auraria Campus Police Department Marley welcomed Chief Phibbs and Commander Mollendor. Marlena had sent some questions in advanced to ACPD for prior review, and Chief jumped straight into answering the questions.

Question 1: How many POC are in the room/on the committees that make high-level decisions for your department?

Chief explained that at the command team level, 2 out of 4 employees identify as persons of color, and at the supervisory level, 7 out of 16 employees identify as persons of color.

Commander Mollendor noted that ACPD has the most diverse community in all of Colorado, and that ACPD cares about diversity. Chief said in the interview process, candidates are questioned about their attention to diversity and their own biases.

Question 2. What actionable steps has ACPD taken in response to the protests against police brutality that POC face?

Chief expanded the question to try to answer multiple questions at once.

1. Chief chairs the State's Chief of Police Legislative Committee, and has helped write and pass S.B. 217 in the wake of George Floyd's murder, which restricts use of excessive force by police officers in Colorado.
2. The ACPD has also finalized the foundation for the Police Advisory Board, which is now seeking applications for membership by each institution at Auraria.
3. ACPD also has updated their police department manuals to match changes in state-level legislation, and has since lead trainings to ensure compliance with the updates.
4. ACPD is also close to finalizing the Co-Responder Program on campus.
5. ACPD is also attempting to meet with classes on campus, but are finding this to be somewhat limited. The police department still makes efforts to be involved with campus events.
6. The first Annual Report was published this year for public review on ACPD's website.
7. Chief also expressed they are working on making students feel safe to express their opinions, including in the form of protest.

Commander added that prior to the protests, ACPD has also promoted diversity and inclusion, as well as bias training, and he hopes that this shown through during the protests.

Taylor Hibbs had a question regarding the Co-Responder program, asking what methods are used to determine what a mental health-related call was. Chief answered that it was sometimes clear to determine based on the nature of the call, but if not, that Co-Responder could be called to be dispatched during any point of an interaction. Commander noted that all staff are Mental Health Crisis trained.

Question 3: When asked about making our black students feel safe with police on campus, Chief Phibbs stated at SACAB that the black students should introduce themselves to the police. Why is the ownness of comfort on black students? Shouldn't it be on the police?

Chief explained the context for this comment, which was that a minority-identifying, architectural student told him in a focus group that he was afraid that he would be mistaken as someone holding a gun at night, and that it frightened him. Chief explained that this student should introduce themselves to police officers working at night, and everyone seemed pleased with this answer within the focus group.

Chief said that ACPD is searching for ways to overcome student anxiety regarding police presence, and that ACPD is focusing their entire Campus Safe Night on Nov 12th on the topic of POC Safety on Campus.

Chief said he does not believe that the ownness of comfort is not on the students, but not totally on the police either. There is room for collaboration on both sides. Chief said the police department wants to be included more at campus events and student committees for collaboration. ACPD does not enforce immigration laws. Commander included that he recognizes students may be uncomfortable with police on campus, and he understands that and wants to bridge that gap. Chief noted that he has been a part of this campus for his entire life, and is committed and invested in protecting the community of Auraria.

Question 4: What type of training has APD completed, or has committed to complete, with regards to exploring one's biases?

ACPD trains on biases at least once a year in the form of formal training. Officers are required to complete 40 hours of training, but would not surprise Chief if many officers complete up to 100 hours of training every year, including training on implicit bias. Training is also completed on LGBTQ+ bias, gender bias, and microaggression training, which was a student initiative.

Commander reinforced the commitment of ACPD to education of officers.

Taylor asked if copies of the training calendars could be available to students. Chief Phibbs said yes. Commander stated that some individuals could be invited to police trainings, and Chief said he would follow up.

Question 5: What are initiatives the APD is taking to help our students feel safer within the campus especially after the global Black Lives Matter movement?

Chief stated that acting on racially motivated biases and ethically unsound decisions is not accepted within ACPD.

Marley gave a 10 minute warning.

Question 6: Has the department sought to lessen the fear of police brutality for minorities and POC within the campus?

Chief emphasized this question. He noted that much of the policies are dated, and do not represent modern perceptions of police. He asked for collaboration of the Auraria community, and promoted Campus Safe Night as well as the Annual Report to the group.

Question 7: How does your department psychologically evaluate newly employed police officers to "protect and serve"?

Before an officer is hired, there is a full background check, personal and professional reference check, polygraph tests, and an intense psychological exam. Officers are not hired who fail the psychological exam. The hard part is keeping officers mentally healthy, and ACPD tries to

combat the stigma of sending their officers to counseling. Law enforcement statewide are screened as well, but historically this is not the case, but ACPD always makes sure to screen officers transferring.

Marley interjected and ask if Chief Phibbs would address the justification for body worn cameras not being used within ACPD.

Chief cited evidence in scientific literature that communities need to lower their expectations for BWCs. Additionally, he cited Auraria as having a very robust stationary camera system. He stated, however, that he is not against BWCs if our students, faculty and staff want them.

Commander jumped in and stated that he is supportive of body cameras, but he is nervous about the cost of implementing BWC's.

Chief asked for 5 more minutes, which was granted.

Question 8: The complaint and feedback page on the ACPD website is simply a phone number in which students can call to make a formal complaint or commendation. Why isn't there a page where students can submit feedback through text boxes online?

Chief stated that there is an email students can send feedback to, just that the website was not updated to reflect this. The email is professionalstandards@ahec.edu.

Dominique asked if this feedback would be shared publicly. Chief stated that there are complications associated with this, but that he supports a third-party system for anonymous complaints. He noted that this will be a discussion point within the Police Advisory Board. He stated that there aren't very many complaints, but they will work on being more transparent.

☐ Unfinished/New Business

- Tabled until next week

☐ Position Announcements

- Tabled until next week

☐ Public Comment

- Marley opened up Public Comment
- Antwaun Johnson (preferred name: X) – MSU Denver Student and Student/staff member with GIDA at MSU

Talked about the nature of policing and how it feels to people within their bodies. X brought up the sentiments of body cams if different between individuals depending on their racial/gender identity. ACPD is funded by students, and should discuss what students wants for Auraria Campus. They shared a resolution from MSU Denver which garners to create more safer spaces on Auraria Campus.

X also asked if ACPD was part of DPD, and if ACPD was defunded if DPD would assume that oversight.

Chief asked for clarification regarding "bodies". X explained that he meant vulnerability with respect to their own experiences and expression within their own bodies. There needs to be conversations to policing of bodies. He recommended "Between the World and Me" by Tenisi Coates as related reading.

Chief explained that ACPD and DPD are separated bodies entirely. ACPD consist of state officers, not municipal officers.

X also wanted conversations including Candi CdeBaca, the Councilwoman for our district moving forward. Commander noted that ACPD has much better response times than DPD.

☐ Adjournment

- **The meeting was adjourned at 12:16.**