

Washington County Sheriff's Office Latino Advisory Commission
January 6, 2021
Meeting Minutes

Commission Members Present: Olga Acuña, Maria Caballero-Rubio, Juan Carlos Gonzalez, Pat Garrett, Joann Hoffman, Ricardo Moreno, Mark Shah, Pablo Valenzuela

Commission Members Absent: Daniel Guzman-Catarina

Moderating: Brandon Lee with Training for Transformation (T4T)

Guests attending: Chief Deputy Karlyn Degman, Chief Deputy John Koch

Meeting via Zoom

CALL TO ORDER

Olga called the meeting to order at 4:08 p.m.

Introductions and Native Lands Acknowledgement

Pat Garrett began introductions and acknowledged the over representation of the Latino community and other communities of color in the legal and justice systems. Pat recognized the original indigenous peoples that still live here today, their tribal lands that we now live on and their sacrifices both past and present.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve December 2, 2020 minutes.

Motion carries unanimously.

Public Comment

No public comments

Body Worn Camera Update

Pat gave an update on the progress of deployment for Body Worn Cameras (BWC).

Washington County Commissioners convened on December 15th and approved full deployment of BWC. Over 200 cameras will be assigned to deputies and corporals. Sheriff Garrett will be briefed by the project officer on an estimate for roll-out and the deployment process. The goal is to have the bulk of cameras in the field by the end of this calendar year. Training will be required for all staff issued a BWC along with a change in uniform, which is needed to hold the BWC.

The BWC policy was updated due to concerns brought before the commission during the December 2nd meeting. The line in question was deleted and an equity statement was added. The policy changes will need to be reviewed by the union (process set in state statute) and County Counsel before full implementation.

Commission members requested the following topics for future meetings:

- A demonstration of how BWC work and are worn
- Training for deputies assigned BWC
- WCSO policy creation and editing process
- What kinds of questions/issues arise regarding the BWC policy changes with the union and/or County Counsel?

Body Worn Camera Case Study - Brandon

Brandon had previously forwarded an NPR article on the officer involved shooting of Andre Hill in Columbus, Ohio on December 22, 2020.

Our case study focused on policy mentioned in the article. The Columbus, Ohio Public Safety Director stated that the officer “had violated the department's use-of-force policy, failed to follow protocol by delaying the activation of his body camera, and failed to render aid to the dying man.”

Brandon focused on the leadership of Columbus city officials by having an existing policy in place to express the values of the city and its citizens.

Pat gave a few examples on what kind of training deputies receive to respond to stressful situations as well as the discipline process for violating policy.

Commission members expressed concern over the use of words like “threat”, “subject” and “suspect” when referencing people. Stating words like those create an image in the mind of the public. Suggested that deputies becoming more familiar with the areas they work in would be beneficial. Sheriff Garrett used the City of Cornelius as an example of WCSO staff getting to know their community and engaging in positive community activities. It is also more common for deputies to work the same area over a long period of time, however the more densely populated areas make it difficult to get to know individuals.

Next steps

Identifying two youth commission members is ongoing.

Agenda items for next meeting:

- Update on BWC – timelines and fitting of cameras
- Bringing a BWC expert for a demonstration
- Have lead WCSO trainers address “time and distance” and “de-escalation” with the commission.
- Review of policy development process. How often are they reviewed?
- Overview of type of BWC training that deputies receive
- Request tour of training center once pandemic restrictions lift
- Can we meet during a different time?
- Are there any issues that other communities (Communities of Color) would like us to address? They could request some time during a regular meeting or give us a presentation

Meeting adjourned at 5:31 PM