

Notes from Meeting Four

Thursday, December 10, 2020, 5pm–7pm, Online

Attendance

Working Group Members Present

- Aaron Amede, Resident
- Kathleen Babeu, Social Services Director
- Dana Baldwin, Behavior Health Liaison
- April Caricchio, Councilor
- Craig Freshley, Facilitator
- Greg L'Heureux, Finance Director
- Margarita Salguero-Macklin, Resident
- Timothy Sheehan, Police Chief
- Pedro Vazquez, Resident
- James Wilson, Fire Chief

Working Group Members Absent

- None

Objectives

- Consensus on a written Statement of the Situation and Goals for Improvement.
- Make a plan to gather information about solutions.

Agenda

5:00

Opening

- Facilitator Craig Freshley will welcome everyone and explain the Zoom format and Meeting Agenda.
- Craig will also remind us of some key Guidelines and where we are in the process of fulfilling our charge.

5:10

Nature of the Problem

- Before exploring solutions, let's spend a little more time exploring the nature of what we are trying to fix.
- In particular, let's focus on the second part of our question: Is there evidence in South Portland that these types of calls result in an escalated

response *and that the individual(s) in need of assistance do not receive such assistance?*

- Let's also focus on overall needs; the causes of challenging calls for assistance. Why are people calling for help and what do they need most?
- Let's also consider: if things were to become improved, how would we know it? What measures of progress would we look for?
- As a result of this discussion we hope to have some sort of written Statement of the Situation and/or Goals for Improvement.
- Shared understanding and consensus on the nature of the problem will set us up nicely to consider solutions.

6:10 **How to Consider Solutions**

- The COHOOTS and Home Team models have been repeatedly promoted. Exactly how should we learn about these models and others?
- We will begin with brainstorming and then make a plan for gathering information, including plans for next week's meeting.

6:50 **Closing Comments**

- Each member of the Working Group is encouraged to make a brief last comment such as a reflection and/or a hope for the future.

7:00 **Adjourn**

Opening Remarks

Facilitator Craig Freshley made the following remarks.

- Welcome everyone to the third meeting of the South Portland Police Services Review Working Group, December 10, 2020.
 - My name is Craig Freshley, the Working Group Facilitator
- First some important announcements about how this meeting will work.
 - Please note that this meeting is being recorded and that the recording will be publicly available. Chat comments will also be saved and will be publicly available. However, please don't expect me to pay attention to chat comments during the meeting.
 - If you are using a nickname or an alias we really appreciate it if you can "rename" yourself so everyone can easily see the actual names of everyone who has joined us today.
 - This meeting has closed captioning available
 - I have posted the Agenda in the Chat and have also posted a link where you can find the full version of the Agenda and several other documents related to this effort.

- Although the general public is invited to watch, this is a meeting of Working Group members and public comments will not be allowed IN this meeting.
 - In the Chat I have posted and email address that anyone can send any comment to.
- To ground us, let's take a look at our charge and where we are in this process.

Our Purpose

Our purpose is to present the South Portland City Council with recommendations as to whether there should be changes to how certain calls for service are responded to by the City of South Portland.

Our Duties

As part of its duties, the Working Group shall:

- First answer the following question before embarking on other duties: “There is a perception that some calls for service are escalated into a worse situation due to the response of a uniformed, armed police officer, and that these scenarios could be handled more appropriately by different personnel, such as a social worker. Is there evidence in South Portland that these types of calls result in an escalated response and that the individual(s) in need of assistance do not receive such assistance?” (The Working Group should reach consensus as to what defines an “escalated response”.) Statistics and examples should be used to help answer this question. The response to this question, along with other considerations (i.e. cost savings, relief on stress to police officers, and resident health and welfare) shall serve as the basis for undertaking the following duties:
 - Research other models of providing a response to certain calls for service that either may not require the presence of a police officer or involve both a police officer and other professional, such as a social worker.
 - Evaluate whether these other models would be beneficial and/or necessary in South Portland.
 - If so, provide a recommendation to the City Council. This recommendation should include a review of all options studied; the problem identified in South Portland that is intended to be addressed; the selected option and how it will address the problem identified as existing in South Portland; and an estimate of the associated costs to implement such a program. The recommendation should also provide a measurable outcome(s) for the City to track so that it can evaluate the effectiveness of this new program in addressing the stated problem.
 - If not, provide a review of all options studied and explain why the Working Group believes a problem does not exist or is not likely to exist in South Portland that would necessitate the implementation of such a model.

Schedule

Meeting	Date	Tasks
ONE	October 21, 2020	Select facilitator.
TWO	November 17, 2020	Guidelines. Define Escalation.
THREE	December 3, 2020	Look at data and stories for evidence.
FOUR	December 10, 2020	More data and stories to define the problem.
FIVE	December 17, 2020	
SIX	January 7, 2021	
SEVEN	January 14, 2021	
NINE	January 21, 2021 (if needed)	
TEN	January 27, 2021	
COUNCIL	February 16, 2020	

Consider other models

Consider relief on stress to police officers

Consider resident health and welfare

Consider cost savings

Develop recommendations

Prepare our report

Nature of the Problem

- Discussion
 - We shared stories and provided clarifications from several points of view.
 - We looked at what Craig drafted at our last meeting, what he called an “Emerging Conclusion.”
 - We considered deleting specific parts of the statement and considered adding things.
 - We acknowledged that people involved or witnessing escalated situations can be deeply traumatized.
 - We considered if individuals in need of assistance do not receive it.
- Tentative Consensus
 - There was a **formal call for consensus** on the following problem statement with unanimous support. Craig said he would call it “tentative” because he

will provide another chance for the group to consider and affirm this statement.

- Problem Statement
 - Intended or not, there are rare instances of escalation when South Portland uniformed officers respond to calls.
 - Sometimes the escalation is due to the prior experiences and/or the emotional state of the resident.
 - Sometimes the escalation is due to inappropriate deployment due to lack of resources.
 - Sometimes the escalation is due to police response.
 - We have seen no evidence that South Portland police officers deliberately escalate situations and no evidence of inappropriate shows of force.
 - It's not reasonable to expect the Police Officers to respond to every social service call. There might not be so much escalation if professionals other than uniformed police didn't respond to every call.
 - Needs for crisis response are likely to increase in the face of decreasing support for social services and lack of financial resources among residents.

How to Consider Solutions

- Ideas
 - The HOME Team could come educate us
 - CAHOOTS has a consultancy group
 - Milestone Recovery – The HOME Team - Joe McNally
 - He could tell us about other programs too
 - Let's hear about the community paramedic program
 - Let's hear from Kathleen
 - Let's learn more about Mobile Crisis
 - Put in names of organizations that we want to tap
 - Keep the focus on outreach
- Conclusion
 - Let's hear some presentations and ask questions
 - Pedro or the Chief do a presentation on CAHOOTS
 - Dana tell us about outreach organizations active in the City
 - Bring in Adam Rice – Youth without barriers and other groups
 - Bring in Joe McNally – The HOME Team
 - Craig will make arrangements with speakers and prepare an agenda

Closing Comments

- Thank you. We have a great group here on the committee and helping us go forward.
- Thank you. We are helping the most vulnerable people in our community.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:01pm

Chat

Here is the record of Chat from the meeting:

17:05:52 From Craig Freshley : Today's Agenda

5:00 Opening

5:10 Nature of the Problem

6:10 How to Consider Solutions

6:50 Closing Comments

7:00 Adjourn

17:06:05 From Craig Freshley : All documents here:

<https://bit.ly/3f95eFO>

17:06:40 From Craig Freshley : ServiceCallComments@SouthPortland.org

All emails sent to this address will be shared with all members of the Working Group, the City Manager, and the Facilitator

17:22:36 From sascha braunig : we are assessing the facts of escalation based on the PD department only. what other criteria could be used?

18:15:37 From sascha braunig : couldn't racially disproportionate police stops, which do exist in Sopo, be considered escalation?

18:16:57 From Chris to Panelists : Honestly just a question of formality and not expressing a judgement: Is it the role of the moderator to editorialize?

18:18:40 From Aaron Amede - Resident to Chris, All Panelists : yes. the moderator will be the person responsible for crafting the report based on decisions made by the group

18:20:32 From Chris to Panelists : Ok, thank you

18:55:27 From Adam Rice to Panelists : i work closely with several grassroots organizations daily doing many things for the community that is helpful. often we partner with many of these orgs on outreach. if anyone would like more info, my email is whitefawkes3@protonmail.com. we have a very large network of people trying to do this work on a volunteer basis, simply because it is that important. many of us would love to find more ways to help and give back. im happy to discuss further with anyone before the next meeting. im

working with 2 unlisted nonprofits, and 4 grassroots organizations that are working with housing, homeless related issues, recovery, and many other things in the community. were already working in Portland, south portland, rumford, lewiston, bangor, and brunswick

18:57:23 From Dana Baldwin - Behavior Health Liaison to Panelists : Thank you, Adam. I'm interested to learn more.

18:59:18 From Adam Rice to Panelists : maine peoples housing coalition

19:00:07 From Adam Rice to Panelists : youth without barriers, maine homeless veterans alliance, overdose prevention society, church of safe injection, maine peoples alliance, and maine youth justice

19:01:08 From Adam Rice to Panelists : my cell is 2073324533, im happy to prepare something for yall. thank you for the opportunity

19:01:25 From Adam Rice to Panelists : ill be here <3

19:01:49 From April Caricchio - City Councilor to Panelists : Much gratitude Adam, bring in Jess Falaro if you want.

19:02:22 From April Caricchio - City Councilor to Panelists : Joe McNally is great

19:04:28 From Adam Rice to Panelists : have a great evening, and week