

# Frederick Police Chief External Search Committee Meeting

## Minutes · October 22, 2020

Teresa Bean, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. Participating were:

### Committee Members:

- Teresa Bean, Committee Chair, Law Professor and former prosecutor
- Kavonte Duckett, Committee Vice Chair, Director of Alan P. Linton Emergency Shelter
- Derek Shackelford, Alderman
- Julia Schaeffer, Resident and Neighborhood Advisory Council (NAC) 11 Coordinator
- Kiesha Edmonds, Housing Authority of the City of Frederick
- Willie Ollie, Resident and retired Frederick County Sheriff's Dept. Detective
- Danielle Doll, Downtown Frederick Partnership
- Nkem Wellington, Resident and NAC 11 Coordinator
- Sgt. Jonathan Shatlock, Frederick Police Department
- Chelsea Kadish, Attorney

### International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP):

- Jim Baker

### City Staff

- Gayon Sampson, Executive Assistant to the Mayor
- Karen Paulson, Director of Human Resources
- Saundra Nickols, City Attorney
- Phyllis Hane, Legislative Clerk

**Absent:** Eliezar Valentin-Castanon, Pastor, Trinity United Methodist Church

### I. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Duckett and seconded by Alderman Shackelford to accept the minutes of the October 15, 2020 meeting. Ms. Doll asked that the minutes be amended to reflect all activity surrounding the vote regarding acceptance of the external survey. Mr. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Alderman Shackelford, to amend the minutes to include conversation surrounding the vote to accept the external survey. The motion was approved 10-0. Ms. Schaeffer made a motion, seconded by Ms. Wellington, to accept the minutes as amended. The motion was approved 10-0.

### II. General Discussion/Review of Timeline

Ms. Bean noted the application period for the Chief of Police position had closed on October 14.

The committee reviewed progress on community outreach:

- Ms. Bean stated the survey is available on the City's website and as of approximately 11:00 a.m. 169 external responses and 89 internal responses had been received.
- Ms. Schaeffer stated a letter has been drafted to be sent to all Neighborhood Advisory Councils (NAC), which is currently being reviewed by City staff prior to distribution.
- The committee has decided not to move forward with in-person feedback sessions due to logistical difficulties.
- Ms. Schaeffer stated approximately 65 local organizations have been identified for targeted outreach. Committee members have volunteered to reach out to all but 23 of these; Ms. Schaeffer will be contacting members following the meeting regarding the rest. In addition, she noted she will share the letter she and Ms. Wellington drafted for NAC outreach, which can be used as is or edited for a specific group. Alderman Shackelford stated he felt there should be one letter for all organizations, Ms. Schaeffer stated she understood his concerns that the message be consistent. She also noted that the message tailored to the NAC community accurately reflects the committee's letter to the community and includes a link to that letter.
- Sgt. Shatlock reported the internal survey has been emailed to all members of the department, with 89 responses to date. He is hopeful to have responses from all members by the end of the week.

Ms. Kadish confirmed public comment will still be taken at all meetings, even after the survey period has ended. She asked if public comment will also be taken at closed sessions following the closed portion of the meeting. Ms. Nickols confirmed this could be done but recommended taking comments prior to closing the meeting. Ms. Kadish stated she felt the opportunities for public comment at three meetings the following week were not sufficient. She noted earlier plans to reach out to all communities throughout the City and stated her concern that the process is being condensed to fit the timeline. Ms. Bean stated she felt there was sufficient opportunity. Ms. Doll agreed, expressing concern that, as the application period has closed, extending the timeline may cause qualified candidates to accept positions at other agencies.

In response to discussion regarding leadership of the Frederick Police Department during the period since the retirement of Chief Edward Hargis in February, Mr. Sampson stressed the department has never been without a Chief as first Captain Patrick Grossman and now Captain Dwight Somers have stepped up to fill that role and lead the department.

Ms. Doll inquired if there has been outreach to local news organizations. Mr. Duckett responded that a media event is scheduled for the following day at City Hall.

### **III. International Association of Chiefs of Police**

Jim Baker of IACP addressed some questions the committee has raised.

Regarding the number of applicants, he stated the thirty-five received was near what should be expected for an agency the size of Frederick's given the current national climate. He feels

the number may be somewhat lower than might have otherwise been expected due to the current environment, which has made chiefs of police hesitant to make career changes.

Alderman Shackelford asked about the most recent search, which occurred in 2015. Mr. Sampson stated the City received 80 applicants at that time.

Mr. Baker also advised the committee that many qualified candidates may have applied to more than one agency; therefore, it is not advisable to have too long of a review period.

Sgt. Shatlock had several questions regarding the applicants:

- Are there any that don't meet basic qualifications?
- Are there any internal applicants?
- Is demographic information available concerning the applicants?
- Has the internal selection committee been chosen?

Ms. Paulson indicated she could not address the first three questions as she has not yet reviewed the applications. Mr. Sampson indicated the Mayor is currently working on assembling an internal committee. Mr. Sampson will update the committee when that process is complete.

Ms. Bean stated the committee will begin discussion regarding the application review process at the next meeting.

#### **IV. Old Business**

There was no old business.

#### **V. Public Comment**

Public comment was received.

Alderman Kelly Russell shared several comments:

- Regarding letters to stakeholders, she felt the same letter should be sent to all organizations in order to maintain consistent messaging.
- In reference to a comment regarding hundreds of members of the NAC community, she noted all City residents are members of a NAC.
- Regarding extending the timeline, she asked what specific concerns this would be meant to address.
- She stated the list of organizations identified for targeted outreach should be made public, along with the process for identifying those groups.
- She also noted any candidates applying for the Chief of Police position should be highly educated in their field and therefore well aware of 21<sup>st</sup> century policing issues such as racial equity.

Lance English had several questions:

- What will be the mechanism be for sifting through the public comments and how much weight will be given to them regarding the prioritizing of qualifications?

- What are the selection criteria?
- How can the public email questions to the entire committee?
- Will the Mayor be able to reject the committee's recommendation if he chooses?

Sgt. Shatlock left the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Ms. Schaeffer addressed several comments. She noted the City's Human Resources Department will assist with selection criteria and the weighting of public comments. She also suggested the committee members who had developed the list of organizations for outreach should comment at the next meeting on the process.

Mr. Sampson clarified that the committee will not be recommending a single candidate to the Mayor, but rather a selection of candidates. The Mayor may select or reject any candidate as he so chooses.

Mr. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. Edmonds, to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. The motion was approved 8-1 as follows:

**In favor:** Ms. Wellington, Ms. Doll, Ms. Schaeffer, Ms. Edmonds, Mr. Ollie, Alderman Shackelford, Mr. Duckett, Ms. Bean

**Opposed:** Ms. Kadish

Respectfully submitted,

Phyllis Hane  
Legislative Clerk