

Capitola City Council

Agenda Report



Meeting: October 26, 2023

From: Police Department

Subject: Chief's Advisory Committee

Recommended Action: Receive a report about the formation of the Police Chief's Advisory Committee, review the application and selection process, and provide direction to staff.

Background: In 2020, the death of George Floyd ignited a movement centered on local policing reforms. To address community concerns and encourage community collaboration, the Capitola Police Department led by then-Chief McManus with the Santa Cruz Criminal Justice Council conducted a comprehensive review of all the Capitola Police Department's Policies and Procedures.

Following that review, Chief McManus discovered the value of forming a Chief's Advisory Committee as an opportunity for early community buy-in and to review and advise on new or sensitive police policies.

In 2021, under Chief McManus, Police Department executive staff researched the formation of the Chief's Advisory Committee by engaging candidates for the promotional sergeant position. Candidates researched and reviewed Police Chief Advisory Committees in other agencies, interviewed City staff and community stakeholders, and presented a written report as a part of their exam. Police Department executive staff conducted follow-up interviews with Santa Cruz Police Chief Bernie Escalante, Watsonville Police Chief Jorge Zamora, and Chico Police Chief Matt Madden.

After conducting research, reviewing policies, and receiving feedback from various agencies, the Police Department developed Capitola Police Policy #217 (Attachment #1) and began recruitment efforts with the goal of activating the committee in October of 2023.

Staff conducted outreach regarding the recruitment for the Chief's Advisory Committee by publishing information on the City's website under the Police Department's Transparency webpage. The webpage provided an overview of the Committee, the commitments required from the committee members, examples of good candidates, examples of topics considered by the Committee, the estimated application timeline, and information about how to apply. Staff also conducted outreach by sharing this information on the Police Department and City social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Nextdoor) and the Capitola Waves Newsletter during the months of July, August, and September.

Discussion: The Capitola Police Department is dedicated to community policing. The Police Chief's Advisory Committee (CAC) is intended to better foster communication and collaboration between the community and the Police Department. The structure of a CAC can vary widely from one jurisdiction to another; however, a common theme among CACs is they are intended to engage the community and create a platform of dialogue. The effectiveness of the committee can depend on many factors, such as the level of community engagement, the number of meetings held per year, and the workplan of the CAC moving forward. Santa Cruz, Watsonville, and Chico Police have Police Chief Advisory Committees, where members are selected by the Chief of Police. Related documents establishing the Chico, Santa Cruz, and Watsonville committees are included as Attachment #3.

Capitola's community is comprised of 10,000 residents and numerous visitors per year. In addition to residents and business owners, the City relies on thousands of service workers to meet the needs of our local economy and community. Staff intended to appoint 6-8 key stakeholders to a two-year term on the new CAC, beginning in October of 2023. The appointed members would be expected to serve as representatives of Capitola's diverse community and would be comprised of a cross-section of active community members throughout the City of Capitola. Members should represent a range of interests and experiences, including business owners, educational leaders, non-profit organizations, public relations,

faith communities, and youth organizations. Applicants were required to reside in Capitola or own a Capitola business.

Recruitment for the CAC began in July 2023. Staff received 8 applications, despite receiving 12 inquiries. Eight candidates participated in an interview with the Police Chief, which provided staff with an opportunity to highlight the role and mission of the Committee and expectations for members. Committee members are expected to ensure that decisions are not influenced by personal agendas and are tasked with actively considering and acknowledging their biases and relying on data and facts to make informed recommendations. Committee members were selected by the Police Chief.

CAC Moving Forward: On October 6, 2023, staff announced the appointment of 8 community members to the CAC. All 8 applicants offered different skills and experiences. Following that announcement, staff reflected on the composition of the CAC and felt that, due to the limited number of applicants, the Committee's composition was not representative of Capitola's diverse community. Staff paused all CAC activity while reviewing how to best recruit and select members. On October 12, 2023, City Council Member Brooks and Mayor Keiser requested that staff bring forth a presentation on the formation and selection of the CAC.

Staff suggests the City re-recruit for the CAC and has outlined a potential communications and outreach plan to do so. All recruitment materials will be available in English and Spanish. Recruitment and application information will be shared on the City's website and social media accounts, as well as published in a selection of local news publications. A flyer will be distributed throughout Capitola, and posted at the locations below:

- City Buildings & Kiosks
- Community Centers located in the sphere of influence
- Live Oak and Capitola Branch Libraries
- Mobile home parks located in the sphere of influence
- Service industry businesses

In addition, staff proposes to communicate directly with interested parties and community groups, as listed below. Staff intends to seek applicants from the groups listed below but does not wish to limit the composition of the CAC to designated interests.

- Diversity Center
- Senior Center
- Service/Construction Union Groups
- Latinx Community Groups
- NAACP
- Cabrillo College
- Spiritual Organizations
- Family Resource Groups (e.g. United Way, First Five)
- Mental Health Groups (e.g. NAMI, Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous)

Staff intends to change the membership requirements and application form for this recruitment. The new application will require that applicants be at least 18 years of age and reside in the sphere of influence of Capitola (Capitola, Aptos, Soquel, Live Oak, etc.). Staff hopes to generate increased interest and application numbers by altering the requirements. Staff will determine the Committee size based on the number and strength of applications.

Staff proposes to conduct recruitment for eight weeks. Applications will be available in hard copy at the Police Department, City Hall, the Capitola Branch Library, and the Community Center. In addition, an online application submittal will be created and available for the CAC. A link to the application will be available in the recruitment materials.

Staff also intends to amend Police Policy #217 to include an annual presentation of the CAC workplan to the City Council. For this first year, Chief Dally anticipates the proposed workplan will include such topics

as Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Policy, Automated License Plate Reader Camera Program, oversized vehicle parking review, website suggestions, and a review of mental health issues in the community.

Fiscal Impact: Outreach costs are estimated at \$3,000. When staff returns to the City Council to present the annual CAC Workplan, an update will be provided on costs for the recruitment and appointment process.

Attachments:

1. CPD Policy #217
2. Revised Application for Re-Recruitment
3. Watsonville, Chico, and Santa Cruz Committee Documents

Report Prepared By: Andrew Dally, Chief of Police

Reviewed By: Julia Gautho, City Clerk

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