

**PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMISSION ORDINANCE  
COMMITTEE**

Meeting Minutes  
October 6, 2020

**OPENING:**

The regular meeting of the PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMISSION ORDINANCE COMMITTEE was called to order at 11:06 A.M. on October 6, 2020 on the Arena Floor of the Columbus Civic Center by Mayor B. H. “Skip” Henderson, III.

**PRESENT:**

State Representative Carolyn Hugley, Councilor Jerry “Pops” Barnes, Councilor Judy Thomas, Tyson Begley, Shameika Averett, Major Freddie Blackmon and Reverend Adrian Chester. Assistant City Attorney Lucy Sheftall and Recording Secretary Tameka Colbert were also present.

**ABSENT:**

Councilor Walker Garrett

**INVOCATION:**

Offered by Reverend Adrian Chester.

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**MINUTES:**

Mayor Henderson asked if there were any corrections to the minutes of the September 22, 2020 Public Safety Advisory Commission Ordinance Committee Meeting. There were none.

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**UPDATE(S):**

Mayor Henderson provided an update on the search for a new Police Chief. He advised that the City is working with the Mercer Group who was previously hired to assist in conducting the search for the Fire Chief. He said candidates will be interviewed with the intent to submit a recommendation to Council by the end of October.

**SUBPEONA POWERS DISCUSSION:**

**Questions/Responses:**

Reverend Chester said he had previously raised questions about expanding the scope and responsibilities of the Public Safety Advisory Commission. He said the City Attorney advised that this action would require a change in the City Charter.

Mayor Henderson said the question was whether a single member of Council could initiate subpoena power, or must it be passed by a majority vote.

Assistant City Attorney Lucy Sheftall responded that the City Charter does address subpoena power and requires a majority vote by the members of Council. She said there have been situations in the past where Council has delegated subpoena power through resolution to handle certain situations.

Councilor Thomas said it has been stated that the Clerk of Council could issue a subpoena. She asked does the Clerk have to have action from an individual Councilor or from the majority of the Council before issuing a subpoena.

Assistant City Attorney Sheftall said the Clerk would have to have action from the majority of Council. It would take a resolution from Council to authorize issuance of a subpoena.

State Representative Carolyn Hugley asked how does the Personnel Review Board obtain their subpoenas.

Assistant City Attorney Sheftall said there is a standing resolution from Council stating that the Personnel Review Board can subpoena employees who are needed to testify in employment matters. She said it is not a subpoena power that extends to the public at-large or any witnesses.

State Representative Hugley asked is it possible to give the Public Safety Advisory Commission the same authority that the Personnel Review Board has by virtue of the Council.

Assistant City Attorney Sheftall said yes it is possible.

State Representative Hugley asked how do citizens submit their complaints to the Public Safety Advisory Commission.

Tyson Begley, Chairman of the Public Safety Advisory Commission said there are two options. Option one is to reach out to someone on the Commission. Option two would be to send an email through the City's website.

**OTHER DISCUSSION:**

Committee members also expressed their concerns regarding further subject matters, to include:

- Public Safety Advisory Commission's complaint submission process
- Building an authentic level of trust with the community
- Appointment of members of Public Safety Advisory Commission

After several minutes of discussion regarding the subject matters listed above, several suggestions were made and are listed as follows:

- Add a link to the Police Department’s website that would connect to the Public Safety Advisory Commission. By adding this link, complaints can be sent to both the Police Department and the Public Safety Advisory Commission simultaneously.
- Add specific requirements to a select number of board member positions to include law enforcement professionals as well as legal professionals.
- Institute education and training programs in order to prepare board members with the right tools and composition to address possible issues.

**REQUEST(S):**

- Councilor Barnes requested that the Committee receive both scenarios as it relates to subpoena power
  - Scenario one: City Council maintaining exclusive rights to subpoena power
  - Scenario two: Extending authority to the Public Safety Advisory Commission for subpoena power
- Councilor Thomas requested information or suggestions in regards to training for the Public Safety Advisory Commission members.
- Councilor Barnes requested information on the process of the Personnel Review Board and Columbus Police Department and how they handle their complaints.
- State Representative Hugley requested that the City Attorney provide 2-3 options of how subpoena powers could be implemented.

**INFORMATION:**

Mayor Henderson said the City Attorney has a sample ordinance that will be included in the information that will be sent out for the next meeting.

**AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING:**

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| 1. Review Personnel Review Board Subpoena Powers                     | City Attorney |
| 2. Review hybrid Ordinance prepared by City Attorney                 | City Attorney |
| 3. Alternatives for PSAC subpoenas                                   | City Attorney |
| 4. Discussion of the impending November 3 <sup>rd</sup> meeting date |               |

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Meeting was adjourned at 12:18 p.m. by Mayor B. H. “Skip” Henderson, III. The next general meeting will be at 11:00 a.m. on October 20, 2020, at the Columbus Civic Center.

Minutes submitted by: Name