Citizen Review Committee/Race Talks
Community Policing: Is it Working?
A Forum to Inform the Citizen Review Committee
November 13, 2012 ◆ McMenamins Kennedy School, Portland, Oregon

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CRC members present: Jamie Troy (chair), Michael Bigham, K.A. Lalsingh, Rodney Paris, Dr. Rochelle Silver, Jeff Bissonnette

Independent Police Review staff present: Irene Konev, IPR Community Outreach Coordinator

Portland Police Bureau command staff and officers as well as retired PPB staff present: Approximately ten.

Community members present: Approximately 150

Facilitators: Volunteer facilitators of: Resolutions Northwest, Uniting to Understand Racism, and Office of Equity Intergroup Dialogue facilitators. Approximately 30 facilitators present.

Acronyms used below:

CRC	Citizen Review Committee
IPR	Independent Police Review
PPB	Portland Police Bureau

Purpose: The purpose of this forum was for CRC members to hear public input regarding Portland Police Bureau.

Role of CRC members: Each CRC member sat at a different table and listened to community feedback on policing and worked with the facilitator to gather the info on policing in Portland.

Dialogue: The McMenamins Kennedy School gym filled almost to capacity by 7:00 pm and folks found space at the 12 tables set up for the evening. Volunteer facilitators gathered at the front of the room to gain instructions from Donna Maxey, creator of Race Talks and IPR Outreach Coordinator Irene Konev on the process of the evening. Each facilitator brought an agenda for the meeting to their table. Each table/group was designated at least one facilitator and one scriber.

Tim Hills of McMenamins Kennedy School spoke about the value of Race Talks, Donna Maxey gave a short overview the history of Race Talks, and what to expect for the evening. CRC Chairperson Jamie Troy introduced the CRC members by asking them to each stand and be recognized. Troy gave a short info session on the powers and duties of the CRC and the upcoming CRC recruitment coming up in early 2013. IPR Community Outreach Coordinator Konev was introduced and gave a short overview of the powers and duties of the City Auditor's Independent Police Review division.

Three You Tube videos were watched:

PPB Recruitment video "Behind the Badge"

http://www.joinportlandpolice.com/index.html

Burlington Police Department
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mvP50kwn3P8&feature=related about 3 minutes

Austin Police Department
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lu21HzChCxE&feature=related about 7 minutes, but could be cut short

After the videos were watched, the facilitators lead each small group dialogue (approximately ten members per group) through the following questions:

1. Short self-introduction. (2 mins./participant) What is a memorable experience you've had with the Portland Police Bureau?
2. After seeing the video how is community policing working in Portland?
3. What is your experience of "community policing"?
4. Based on the Portland Police Department (PPD) Diversity graph, HOW would you like the future PPD to reflect cultural diversity?
5. Does the diversity of the PPB video represent the diversity of the Portland community?
6. What are the top two suggestions and topics you want the CRC to address to improve community policing in Portland? (Each participant should have their own ideas.)

To aid the groups in discussion, each group had a PPB sworn member's diversity graph. (See attached diversity graph and Race Talks agenda)

Small group dialogue lasted over an hour as each group was instructed to go over each question, and document feedback. Each group picked one or two people to come to the front of the room to give a couple of salient points discussed in each group to the entire group. There were 12 tables in the room and all were filled. Several more groups sat in different sections of the room because all tables were filled.

CRC member Jeff Bissonnette created a short PowerPoint of CRC powers and duties and latest accomplishments. The PowerPoint slides scrolled through the two-hour event.

Of Note:
PPB staff attended in plain clothing and participated in the dialogues and gave feedback to the group.

Public Comments gathered at the Race Talks Forum

Most Frequent Comments

- Community policing does not exist in Portland
- PPB needs to work on:
- Relationships
- Training

- Trust
- Recruitment
- Community Engagement
- Community Policing would include
- Police getting out of cars and walking the beat
- Police and community getting to know each other
- Police living in Portland
- Diversity and cultural competency training
- Listening
- Respect
- Police are never accountable, never admit they're wrong, never apologize
- Police have knee jerk reactions
- Accountability should be tied to promotion
- Need to hear more positive police stories
- Need more opportunity for community citizen advocacy
- Police force should be the same % as community or better yet as people being arrested
- Need acknowledgement from the Police that there is an issue, that there is a problem in the force, not a problem with the community
- Discipline officers appropriately
- Police Culture needs to change
- More opportunity for contact with community
- Mutual respect
- Race dialogue
- Unions need to be overhauled
- Community policing is not about getting information but to make a connection
- Where are the women?
- But, statistics show crime is going down
- Sisters of the Road have a non-violent policy. Let's look at what they're doing
- Training, more tools, tactics, education
- Racism has gone underground
- Police are afraid
- Do you expect the community to heal without acknowledgement of harm being done?
- There are some good police officers.
- Want PPB to reflect Portland
- Hire black men and women
- Language skills would help
- Build relationships
- Body Language
- Roll down the window
- Show you are approachable
- Don't try to advance your rights, your goal is to stay alive

- Go to high schools and do recruitment- maybe fund students further education
- Attach an officer to a neighborhood association
- We want regular interaction, not just event-based
- Compassion
- More ride alongs
- Fear police
- Police need to volunteer in the community – maybe could be paid for that like private corporations do
- When you're in a car you are not a person to me, more so on a bike, very human walking around
- PPB doesn't want to hear a lot of public input
- Police should try to assume the best
- Officers say "you're the community, we're the Police"
- Need to be listening for a two-way street to happen
- Reach out to youth in the community – DARE coming once a year to talk about drugs is not enough
- CRC should look at lawsuits
- Homeless immersion for police officers
- Address institutional racism and gender diversity
- Keep shining light on working with people with mental illness
- With DOJ things may be headed in the right direction
- What is PPB's definition of Community Policing
- Maybe recruit officers with social work background
- Message needs to come from the top
- IPR has not effectively watch dogged the police
- Racial profiling does exist. Stop denying it.
- Citizens should be part of hiring process for officers.