

CITY OF WYOMING
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION TASK FORCE
March 30, 2021
Wyoming Recreation Center
7:00 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Becky Johnson, Cindy Peebles, Christopher Reintz, Amanda Flynn, Nedra Ward, and Judd Weis

Staff members present: Rachel Leininger—Director of Recreation and Citizen Engagement, Rusty Herzog—Acting City Manager/Police Chief, Steve Ballinger—Assistant Police Chief

1. Interview: *Rusty Herzog, Acting City Manager/Police Chief, City of Wyoming*
Steve Ballinger, Assistant Police Chief, City of Wyoming

Mr. Herzog explained that the police department had recently switched to a new records management system that allows for more data collection and flexibility, going from all paper to all digital driven by the need for data. He further explained that the backbone and structure of police department is the policy manual which provides the policies and directions for how the police department conducts their work. Mr. Herzog explained in the past it was a challenge for small police departments such as Wyoming to keep their policies and training and training up to date as things are constantly changing. Wyoming partnered with Lexipol which is a national company that builds policy manuals for police departments which provides the best practice guidelines for policing. Mr. Herzog also stated that this program is a web based software, so an officer can look up a specific policy in the field to make sure they are applying the policies correctly. Lexipol took the need to update the manual and made it automatic, meaning they automatically push out updates to Mr. Ballinger and then he can update the force accordingly. Mr. Ballinger explained that the manual in reference is that of procedure such as the use of force, traffic pursuits, etc., and that the content does not contain laws. However, he did explain that there is a local level procedural aspect such as a local level agreement on traffic pursuit procedures, but that most practices driven by state or federal law. Mr. Weis asked if most city managers, council, etc. have input on the policing policies. Mr. Herzog stated that no they do not because the policies are dictated by the professionals of the field and the industry wide best practices, however sometimes they may get involved such as the execution of no knock warrants. Ms. Flynn asked if there were policies that should be considered to make things more equitable. Mr. Herzog stated there the police department has policies on biased-based policing. He further explained that the Wyoming Police Department is part of

the state collaborative and that they must qualify by submitting data. The collaborative analyzes data to verify that it matches you know that matches the submitted policies, and the collaborative looks specifically at biased based policing, hiring practices, use of force, and community engagement. Mr. Ballinger explained that the police department had to show their policies were in line by submitting photos and even testing officers on a daily basis—365 questions on policies for each officer every year. In 2020 Wyoming was certified in biased based policing, investigation of employee misconduct, and vehicle pursuits. In 2021 Wyoming was certified in the body worn camera and the safe policing safe communities barring the choke holds. Mr. Reintz asked how broad the bias training is when it comes to diversity. Mr. Herzog explained the officers explained the officers would receive outside training and legal updates in addition to the Lexipol training which could range anywhere from one to two hours. He also stated that some trainings are discussions about things that have happened such as the incident involving the pastor at Friendship Church and that each sergeant would discuss the incident with each of their teams. Mr. Herzog also explained that almost every police training, no matter the topic, contains some form of diversity training because it touches everything the officer does. He also stated that the department has tried to get everyone into leadership training with a goal of 30 hours of training per year. Ms. Peebles asked if someone monitors training to make sure the officers are receiving the appropriate amount in each area. Mr. Herzog stated that each team supervisor is responsible for the training on their team, and that new officers receive additional training. Mr. Ballinger is responsible to make sure all the sergeants get their training, and Mr. Herzog reviews the training of everyone in the department. Ms. Ward asked if there are certain trainings that all officers have to attend or that you have to make sure at least one person is always trained per shift. Mr. Herzog said that that would certainly be the goal to get everyone training. Mr. Ballinger will usually preview any training before it is put out to officers to make sure it is of value. Mr. Weis asked who recommends and approves the curriculum of the training the officers receive. Mr. Ballinger stated that Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) approves training. Mr. Herzog added that Wyoming does have some OPOTA certified trainers so some training can be performed in house. Mr. Herzog stated that police policies are always addressing diversity, but hard for some people to understand the police department has been training on these topics for a long time, and does a great job, staying up to date on policies and training. Mr. Herzog shared that in 2019 Wyoming wrote 1121 citations compared to Woodlawn that wrote 2300, Lockland 3400, Amberley Village 1300, and Evendale 1065. Of Wyoming's tickets were for 474 speeding and 435 no driver's license, 156 expired license plates. Mr. Herzog further explained the breakout of citations issued as 35% white, 57% black, 8% other, and that the high percentage of black tickets equates to the 52% population of black people in the surrounding communities as most of those tickets are written in places that are main throughways for transient drivers, and only 8.4% of tickets are to residents. Mr. Weis asked if the collaborative would catch it if the numbers did not add up. Mr. Herzog replied that the police department has to turn in all of the supporting data to explain the numbers and why it is consistent with normal policing and not biased. Mr. Reintz asked how we amplify this information regarding the police in Wyoming. Mr.

Herzog stated that he believes communication and information is key to informing residents. Ms. Peebles stated that ambiguity always is perceived negatively, and that often there are only negative interactions with people of color, and how this could be addressed as part of the biased based training. Mr. Herzog explained that the department does look at all type of body camera footage (good and bad) and a lot of the stuff you see is violence on black or minorities and the facts would say it happens everywhere and you don't see the ones that go fine on media. He further explained that as part of the collaborative the police has to track and report on use of force. In 2017 the total contacts for Wyoming was roughly 5000 and only two were use of force—one being a domestic and one was suspicious person. In 2018 the total contacts were nearly 4600 and only 4 use of force. In 2019 there were 6000 contacts and only 2 use of force. In 2020 there were 6000 contacts 2 use of force—one was an armed robbery one was an armed suspect. Mr. Herzog stated that of the 8 use of forces that were just stated, 5 did not happen in Wyoming, but rather as part of mutual aid. Ms. Peebles stated that sharing the story gives context to the number but it is still a high percentage. Mr. Herzog stated that their new platform will allow the police department put data on the website, share statistics, etc. Mr. Weis stated that while it mentioned the data points who you ticketed, but it would be interested to see who was let go.

Mr. Herzog provided example footage from the body worn cameras. He explained that each officer has their own camera, and that the camera triggers automatically if the firearm, Taser, light bar, or if they are less than 30 foot from another officer, as well as they can push the button on. The footage automatically uploads to the cloud and they can provide access to the prosecutor or provide the videos to others as needed. He explained traffic stops are held for 60 days and accidental videos are held for 7 days, but that all law enforcement activities are recorded. Mr. Herzog added that there are 19 officers—2 female, 2 men that identify as other, and that the rest are white. He also stated that they have made changes to hiring and recruitment such as removing from the Civil Service and engaging a national testing network.

4. Miscellaneous
5. Adjourn at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rachel Leininger, Director of Recreation and Citizen Engagement