

DRAFT of the Minutes of the Equity Diversity Task Force, April 7, 2022 on the Zoom Platform

Members Present: Chair Andrea Fonseca, Jonathan Tropp, Marty Isaac, Tara Figueroa

Also Present: First Selectman Vicki Tesoro, Attorney James Cordone, Police Chief Michael Lombardo, Assistant Chief Glen Burns, Chris Hayes, Clerk

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Fonseca at 6:04pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

There was correspondence from Sarah Leighton re scheduling of meetings.

There were no Public Comments.

Motion to approve minutes of 1/13/22 made by Marty Isaac, seconded by Jonathan Tropp. Motion tabled to later in the meeting, to accommodate Chief Lombardo's schedule.

New Business

Interview with Chief of Police Michael Lombardo and Assistant Chief Glen Burns

- How can EDIT understand how your departments deal with equity and diversity
- How can EDIT help your department

The purpose of the open dialog is to understand procedures and how they relate to a more welcoming and diverse Trumbull.

Chief Lombardo said about a year and a half ago they became an accredited agency in the State of Connecticut, Tier 1 Status. This accreditation is from outside independent professionals in law enforcement, to see if they are operating at a high level of service to the community, in accordance with laws, policies. The Post council is the police officers' standard training council in the State of Connecticut – the certification comes from them – requiring a minimum of 60 hours of training every three years for every officer to maintain the certification. The lengthy list of requirements includes diversity, implicit bias. It tells the community that they have reached a certain level of professionalism. This process began before the State Law on police accountability. When they do an inspection, 110 policies are reviewed, with hundreds of standards in each. They make sure they are not just policies on paper, but they are following through. They are in the process now of getting Tier 2 status – there are three tiers.

Mr. Tropp stated he was very grateful for the conversation he, Ms. Fonseca and Chief Lombard had about a month before this meeting. They discussed policies – some are driven through the Post standards and some through the legislative process. How officers approach calls depend on the kind of

call it is – if they know ahead if it's violent, they proceed with caution, vs, a medical emergency where they go right in.

Mr. Isaac referenced the Public Session, where a person of color described a situation where a neighbor had called the police, because they were walking in the area. Are police required to show up – when do they ask for ID? Call takers are trained to ask many questions to determine why they are suspicious. If the answer is just “they're not from around here”, they will not send a car. If they are pulling on door handles, etc, they will send two cars (because there is only one officer per car). If an officer sees someone walking alone at 4am, they will stop them – hopefully just to make sure they are OK.

Mr. Isaac thought it would be interesting to a community discussion – people may get heated because they do not know standard procedures. Mr. Tropp stated he is appreciative of the Trumbull Police Department, and noted there are perceptions that problems exist. Chief Lombardo said it's hard to know what biases may be leading to calls. Nationwide, the public has been invited to “see something, say something”. There has been an enormous uptick in car theft. He is trying to put together a Citizen's Police Academy that is 8-10 weeks. They would teach everything they do. The current staffing shortage makes this a hard time to start this. It would educate the public and build bridges.

Ms. Figueroa said as the community gets more diverse, public behavior may change. Right now there are lots of new faces. The Chief was asked what the diversity of the Force is? Mr. Lombardo said they have made some strides: 7 years ago there were 4 women, now there are 11. They have the first Sikh officer in the State. The Police commission has two women out of 5 members.

Assistant chief Burns said they are ramping up recruiting. There are fewer applicants than in the past. Reaching out to get a bigger pool.

Chief Lombardo cited Coffee with a Cop and other similar programs they have put in place for the public to get to know the police in a less formal way. Events are listed on their Facebook page.

New Business

Ms. Tesoro has agreed to attend the May 19 meeting. Ms. Figueroa said she had invited the co-Chair for Fairfield EDIT to attend an upcoming meeting. Meetings are preferred to be in person.

Minutes

Mr. Tropp tables the discussion of the January, February and March minutes. Mr. Isaac seconded.

VOTE: All in favor.

Next up: it is time to report to Town Council. Mr. Tropp noted they have lost one member, and one has stopped attending. Erhaps the alternate members can be made full members, or new members can be appointed. Ms. Figueroa said for the next meeting, they should decide on the next steps for work.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Troop, Ms. Figueroa seconded. All in favor at 7:09pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Joanne Orenstein

May 30, 2022