

**City of Keene
New Hampshire**

**AD HOC RACIAL JUSTICE & COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, August 13, 2020

6:00 PM

Remote Meeting via Zoom

Members Present:

Dr. Dottie Morris, Co-Chair
Rick Van Wickler, Co-Chair
Gail Somers
Tia Hockett
Catherine Workman, Councilor
Julia Atkins
Aditi Saleh
Eli Rivera
Pierre Morton

Staff Present:

Rebecca Landry, IT Director
Shane Maxfield, Lieutenant, Keene Police
Department
Elizabeth Dragon, City Manager
Steven Russo, Chief, Keene Police
Department

Members Not Present:

Stacey Massiah

George S. Hansel, Mayor

Co-Chair Morris read a prepared statement explaining how the Emergency Order #12, pursuant to Executive Order #2020-04 issued by the Governor of New Hampshire, waives certain provisions of RSA 91-A (which regulates the operation of public body meetings) during the declared COVID-19 State of Emergency. She called the Ad Hoc Racial Justice & Community Safety (AHRJCS) Committee meeting to order at 6:05 PM. Roll call was conducted.

1) Minutes of Last Meeting – July 23, 2020

Ms. Atkins made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of July 23, 2020. Councilor Workman seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

2) Guest Speaker – City Manager Elizabeth Dragon – City Actions

Ms. Landry stated that City Manager Elizabeth Dragon is here to talk about what the City is already doing, to give the committee an idea of where to begin.

The City Manager introduced herself and thanked the committee members for agreeing to do this important work. She read the following:

“The committee’s charge to make recommendations about preventing and correcting systematic and cultural inequities is a pretty large task. As you know, it goes beyond just policing. To effect real community-wide change we need to look all parts of the community: our entire city government and services, our county services, our educational services, and all sectors of our community.

I believe it requires each of us in leadership positions to take stock of our individual organizations that we lead and ask ourselves, ‘Are we doing everything that we can to be inclusive and correct systematic inequities?’ We can and must all do better. I start there. At the City we have an employee group that will be working with our Human Resources Department to generate ideas for general organization-wide awareness and training. Education and Awareness is a crucial first step for change. We are looking at focused education, specifically for our hiring managers and our hiring teams, or anyone in a position to make a hiring decision. We are also looking at training opportunities for our hiring teams to help them recognize bias that may not realize they have.”

The City Manager added that she was talking with the HR Manager about this today and she had a great idea that involves an anonymous survey. The individual gets the feedback directly, but also they get anonymous results. They are looking at doing things of that nature.

She continued: “We are being more deliberate in how we structure our hiring teams, using people across the organization – for example, a hiring team for a Public Works position might include a staff member from the Library. We are going across the organization to tap into all of the people the City has. We are changing things up a bit and including adding others in the organization that are not usually part of that process.

We are considering the inclusion of skills-based testing, which we do not currently have, as a component of the candidate screening process. There are some departments that have skills-based testing but not as a general rule. The other idea we are pursuing will involve work with our Human Resources software vendor (Halogen) to see if it is even possible. We receive and process job applications electronically through this automated system. We are talking to our vendor to determine if we can remove names from applications and instead identify applicants by number, at least through the first screening steps. This could potentially help reduce various types of biases that people might not realize they have.

We are always looking for other venues to advertise our open positions and recruit people. We participate in college job fairs, and reach out to professional organizations that have some sort of

tie to the type of position we are seeking to fill. We also use interns and have often kept interns on, and it is great to keep people here locally beyond college. We have had some success with that. We are looking for anything we can do to increase and diversify our pool of candidates for all positions. Recruitment is always a concern for us so we would welcome ideas from you on

Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Director Andy Bohannon is the staff liaison to the Human Rights Committee (HRC), which Dottie Morris is a member of. That group currently holds an annual Martin Luther King Breakfast, and recently added a very popular international festival that we are looking at growing, and I understand the committee is looking to add a third event in June of each year. I would really love to see some momentum continue from this group's work into that ongoing standing committee."

The City Manager continued that the HRC will continue beyond the specific charge for this group, and she would love to see some of this group's work rolled into the HRC. The HRC has at times been active, and at other times not been active, so this is a great opportunity to give the HRC some additional momentum.

She continued: "Next, because I know there is a lot of focus on policing nationwide, I want to talk a little about our Keene Police Department (KPD). We have a highly trained, professional department that is nationally accredited. We voluntarily hold ourselves to this higher standard. I hope you get a chance, if you haven't already, to watch the recording on our website of the City Council workshop held July 14th. It was an informational workshop about the KPD. We really tried to answer some of the questions we were getting. It was an excellent workshop and the Chief and his team discussed, among other things, what it means to be a nationally accredited department. Only 4% of law enforcement agencies in the US are nationally accredited and only 15 of the 210 agencies in NH are part of that number. I would argue that in NH accreditation is perhaps even more important than in other states because currently there are no statewide policies and procedures or statewide review of policies. CALEA was formed to create policy and procedures for law enforcement based on nationally-recognized best practices. Most departments do not become certified because it is a lot of work and it is expensive to achieve and it is expensive to maintain accreditation. I think you will hear more about this related to recommendations that come out of the Governor's Commission on Law Enforcement. If you get a chance check out calea.org. CALEA requires and reviews written directives/policies; reviews reports and use of data in decision-making in the KPD; and reviews the KPD's relationship with the community, including a process for public input during certification. CALEA uses an independent team of assessors to review the KPD's operations.

During the City Council workshop, the Police Chief also reviewed their hiring process and just how rigorous the process is. In 2019 we had 376 candidates for police officer positions. Fifty-two of them actually showed up for the next step of the process, and of those 52 only 20 passed the physical fitness test. Of those 20 only 12 passed the oral boards, and in the end only two passed the background tests, which include a polygraph that covers the answers given as part of

application process, physical and mental health, education, previous employment, alcohol and drug use, gambling, IT and online usage, and much more. I encourage anyone interested in these statistics to also check out the KPD web page. In the 'resources' section you will find statistical reports related to hiring, citizen complaints, and internal investigations, as well as our Use Of Force (UOF) policy and our UOF statistics."

The City Manager added that it is all information that CALEA reviews, and some of the reports are ones that CALEA requests. The KPD tries to make all of that available to the public and they keep several years' of data in there.

She continued: "As part of the workshop the Chief also identified areas for improvement, including some areas of training that may have become stale and should be updated. They also identified some areas that should be enhanced, such as diversity/cultural dynamics/race relations - he believes these should be more of a theme throughout all the training, not just one, specific topic/training moment. There are several other areas he identified at the workshop. However, it is important here to recognize the work of the Governor's Commission on Law Enforcement and the required training changes that will likely come from the work of that group. There is a good chance the areas we have identified will become part of the state's required training program for everyone in NH. So we are waiting for the work of the Governor's Commission to be complete before moving to implement any training program changes here locally.

I believe we might also see some recommendations from the Governor's Commission on Law Enforcement related to mobile crisis teams. This concept of engaging mental health (and I would add to that: substance abuse) professionals to assist the Police Department either at the scene or as a follow up to a call is not a new concept for us. In fact, for a couple of years now the Police Chief has been following this type of work in other communities and discussing the possibility of creating some partnerships here locally. This type of relationship would not only be a welcome relief to the KPD, but to the ambulance service and the Fire Department as well. It would provide needed services to people in crisis. New Hampshire has mobile crisis teams in larger cities but none here in Keene or in this region. I have briefly discussed this with our Senator and the Chief has been discussing this with Monadnock Family Services as a potential partner. I would like to see State funding to stand up more of these mobile crisis teams."

She added that it is very important. She thinks they will see something like that come out of the Governor's Commission on Law Enforcement. If they do make a recommendation, she hopes they follow it with funding. She thinks it should not just be the big cities that have access to this type of resource. Keene needs it, as does every other community in NH.

She continued: "Funding, however, is not the only hurdle locally we would need to overcome. [Lack of] workforce is also an issue. There are not enough mental health counselors to provide all the services currently needed."

The City Manager stated that she knows that Senator Kahn has been working on that, in terms of certification and getting people to be able to work a lot sooner under a mentor. That has made a lot of progress but they still have more work to do, and she thinks the demand will only increase.

She continued: "However, the Chief is going to continue these conversations and I am going to continue these conversations with our Senator and ultimately the State. We need to see first if it is included in the recommendations that come from Governor's Commission because if it does then hopefully funding will also follow.

One other update: the KPD is currently reviewing body camera programs. They have been meeting with vendors and talking with stakeholders and other communities about their experience. The Chief is planning to provide an update to the Finance, Organization, and Personnel (FOP) Committee on Aug 27 at 6:30 PM for those of you that might be interested in tuning in."

She added that the work is not done but they want to let the FOP Committee know what they have come up with so far and get some input from the FOP Committee/City Council. They expect to go back and forth to the City Council a few times.

The City Manager thanked the AHRJCS Committee again for having her, and stated that she would be happy to answer questions. She continued that if she does not know the answer(s) she can bring the questions to others who might have answers and then follow up.

Co-Chair Morris asked if anyone had questions, from the committee or public.

Ms. Atkins asked, regarding hiring practices, what the City does to try and make sure the pool is diverse. She continued that NH is not very diverse. Are they looking outside of NH? The City Manager replied that they do look outside of NH and can sometimes recruit from other states if it is a higher level position. She continued that it takes more effort reaching out to other states. They have success reaching out to professional organizations. For example, when seeking a Library Director, they go through a library network, which will reach library professionals across the country. They are always looking for other ideas for how to recruit more people, especially for the KPD, where they have a lot of vacancies. Part of it is because it is a rigorous process to get through, but also, it is because Keene is more remote and they are competing with other locations like the seacoast, which attract more people. If [Ms. Atkins or other ADRJCS Committee members] come up with other places the hiring teams should be looking at, they would be happy to.

Ms. Atkins stated that the KPD process is very rigorous. She asked if anyone has looked at the process for biases, i.e. to see if just the process eliminates a diverse group of people. The City Manager replied that CALEA looks for bias, and they are independent. She continued that CALEA just went through all of the City's hiring processes. Lt. Maxfield stated yes, CALEA goes through everything in the hiring process with a fine tooth comb. He continued that as far as

he knows they have not found anything. He is not aware of any specific bias issues in the hiring process. Chief Russo stated that the biggest challenge is getting a diverse group here to begin with. He continued that he does not disagree that they should be looking to see if there are any biases in the hiring process, and looking at how to make it more open, but the problem is getting people here. Low numbers of everybody is the problem. The KPD will consider any applicant, regardless of what they look like, what they wear, their race, sex, or nationality. He understands Ms. Atkins's point, thinking of biases that may keep someone out of the process, but they have never gotten to look at that, because they do not get the numbers here. The KPD is "close to zero in diversity," he continued, which is unfortunate. They have reached out to minority papers in the past, to get posted nationally, and they held a hiring process in Springfield, without any success. The KPD is open to anyone's ideas for how to get people here, because the KPD is out of ideas. He thinks this applies city-wide.

Mr. Morton thanked the City Manager for coming and sharing the information. He continued that she said they are thinking about broader skills-based testing for hiring for the City. Similar to Ms. Atkins's question, he would like to encourage the City to work with a college, university, or outside organization to help develop the tests so the tests will be free of bias. One of the things Chief Russo spoke about was ways that he can develop a larger scope, whether that is looking for folks with disabilities, indigenous people, or [other underrepresented people]. Something C&S did successfully was partner with a university to bring in interns, many of whom were later hired. That is a wonderful way to grab hold of an underrepresented population for work. It is great that the City Manager attends job fairs and has interns. He encourages her to look for ways to have a formal pipeline created between the City and universities, with structure and consistency to the type of candidates the City can see. This should include universities outside of NH, too. Lastly, he continued, the skills test really bothers him. It could weed a lot of people out. He asks the City to consider widening the parameters of the applicant tracking system to not only look for core competencies listed within job description documents, because there are transferable experiences and skills that the applicant tracking program would not pull out if it is limited to a core competency. For example, someone working in the Coast Guard could be a fantastic Police Officer.

Ms. Landry stated that that is really good input and that is the type of information they should include in their report to the City Council. She continued that she has made a note of it so they can include it in their draft.

Co-Chair Morris asked for public comment. Hearing none, she thanked the City Manager.

3) Education and Schools Discussion

Ms. Hockett stated that she has a list that she, Ms. Hockett, Ms. Atkins, Dr. Morris, and Ms. Saleh brainstormed. She read the following:

"Data and Stats available

- Demographics – K-12, Antioch University-New England, Franklin Pierce University, Keene State College, River Valley Community College
- Campus/School Climate – Experiences of staff and students based on race
 - How well are people performing within various educational settings?
 - What type of services are offered to Black and Brown students? Mentorship opportunities? Support?
- Disciplinary actions – any data connected to race? General tiered behavior evaluation
- Contact with law enforcement - Nature of contact between police and youth based on race
- Break down of students in AP class and Honors based on race – High School and Colleges/Universities in area
 - College bound advising – guidance counselors report about Black and Brown students”

Ms. Landry asked, regarding the “Data and Statistics” category, if the group is looking at data and statistics they want to investigate. Ms. Hockett replied yes, this is what they want to start digging into.

Ms. Atkins stated that the thinking is that based on the data, they would make a formal request to the different groups and these would be the types of things they would be looking for. They realize they might not get it all; data might not be kept on all of these topics. But it is the information they would be looking for and information that they could use to help them come up with the recommendations for the City Council.

Ms. Hockett continued reading:

“Programming and Educational Opportunities

- What types of programs and educational opportunities (related to diversity, equity and inclusion) are available in the region, in school system?
- Type of training for teachers, counselors, administrators and other school personnel – Professional development related to diversity as it relates to race?
- What types of opportunities are available for all students to have diversity experiences?

Curriculum related issues

- What resources are available in the schools?
 - People
 - Books
 - Types of presentation
 - Content in classes
 - For example - Has the content in history classes changed? Are various voices represented? Indigenous peoples? People of African, Asian, Latino backgrounds? How are these voices represented?
- Integration of diverse information into content/curriculum in general
- Changes in how information is presented including types of assignments

- Contextualizing – What is the bottom line and lessons we are trying to teach within the school, in general – overall goals, vision and outcomes

Staff diversity

- What are some plans in place to increase diversity among teachers? What is current staffing? Recruitment and Retention strategies?

Other things to consider

- Working understanding of variations in family structure and make-up – single race families, mixed race families, adopted children into “white” families – needs are potentially different for the child based on family structure and make-up – many students who are multiple races – many dynamics to explore, understand in order to serve students
- Within racial group diversity – needs based on these differences exist – racial differences within POCs – gender, SES, ability, religion, age, etc. – “intersectionality”
- How are priorities determined within the education system? Is diversity a priority? If so, how is it expressed and addressed as a priority? What plans are in place already to address issues of diversity, bias, racism, etc.?
- Understanding of how to engage students - How to balance engaging students from diverse backgrounds without singling them out? - Navigating this complexity
- How is discriminatory or hate-related behavior handled? What are the consequences? What about hate or derogatory speech addressed? Consequences? Is there a difference between bullying and bias/discriminatory behavior/hate actions? Are bias/discriminatory behaviors/hate actions captured as bullying? Same consequences or variation?
- Low school performance of Black and Brown students compared to White students – how is this interpreted? What is done when this performance gap is noted?

Obtaining additional information

- Discussions with students, parents and teachers – Three separate times to talk to the different groups to get input – Listening sessions
- Creation of a “living” document for ongoing feedback – express feelings about experiences, opinions, present options, questions, other comments – maybe an online form”

Ms. Landry stated that she is wondering where they go with this. Is this something they want to take to the schools? Are they looking at a questionnaire, or interviews? What do they want to do with this information?

Ms. Atkins replied that she envisioned cleaning it up a bit and asking for that data, but it also informs, say, the Superintendent of what this group is thinking about. It is twofold. It needs to be cleaned up in a way that can be presented as a request for information, and also, in a way to extend a formal invitation, so they can say ‘these are some things the committee wants to discuss,’ whether it relates to K to 12, colleges, or whatever else. That is her thinking. She asked if anyone else had thoughts. Co-Chair Morris replied yes, the working group was just

brainstorming. They wanted to put it all out there. She continued that they need to organize it more to figure out all the directions they want to go in. Maybe they could have the Superintendent come in and do what the City Manager did - talk about what is in the mix (in the School District) and what they are doing in the future to address some of these things. It is a good way for the School District to learn about what the committee is thinking about and the questions they may be asking.

Ms. Somers thanked Ms. Hockett for sharing that thorough list. She continued that she has a question and a recommendation. A lot was covered and they definitely touched on disciplinary factors but it would be a good idea if they start to thinking about a way for community members and parents to have an objective, independent body sit in on disciplinary areas where there may be concerns from brown and black families if they have concerns about a situation not being handled objectively. That is one concern that came up from the public. A parent spoke about how her children of color were treated differently than her white children. There might be an opportunity here to see if the schools would be open to think through having a process where a parent could invite an independent body to sit in or maybe provide recommendations on such matters. Co-Chair Morris thanked her and stated that they will note that.

Councilor Workman commended the group for such a thorough brainstorming session. She asked, was there discussion of exploring the role of the School Resource Officer (SRO) in schools? Co-Chair Morris replied that she does not remember. Mr. Morton replied that he thinks Ms. Hockett listed students' interactions with "on-school police officers" as a topic. Councilor Workman replied that some questions could be: Should an SRO be uniformed on campus? What is their role? What is the ratio of SROs to guidance counselors? What are their roles? Is it the most appropriate use of an officer's time? Co-Chair Morris thanked her for adding that. She continued that the group will continue to work and refine and they will bring it back.

Ms. Landry replied that this is definitely the right way to go about this; this is textbook on how to have working groups. She continued that the working groups are not making decisions on their own or "replying all" via email; they are bringing everything back to the full committee. She thanked them for doing it the right way.

4) Police and Policing Discussion

Mr. Morton stated that he and Sheriff Rivera met and chatted about looking for low-hanging fruit and looking for areas within this bucket list where they can make a more immediate impact. He continued that two areas that they decided on are: mental health considerations for Police Officers, and Police training on UOF. Those are under the "training" and "mental health" bucket list of "Police and Policing." They do not know what they do not know, and thought it would be best to recruit some professionals to speak either with the full committee or with him and Sheriff Rivera, on what the KPD's UOF policy is and what the training around it is like. Sheriff Rivera recommended that Chief Russo, Lt. Maxfield (who is the lead trainer) or someone else from the KPD come speak about UOF.

He continued that he spent quite a bit of time on the KPD website. The truth is: he is elated. He saw the data that the KPD takes, and he saw a training manual that KPD has to go through. It is tough to become a Police Officer in Keene, and there is so much ongoing training. He was bowled over, and he is proud. The data reported out by the KPD runs the gamut. Other committee members can look at the 2019 data on citizens' complaints and UOF analysis, which were amazing to read. At first he thought there was not, but there *is* information on the ethnicity of the individuals. This is fantastic. The KPD does have the data for the committee to review. He thinks they should have someone from the KPD speak with them briefly about what the UOF training entails.

Mr. Morton continued that regarding mental health, Sheriff Rivera gave him a wonderful contact: Eric Golnick, the President of Veterans' and First Responders' Healthcare. He is fantastic and he spoke with him at length. Mr. Golnick is willing to speak with the committee about the mental health needs of police officers and first responders, and also sent the committee a PowerPoint presentation on this. He also spoke with James McKim, President of a NH chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Mr. McKim is also on a Governor's Council about race. He also can speak with the AHRJCS Committee about the mental health needs of Police Officers. He asked if Sheriff Rivera had anything else to add.

Sheriff Rivera stated that the Police and Policing working group needs more people. He continued that he is sort of in the middle of this, since he served for 22 years on the KPD. He considers the KPD to be a very professional organization that got him to where he is, and he is currently the elected Sheriff of Cheshire County. Thus, he brings a different point of view to the working group than someone not engaged with law enforcement. The working group needs that outside voice as well. He and Mr. Morton would welcome others to join them as they explore more into the mission and directive of the working group. It is not just what [law enforcement] needs to do more, but what are [law enforcement] doing already, that the working group can share with the committee, that maybe people do not know is already happening. It would be great to have one or two more people, to have that conversation. He went through the KPD hiring process twice – the first time he did not make it, and the second time he did. When he applied there were over 200 applicants. There were programs where the military helped people transition from the military to law enforcement, and Keene benefitted from some funding for that, because of the promotion and advertisement of law enforcement careers for people leaving the military. As a person of color coming into the KPD almost 30 years ago, he found the hiring process to be extremely fair, with everyone that applied having similar testing and similar requirements. That is just his experience.

Co-Chair Morris noted that Ms. Somers has offered to join the Police and Policing working group. Ms. Somers stated that she would be glad to join; she does not know much about this topic and maybe that will be a good thing. She will be a "clean, curious slate." Sheriff Rivera agreed and welcomed her and her perspective. Councilor Workman stated that her schedule has opened up and she would be happy to join that group as well.

Sheriff Rivera asked about having a guest. Ms. Landry replied that any guest speaker(s) should come to the full committee meetings instead of working group meetings so the public can at least observe. Sheriff Rivera stated that the working group wanted to have the Chief or someone from the KPD update them on what the KPD is doing, so that the committee does not end up recommending something that is already in place, so they can focus on where to go. Ms. Landry replied that that is the type of decision that needs to be made by the committee, not a work group, unless they have an official subcommittee meeting with an agenda, a minute-taker and minutes, public notification, and so on and so forth. They could do that if they want, or they could, if the Chair agrees, include that in a future AHRJCS meeting.

Mr. Morton asked: if they wanted to have someone come and speak, how do they go about that? Do they email Ms. Landry and say that the working group would like to bring in so-and-so to speak, and list some times and days that person is available? Ms. Landry replied that that would be fine, and she would bring it to Co-Chairs Morris and Van Wickler. She and Co-Chair Morris reiterated the importance of emails sent to and from committee members not including more than five committee members, so it does not create a quorum.

Ms. Atkins stated that police departments have a lot of data. She continued that she recommends that the work group find a way to look through the data to see if there are individual officers who fit the category of inappropriate UOF or other issues. Does the KPD look at individuals in that manner? That would be helpful information. Mr. Morton agreed. He continued that the KPD does look into that. They have a very specific process, which he was quite impressed with, and Lt. Maxfield could give information about this. Lt. Maxfield replied yes, there is a multi-level review process and the KPD does try and identify individual issues that might be happening. They look into anything unusual like that and address it. Mr. Morton replied that they address it with additional training. He saw that on their website. It is very detailed and impressive. They can share the link to that webpage for everyone on the committee to see.

Co-Chair Morris asked if there was any public input. Ms. Landry replied that she does not see any members of the public indicating that they would like to speak. She continued that she shared the link to the KPD, and for the benefit of the public, it is: www.ci.keene.nh.us/police, and there is a tab labeled “resources,” and you can dig in deeper there. The “employment” tab has a lot of information about the prerequisites, training, and qualifications for employment.

5) Laws and Policy Discussion

Mr. Morton stated that this, too, is what he and Sheriff Rivera worked on. He continued that the topic goes hand-in-hand with Police and Policing. They thought of the idea of looking at City laws and ordinances that affect the public and examining their potential impact on underrepresented populations. That was the beginning of their discussion. They are hopeful that with the addition of two more people they can begin to pull that together. He asked if Sheriff Rivera had anything to add. Sheriff Rivera replied no, Mr. Morton is right on track.

6) Social and Community Discussion

Co-Chair Van Wickler stated that Councilor Workman sent some amazing brainstormed ideas, and Ms. Somers also had some great thoughts as well. He continued that since their thoughts reflect his as well, particularly in regards to spiritual leaders and healthcare practitioners in the community, he will yield to them instead of trying to summarize their thoughts. Ms. Somers stated that since she does not have a good internet connection right now, she will defer to Councilor Workman to share her document. She continued that she and Councilor Workman's thoughts and ideas were similar.

Councilor Workman stated that there were a couple of core categories they wanted to cover: community conversations, budgets, social services, and integration. She brainstormed in each category. She continued that for "community conversations," she thought it would be helpful to gather feedback from spiritual leaders from various backgrounds, regarding their experiences counseling their congregations on racism and inclusivity, and ideas for ways to improve on these issues. She listed a group of diverse religious and spiritual backgrounds, such as Keene Assembly of God, the United Church of Christ, Elm City Church, New Level Church, Keene Unitarian Universalist Church, St. Bernard's Catholic Church, Monadnock Covenant Church, and St. George's Greek Orthodox Church. Co-Chair Morris stated that they should add the Synagogue.

Councilor Workman stated that she also thought to gather information from healthcare providers regarding common trends they may see surrounding racism and racial diversity or lack thereof, in patients and in hiring practices. They could ask about cultural biases in healthcare and tie that into the Healthy Monadnock 2020 aspect, and programs in place to promote inclusivity.

She continued that she also thought about mental health: looking at agencies like Monadnock Family Services; MAPS; Mountain Wellness Associates; Antioch Psychological Services (they are a teaching school, so it would be really helpful to get their feedback); Monadnock Area Peer Support; and Cheshire Medical Center's Psychology Department, ER team, Primary Care units. Because Cheshire Medical Center is so large it would probably be best if the committee gathered information via survey. Or they could invite leaders from the religious and spiritual and healthcare agencies together, but logistically, she is not sure how that would work. A survey might be better but that is open for discussion.

Councilor Workman stated that regarding the "budget" category, in the KPD's workshop with the City Council they mentioned that CALEA did an on-site visit in 2019. She continued that she did not see that report on the KPD's website, and she was wondering if the committee could have that. The CALEA website says that the reports say what areas a department is doing exceptionally well in and areas that need improvement, and overall recommendations. She wonders if that report could be made public. Oregon has, in Eugene and Springfield, a program called CAHOOTS: Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets. It is a crisis intervention team partnered with law enforcement. It is helpful to look at what other municipalities are doing to split the role of law enforcement and social services, because the police are currently the catch-

all for all of society's problems, so how can they look at doing that differently? Eugene's program costs roughly \$80,000 per year. The United Kingdom also has a national health services to respond to mental health calls, and Oakland, CA, is currently piloting a \$40,000 project called MH First Team to test non-police strategies on mental health calls, which is modeled similarly to CAHOOTS. During the KPD workshop, the KPD talked at length about alternatives they have been looking into, such as one modeled after the Laconia Police Department's hiring of a PET Officer (Prevention, Enforcement, and Treatment) and an ACERT (Adverse Childhood Experiences Response Team), which was mentioned or explored by the KPD in 2017. It was determined that Keene did not have enough resources. Maybe this could be reexamined – what are the specifics of the team? How much would it cost to pilot it? Could Keene apply for grants for this? She envisions exploring these options a little more to see if any would be viable for Keene.

Councilor Workman stated that for “integration,” she looked at, in regards to community policing and making the Police Department even more user-friendly: possibly increasing bike or foot patrols downtown; spacing out patrol space, because sometimes there are two police cars in one parking lot; and adding intros to interactions (“Hi, I’m Officer Joe. Do you know why I pulled you over?”). Also, talking about more diversity on the KPD as a whole.

She continued that for “social services,” she thinks in upcoming budgets they should look at allocating more funds to mental health, child welfare, and addiction services. She also thought about promoting educational campaigns focused on identifying racial biases, microaggressions and why they are hurtful, and ways to celebrate diversity in the community. Having a discussion with mental health agencies – would they be up to the task of taking on more responsibility with regards to mental health calls, if Keene were to look at one of those models? How would it really be implemented, and can they get buy-in from the mental health agencies? A friend of hers runs a crisis center in Boston, and they deal with various populations – homelessness and substance abuse tend to be the main issues. They have a crisis van, not very expensive or fancy, as a mobile unit so they can go out and provide services to individuals where they are in the community. Keene could look at models such as that one.

Co-Chair Van Wickler thanked Councilor Workman for her amazing ideas/work.

Co-Chair Morris stated that someone's suggestion was to add “St. James” to the list of churches.

Co-Chair Van Wickler stated that Ms. Somers' ideas were: identify community organizations, groups, and stakeholders that the committee can learn from – what are those groups' initiatives? What are they doing, and how might this committee integrate into that? He continued that he thought that was a really good idea, because if a group or organization is not doing anything, this committee's inquiry might trigger them into doing something.

Ms. Landry asked if Councilor Workman heard what the City Manager was saying about mobile crisis units, and if that perked her interest, based on what she was just talking about. Councilor Workman replied yes, and she would like to learn more. Ms. Landry replied that maybe they can get more information about that in a future discussion.

Co-Chair Morris stated that Ms. Somers wants to add Keene Human Rights Committee and Keene Historical Society to the list. Councilor Workman asked if those go under “social services” or somewhere else. Co-Chair Morris replied that Ms. Somers did not say. Councilor Workman replied that she will add them.

Ms. Adkins asked if this working group is also looking at: the first person responding to a mental health call does not even belong with police. Maybe it should be EMS or a mobile health unit. Is part of the recommendation that they move it away from the police? Unfortunately, when many people hear “police” they hear “trouble.” They are afraid. They are afraid to be open, and afraid they are going to get in trouble. When they are looking at the idea of a mobile unit, they should look at whether or not it should be connected to police, or police and EMS. That is just a question, not a recommendation. Councilor Workman replied that she thought about that as well. She continued that similar to what she said in the school section, about having SROs in schools. You don’t know if the situation is going to need to include the police. A simple mental health call could go awry very quickly. That would be part of the larger discussion. i.e. would they recommend an officer not fully in uniform, so they look less threatening? She is just brainstorming, but maybe in those situations police would take direction from the mental health provider and not intervene unless the mental health provider gives a sign. There is a lot to think about. She does think adding EMS to the conversation would be good. It could be a partnership between EMS, police, and mental health providers.

Co-Chair Van Wickler stated that some of this is about the entrance of a call. There is some value in having one phone number, with dispatchers that have the training and expertise to ask the right questions and decide whether to dispatch the call to EMS, police, or some drug and alcohol abuse organization if there is a partnership. Then the police will get involved if that is necessary, at the discretion of whoever it is decided has that discretion. It would be important to have one number to call, so that people who are not educated about a situation do not need to try and figure out which number to call. It is important to think about the entrance of a call and how it is dispersed.

Ms. Landry asked for Sheriff Rivera’s perspective on this and information on how this is done now. Sheriff Rivera replied that 911 calls go to Concord and then Concord decides where to route the call. He continued that the dispatchers’ primary goal is to get the help to the person as quickly as possible. They are not trained to do triage or have a checklist to decide; they are just trying to get someone there to help, and the person who goes to help decides whether they need to call in EMS or others. This would be an entirely new ballgame, if they would be training dispatchers to triage calls and decide whether to send police, ambulance, or social services to the call. He is not ready to answer this. It is an entirely different way of looking at it.

Chief Russo stated that the police is in the dispatch business as well. He continued that anything would have to start at the state level, because the state transfers 911 calls to Cheshire County or KPD dispatch. If the KPD then goes through another question and answer period, they could be delaying response by minutes, which adds to whatever amount of time it took the state dispatcher to get the basic information needed to transfer the call to the KPD. He is not disagreeing with this method because he knows it works in some larger communities, but it is something that

would have to start at the top rather than the bottom. There are some very serious concerns with starting at the bottom rather than the top (the state 911 system).

Ms. Landry stated that maybe learning more about the mobile mental health units would help; maybe they have done a lot of this homework already and have some insight that could prevent this committee from having to figure this all out. She will look into this for the committee. Chief Russo replied that he thinks she will find they are not exactly what she thinks they are. In three locations they are state-funded, mandated by court. There is lack of funding in some secondary programs. He does not think any are actually riding with police officers. He and MFS have been talking about a hybrid model but they are nowhere near even initial talks. It all rolls together with what they were just saying about who should initially respond. He encourages the committee to talk to people running those types of organizations to see what they actually think about this. The answers might be a little different, for unexpected reasons. The KPD is short nine people right now and [mental health organizations] do not have the workforce either. There are a lot of things rolled into some of these solutions. He is a proponent of them – he would love to have an ACERT and PET Officer in Keene already. It is a workforce issue. That has to be solved in order to move to these next good steps.

Co-Chair Morris thanked everyone for the good work they have done since the last meeting. She asked where they want to go from here. She heard that maybe each group would want to have speakers from each topic/sector come in and update the committee on what is already happening because it would help the committee understand what needs to be done. It would be helpful to even just get information from people, like tonight, to help shape some of the committee's recommendations, because there are things that the committee just does not know. Is that the direction they want to go next? Or do people have other ideas?

Co-Chair Van Wickler stated that he agrees. He continued that work groups need to sit down together and process what they have heard and discussed tonight. He has some ideas for the work group he is in and information he could gather and bring back to this group. This is a great start. Everyone is really engaged and providing exceptional feedback, which is encouraging. He hopes it materializes into something good. They have talked a lot about training, retooling, and education, but they have not talked about culture yet. That is part of what his presentation to the Governor's committee will be next week. People can be certified and trained yet have a culture in their midst that is not good, and secretive. That is what they have to drill down on – how to manage that, not just locally, but nationally. These work groups are off to a tremendous start. He is learning a lot and hopes others are, too. If they can put together a report saying what they have learned, even if it is short of recommends that cannot happen due to fiscal or other reasons, a lot of good has already come out of this committee and he is glad to be a part of it.

7) Plan for Public Input

Co-Chair Morris stated that she wonders if they can have an online forum of some sort, for people to give the committee feedback and ideas, in case they cannot come to the meetings. Another idea is for each work group to hold a listening session in a public meeting like this. They should think about how each group can craft some really good questions for the public, to

get the answers the committee needs in order to create a really, really detailed document. That is what she was thinking but she is open to other thoughts. She wishes they could meet in person with coffee and donuts.

Ms. Landry stated that they can look at the ways that other committees have done this. She imagines there will be a lot of public interest. She continued that they have had 4 to 6 people from the public at each meeting. If that low number continues it might be easy enough to include public input in the meetings. Or they could set aside one meeting every other month, or every month, and have public input on the agenda. If they do a forum, which they are at liberty to do, it would be big. They would need to be prepared for that scope. Or they could limit a public forum to specific topics or questions, or do a survey. There are options out there.

Co-Chair Morris stated that someone in the chat box asks that the Jonathan Daniels Center for Social Responsibility be included in the social, community, and education work group discussions when possible. She thanked Mary Jenson from the Historical Society for that input.

Co-Chair Morris suggested the work groups talk about how they want to get input from the public, and then they can come back together as a committee to make a decision. It would be fine to table it until next time. Co-Chair Van Wickler agreed and stated that this is a lot to process and he has a lot of ideas. Public input is important and they have to make sure they do it right, to get maximum participation. They need to give this the attention it deserves.

8) Next Meeting – Agenda Items and Schedule

Co-Chair Morris asked if they have future meetings scheduled. Ms. Landry stated that the committee had decided to meet every three weeks. Discussion ensued. Co-Chair Morris that the next meeting is September 3, at 5:00 PM. She continued that work groups can meet before then. There being no further business, Co-Chair Morris adjourned the meeting at 7:37 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Britta Reida, Minute Taker