

**MINUTES OF THE  
BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS RETREAT  
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2012**

A meeting of the Board of Police Commissioners of Kansas City, Missouri was held on Friday, November 9, 2012, at the Gem Theater, 1601 E. 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Kansas City, Missouri.

**PRESENT:**

Commissioner Lisa T. Pelofsky, President  
Commissioner Alvin L. Brooks, Vice President  
Commissioner Angela Wasson-Hunt, Treasurer  
Commissioner Patrick A. McInerney, Member  
Mayor Sylvester "Sly" James, Jr., Member  
Darryl Forté, Chief of Police  
Mr. David V. Kenner, Secretary/Attorney

The meeting was called to order at 9:16 a.m. by Commissioner Pelofsky.

Ms. Denise McNerney facilitated this retreat with a presentation which encompassed growth and change; challenges faced by Boards, characteristics and practices of high impact Boards, and planning for the future. She suggested examining the Chief's strategic objectives to develop some clarity as to what the Board's role is in meeting these objectives.

Ms. McNerney said planning alone does not create organizational excellence, it also requires a high level strategy and vision. Strong consideration must be given to the organizational culture, because if the culture is not in line with the plan it will not be accomplished.

Ms. McNerney discussed the four stages of growth and change in an organization:

## Minutes of Board Business Session, November 9, 2012

- 1) Start up – the early, chaotic and creative time when organizational strategy and projects are just beginning.
- 2) Grown and stability – a more consistent growth period with a focus on maintaining operations.
- 3) Peak – the organization is in full swing. This phase requires a new period of growth to allow for greater levels of development and achievement.
- 4) Decline – if greater levels of development are not achieved the organization will decline.

Commissioner Brooks stated that he feels the police department realized its peak prior to Darryl Forté's appointment as Chief of Police, and Commissioner Brooks views this as a new start up phase. He said there is some concern as it relates to officers and the fear of change which if prevalent will cause the organization to decline.

Mayor James said he feels that some aspects of the organization are ascending toward phase 3, some may be transformational, and others are in decline. He said this cannot be viewed as one large component, it has many segments.

Commissioner Pelofsky said there is a difference in where the leadership of the police department is versus the implementation of new ideas. In some aspects the police department is moving forward and some aspects have not changed.

Mayor James asked for some clarity surrounding this discussion. He asked if this retreat is being held to discuss policing strategy, the Board, policy, or operations.

Commissioner McInerney said the core question is what is the role of the police board? He said there is a lack of clarity surrounding this topic.

## **Minutes of Board Business Session, November 9, 2012**

Ms. McNerney said she is setting the foundation for the discussion about the Board's role and how the members execute that role and the dynamics of the role. She provided a list entitled the "The 7 Realities of Nonprofit Boards" which included the fact that Board members do not have enough time to give to the task; Boards have imperfect knowledge to make good decisions; composition of a Board is typically haphazard; Boards rarely suffer consequences for poor performance; and Boards must rely heavily on the Chief Executive.

Ms. McNerney said the Board must work in partnership with the Chief for an adequate flow of necessary information to help the Board to do their job effectively.

Commissioner Pelofsky said the Board members are only as effective as the amount of training, preparation and guidance received. Commissioner Pelofsky said she received no orientation or preparation when appointed as a Board member and Commissioner Wasson-Hunt said she received a lot when she was appointed as a Board member during her first term. Mayor James said he received some preparation from Commissioner McNerney and David Kenner. Commissioner Pelofsky asked who is responsible for training the new Board members. Chief Forté said it is the Board's responsibility. Ms. McNerney agreed and recommended that the Board develop a clear initial orientation process as well as on-going Board development.

Mayor James said this Board lacks an Executive Director which differs from the position of Chief Executive. The Executive Director would do the majority of the day-to-day work and act as a liaison between the Board and the

## **Minutes of Board Business Session, November 9, 2012**

Chief Executive. Commissioner Wasson-Hunt said the statute allows the Board to have a business manager and said the Board has utilized one in the past. The Board agrees that having a business manager (Executive Director) would be extremely helpful.

Commissioner Brooks said he would like someone from within the Department to fulfill this role. Mayor James disagreed saying in some instances that will work; however, the chain of command and the paramilitary structure build in a bias that is not conducive to the free flow of information. He said as Mayor he would not feel comfortable divulging certain information to someone who may not necessarily be loyal to the Board. He recommended that this person be neutral to the Board and he does not feel that a police department member could fulfill this position in all circumstances.

Ms. McNerney said the person in this position should have loyalty to the mission of the police department. Commissioner McNerney said there is a difference between loyalty and effectiveness which is dependent upon the flow of information which is tightly controlled by the command staff. He said the Board is often asked to make significant decisions with very little information. This position should have the goal of increasing the flow of information in both directions.

Chief Forté said he has someone in mind for this position from within the police department; however, he is not opposed to finding someone from outside the police department as well.

The meeting took a recess at 10:22 a.m. and resumed at 10:29 a.m.

## **Minutes of Board Business Session, November 9, 2012**

Ms. McNerney discussed events in life and how we interpret them differently based on our experiences. She said an individual's interpretation of events can sometimes lead to misinformation and miscommunication. Commissioner Pelofsky said misinformation as a result of Board meetings is a frequent occurrence.

Commissioner Brooks said Board members change and the police department staff remains the same. This at times can cause conflict because each Board has different requirements of the staff. Commissioner Brooks said at times when the Board asks questions or makes requests of the staff it is sometimes met with resistance. Ms. McNerney said one way to resolve this issue is to "lead with your intention." She explained that leading with your intention means to explain why a question is being asked or a request is being made prior to asking which helps others to understand why the request is being made.

Ms. McNerney discussed some of the characteristics of high impact Boards and made the following suggestions.

- 1) Take accountability for their performance as a Board.
- 2) Make a difference measured by resources, performance and influence.
- 3) Develop a leading/partner role with staff, rather than audience.
- 4) Conduct an annual Board self evaluation; something every high impact board does.
- 5) Develop an explicit Board job description.
- 6) The Board must manage its own conflicts.

Commissioner McNerney said that he thought it was very important to develop a Board job description.

## **Minutes of Board Business Session, November 9, 2012**

Mayor James said he would like the Board to determine if he is considered a Board member or the Mayor because depending on circumstances he can fall into either category. Commissioner McNerney said the Mayor James has a position on the police board because of his position of Mayor. David Kenner said there is a perceived conflict of interest in that the Mayor may be looking out for the City's best interest rather than the police department's best interest. The Mayor asked how can there be one without the other. Commissioner Pelofsky said it can be perceived at times that the Mayor is negotiating with himself and against himself. Commissioner McNerney said Mayor James brings the strength of his position and the Mayor's perspective to the Board. Commissioner McNerney stated that the statute says it is the police board's obligation to consider what the Mayor has to say.

The Board discussed the dynamics at Board meetings when interacting with police department staff. Ms. McNerney suggested ways that the Board members could lead with their intention at these meetings. Ms. McNerney said leading with an intention is a way to avoid frustration.

The Board went into special closed session at 11:26 a.m. to discuss personnel matters.

The Mayor left the meeting at 12:17 p.m.

A motion was made by Commissioner Brooks with a second by Commissioner Wasson-Hunt to re-open the meeting at 12:28 p.m. The vote was 4-0 in favor. Following polling Commissioner Brooks voted aye, Commissioner

## **Minutes of Board Business Session, November 9, 2012**

McNerney voted aye, Commissioner Pelofsky voted aye, and Commissioner Wasson-Hunt voted aye.

In conclusion, Ms. McNerney discussed some of the desired outcomes of the retreat such as to create a supportive environment; align clear goals and priorities; holding each other accountable for effective communication and problem solving and doing so in a supportive manner. Ms. McNerney will provide a summary and a list of tasks for the Board members.

The Board supports the idea of utilizing a business manager and wants to have more discussion about this. Ms. McNerney said one of the first steps is to determine if the command staff is supportive of this idea and to determine what is the goal and purpose of this position. Commissioner Wasson-Hunt suggested that a business session be held in December 2012 to discuss this item. She said she wants to streamline the business sessions and she does not want a Board book prepared.

Chief Forté left the meeting at 12:38 p.m.

Ms. McNerney said she will develop suggestions for a job description for the position of business manager and she will also compile a suggested performance review process and an instrument to use for the performance reviews. She will also develop suggestions for a Board member job description and for new Board member orientation.

The Board said they will address the topic of “meeting effectiveness” at the November 20 Board meeting. This item will be included on the November 20 agenda under Commissioner Pelofsky’s name.

**Minutes of Board Business Session, November 9, 2012**

With regard to the business manager position, Commissioner McNerney said he does not feel it should be a member of the chain of command due to the fact that a current sworn officer has taken an oath to follow the Chief's directives. Commissioner McNerney said the allegiance must be both to the Chief and the Board. Commissioner Brooks said he feels someone in the position of major would be appropriate. Ms. McNerney said the biggest challenge will be the accountability and authority of this position. Commissioner Pelofsky said she feels that a law enforcement member would be preferred due to their ability to get access to information. Commissioner Brooks said Chief Forté needs to be a part of this discussion. The Board agreed.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wasson-Hunt with a second by Commissioner Brooks to go into special closed session to discuss personnel issues. Following polling Commissioner Brooks voted aye, Commissioner McNerney voted aye, Commissioner Pelofsky voted aye, and Commissioner Wasson-Hunt voted aye.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:46 p.m.

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President

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Secretary/Attorney