

August 18, 2022

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

**Hon. Kim L. Bright, Chair
Civilian Review Board
Aurora, IL**

It has been an honor to serve the citizens of Aurora, IL as the first Chair of the Civilian Review Board (CRB).

Resulting from the City-wide CHANGE initiative as part of the national reckoning following the murder of George Floyd, the CRB is a significant step towards building bridges between citizens and the police in our City.

I am grateful to all the Aurora citizens who contributed to the CHANGE discussions, testified during the CRB's public meetings, and participated in our public outreach and education activities. During my tenure, I was blessed to hear first-hand the concerns expressed by City residents and to be part of the solutions that we all hope will contribute to greater police accountability and respectful relationships between citizens and police in all wards of our City.

As the first Chair of the CRB, I was fortunate to play a role in addressing the many challenges the Board faced in establishing itself during its first year of operation which included technology setbacks and other limitations. Board member email accounts were hacked early on leading to severe technology restrictions to protect confidential information shared as part of the Board's deliberations. Board members worked diligently to overcome the obstacles it faced and I applaud all the inaugural Board members for their perseverance.

My thanks go to Mayor Richard C. Irvin and his administration for the support extended to the CRB. As a completely volunteer Board with no budget of its own, the CRB relies extensively on City staff to facilitate its day-to-day operations, including our communications, and technology needs.

Deepest gratitude goes to the members of the City Council who readily partnered with the CRB on a series of public education and outreach events held throughout the City. The willingness of our City Aldermen to join with CRB members in these Meet and Greet sessions spoke volumes about their support for the CRB's mission. Their pledges of ongoing support are critical to the CRB's future success and definitely appreciated.

In addition, Police Chief Keith Cross is recognized for his support. He participated in the CRB member training prior to taking his office and always demonstrates a sincere willingness to collaborate with the CRB as evidenced by his commitment of resources and attendance at our Community Conversation on mental health issues held in May 2022. On case reviews, the Board benefitted greatly from the assistance of Deputy Chief Matt Thomas and other APD officers.

In discharging the duties as Board Chair, I was privileged to represent the CRB at public events and in interviews with the press. I also met with Kane County States Attorney Jamie Mosser to discuss areas of common interest that may provide the basis for future collaboration.

Special thanks go to Deputy Chief of Staff Alexandra Voigt, Board Secretary Chanel Kassis, and Legal Counsel Deborah Lang who assisted with our day-to-day operations. Diversity and Communications Staff members Clayton Muhammad, Michele Williams Clark, and Denzel Lee deserve special recognition and deep appreciation.

By far the best aspect of my tenure as Chair was the opportunity to work with the eight other inaugural members of the Board: Dr. Timothy Brown, Rajesh Char, Dr. Vincent Gaddis, Principal Jacqueline Gibson, Ginger Ingram, Vice Chair Andrea Rios McMillian, Lily Rocha, and Curtis Wilson. I wish them all the highest success in their future endeavors.

The Civilian Review Board's efforts are ongoing as there is much more to be done. I encourage all citizens, elected and appointed officials, law enforcement, civic agencies, and community organizations to continue to engage with the CRB and its work. Only by all of us working together for change and greater transparency will we ensure that the City of Aurora is the safe community respectful of all its citizens that we all envision.

With warmest regards and blessings,

Kim L. Bright

Hon. Kim L. Bright, Chair 2021-2022
Civilian Review Board
Aurora, IL

Civilian Review Board Highlights 2021-2022

A result of the City-wide CHANGE initiative initiated as part of the national reckoning following the murder of George Floyd, the CRB is a significant step towards building bridges between citizens and the police in our city.

Following extensive training, the inaugural members of the Board, a diverse group of nine volunteer members from wards throughout the City of Aurora, were sworn in on August 19, 2022:

- Hon. Kim L. Bright
 - Timothy Brown, Psy.D.
 - Rajesh Char
 - Vincent Gaddis, Ph.D.
 - Jacqueline Gibson
 - Ginger Ingram
 - Andrea Rios McMillian
 - Lily Rocha
 - Curtis Wilson
- During monthly meetings on the third Thursdays of the month, Board members listened to public comment and fulfilled their responsibilities under the Board's authorizing ordinance.

Board members worked diligently towards goals focused on Connections, Cornerstone (Foundation and Structure), Communications, Coalition Building and Public Education, Complaints and Compliments, and Collaboration with Law Enforcement throughout the year.

Highlights of the Board's work follow.

Administrative Matters

- At its August 19, 2021 meeting, Board members set about the task of creating a foundation for its operations, electing Hon. Kim L. Bright as Chair and Member Andrea Rios McMillian as Vice Chair.
- Among the Board's first actions were to approve a workplan and Strategic Plan to guide its work over the 2021-2022 fiscal year focused on Connections, Cornerstone (Foundation and Structure), Communications, Coalition Building and Public Education, Complaints and Compliments, and Collaboration with Law Enforcement.
- At its January 20, 2022 meeting CRB members approved the following proposals consistent with its approved Workplan and Strategic Plan for 2021-2022:

Recommended Complaints Process (Lead: Member Rocha);

Recommended Compliments Process (Lead: Member Ingram);

Outreach Activity #1 Meet the CRB Members – Listening Tour with City Aldermen (Lead: Member Gibson); and

Recommended Outreach Activity #2 APD Interactions with citizens with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (Lead: Member Brown)

Policies and Procedures

Pursuant to its authorizing ordinance, Board members approved the following policies and procedures to govern its operations:

Procedures for Case Consideration – processes used during Board consideration of case referrals from APD and approval of Recommendations to the Chief of Police

Appearance of Members by Electronic Means – processes for Board members to appear by electronic means when a quorum is present in person consistent with the general policies governing City Boards and Commissions

Record of CRB actions and documentation on City SharePoint site

Status Report for pending Civilian Complaints

Review of APD Referrals of Civilian Complaints

Board responsibilities included reviewing and making recommendations to the Chief of Police on the disposition of four complaints filed by Aurora citizens alleging misconduct by Aurora Police Department officers. The Board requested additional information as appropriate to consider each case fully. The Board made additional recommendations to enhance processing case reviews including requesting to receive complete documentation in case files. Additionally, the Board made training policy recommendations including recommending that officers be reminded of the duty of care owed to protect possessions of suspects during arrests.

Citizen Complaints and Compliments Processes on CRB Webpage

Board members approved and worked on forms and processes for its webpage to allow Aurora citizens to file complaints alleging misconduct against police officers. To provide a balance of perspectives, the Board also approved a compliments form for citizens to note positive experiences with City police. Having both an avenue for citizen complaints and an avenue for citizen compliments is consistent with best practices implemented by other civilian oversight boards in Illinois and other states.

Community Outreach and Public Education – Mental Health

The Board approved two series of outreach activities during its first year of operation.

The first series focused on law enforcement interactions with persons with mental impairments. The first program in this series, **“Community Conversation: How to Access Emergency Services for Persons with Emotional, Mental, or Intellectual Challenges”** was held on May 21, 2022 (10:00 am – 11:30 am) at the Aurora Public Library (Santori Branch 101 S. River Street Aurora, IL).

The program was hosted in Partnership with City of Aurora Police Department, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, Kane-South, Dekalb and Kendall Counties, and the Glen Ellyn Area Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated.

The community-wide program addressed the needs of the community and those of First Responders by educating citizens on how First Responders handle interactions with citizens with emotional, mental, or intellectual challenges.

Frequently citizens experiencing mental health challenges come into contact with First Responders, including members of the Aurora Police Department. Highly publicized fatalities in other cities involving citizens with similar challenges make this topic a necessary one to highlight the way similar cases are handled in the City of Aurora.

Participants heard from members from the Aurora Police Department, including the Telecommunication -Dispatch Center and the mental health workers assigned to the Aurora Police Department. They received guidance on how to inform First Responders about the circumstances leading to the call and details about the individual involved. The First Responders detailed what services they are able to provide in these often intensely stressful situations. Mental health and other experts also engaged in the discussion.

- **Community Outreach and Public Education – Meet and Greet Listening Tour with City Aldermen**

CRB Listening Tour and Meet and Greet Events with City Aldermen

June 23, 2022 Wards 2 and 7
Alderwoman Juany Garza
Alderwoman Scheketa Hart-Burns
@ Main Baptist Church
CRB Member Jacqueline Gibson

July 13, 2022 Ward 10
Alderwoman Shweta Baid
Alderman-at-Large Sherman Jenkins
@ Cathedral of Grace St. John AME Church

CRB Members Chair Kim L. Bright and Rajesh Char

July 27, 2022 Wards 8 and 9

Alderwoman Patty Smith

Alderman Edward Bugg

@New Song Community Church

CRB Members Vice Chair Andrea McMillian and Timothy Brown,
Psy.D.

August 3, 2022 Ward 1

Alderman Emmanuel Llamas

Alderman-at-Large Ron Woerman

@Marywood Community Center

CRB Member Vincent Gaddis, Ph.D.

August 22, 2022

Wards 3 and 4

Alderman Ted Messiacos

Alderman Bill Donnell

@Phillips Park Visitor Center

CRB Member Ginger Ingraham

To Be Scheduled Fall 2022

Wards 5 and 6

Alderman Carl Franco

Alderman Michael B. Saville

CRB Members Lily Rocha and Curtis Wilson