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Safety Committee

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Agency: [Cleveland City Council](#)

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Summary

- Cleveland and its police department are still trying to navigate the changing landscape of the city and the nature of policing while meeting expectations of the federal consent decree.
- There were 295 job applications submitted to the police department in the third quarter.
- The high pass-over rate seems to indicate a mismatch between applicants and the job requirements. While this is not unique to law enforcement, it has become a sticking point for the council and the community.
- Key positions within the safety department's administrative team are also waiting to be filled.

Follow-Up Questions

- Operation 216 was touted as a success with an increase in arrests for violent offenders. Is the surge ongoing? Has the city or state considered continuing the partnership until staffing levels in CDP increase significantly?
- Council has requested the return of brevity reports. If granted, are the reports available to the public?

Notes

Attendance:

Mike Polensek, Ward 8, Safety Committee chair

Joe Jones, Ward 1

Deborah Gray, Ward 4

Richard Starr, Ward 5

Blaine Griffin, Ward 6, council president

Stephanie Howse-Jones, Ward 7

Kevin Conwell, Ward 9

Danny Kelly, Ward 11

Kris Harsh, Ward 13
Charles Slife, Ward 17

Cleveland City Council's Safety Committee meeting began at approximately 10:12 a.m. The meeting provided an overview of the agencies within the Department of Public Safety. No ordinances were proposed or passed.

Department of Justice-Consent Decree

Karrie Howard, director of the Department of Public Safety, began by discussing how the department has performed under the consent decree. Leigh Anderson was appointed executive director of the Police Accountability Team for Cleveland, which is run by the city's law department.

Anderson stated that her role is to steer the department into full compliance with the consent decree by working internally on matters of crisis intervention and removing bias and externally with the Department of Justice (DOJ) and monitoring team. She will provide a full report on the team's progress next month.

Daniel Fay serves as the deputy chief of administrative operations. He highlighted some of the requirements of the DOJ for the Cleveland Division of Police, which includes the following (timestamp 25:27-28:00):

- Recruitment
- Training
- Independent monitor review
- Additional personnel
 - Implementation coordinator
 - Civilian head of Internal Affairs
 - Crisis intervention
 - Additional IT positions
- Information technology
 - Data/records management

There are three openings for data analysts. The police inspector general position is also open. Per Howard, this role is a requirement of the DOJ. The consent decree has been amended to allow the inspector general to report to the safety director instead of the chief of police.

Council Member Slife asked how Issue 38, regarding participatory budgeting, may affect the city's compliance with the consent decree and further impact CDP. Chair Polensek expressed the importance of adhering to the consent decree and maintaining the budget for the DOJ (timestamp 53:07-56:23).

Corrections

Per Howard, the City of Cleveland does not operate the county jail but contracts with Cuyahoga County to house people charged with crimes (timestamp 1:17:23-1:17:40).

Per Lisa Scafidi, jail superintendent, the cost for each person detained in jail is \$99 per day.

Council Member Jones inquired about the number of daily arrests (timestamp 1:26:24-1:29:20). Scafidi stated that the number of arrests daily is less than 20 (timestamp 1:28:19-1:28:36). Howard and Scafidi said that arrests have decreased over the years due to criminal justice reform measures and process changes (timestamp 1:30:20-1:32:18).

Polensek and Council Member Howse-Jones both talked about how the decision to move the county jail will substantially impact Cleveland and its residents.

Staffing/recruitment

The shortage of police officers has been one of the biggest issues facing the city the past year. Howard said that many cities and job sectors are having staffing problems.

Per Fay, there are 1,211 sworn officers in the department (timestamp 3:01:25-3:01:40). Since January 2022, 301 officers have left the force; 133 have left this year, down from 168 in 2022. There are currently 954 patrol officers and 17 recruits in the academy.

Fay later discussed that patrol officers tend to leave three to five years into the job (timestamp 4:59:02-4:59:50). The officers who remain are working overtime, with \$20 million in overtime already paid out this year. Fay said \$13 million was budgeted. (timestamp 3:34:27-3:35:36).

Increasing officer pay has been an important tool in boosting recruitment. Under the new contract, patrol officers can earn the top patrol rank in five years. Here are the annual salaries for patrol officers: (4:49:19-4:49:32, 4:53:06-4:53:29).

- Patrol Officer 4 (police academy graduate): \$59,924

- Patrol Officer 3: \$63,593
- Patrol Officer 2: \$65,811
- Patrol Officer 1: \$73,868

Det. Felton Collier discussed the department's recruiting challenges. He said many prospective candidates worry about a lack of support for police officers. The notion of defunding police has been a deterrent for applicants, he said, adding that there is also competition from other cities for prospective candidates.

Collier said the pay increase for recruits has helped attract more applicants. The department has also enhanced its social media presence to reach more young adults and guide applicants through the application process. There have been approximately 295 applicants for the Cleveland police force for the third quarter.

Additionally, weekly conditioning events helped prospective applicants acquire the fitness needed for the job.

Another endeavor is the young adult ambassador program. The yearlong program for adults ages 18 to 26 offers personal development along with exposure to careers in fire, police and EMS.

Council Member Harsh said his constituents are concerned about the lack of traffic enforcement and the high number of police applicants who've been passed over.

Howard said information coming out soon will detail the department's hiring decision process.

Fay said that the 1-in-10 selection process is overseen by Chief of Police Wayne Drummond, Howard, Fay, Commander Mark Maguth, and members of the personnel unit. He also stated that approximately 10% of police candidates are hired nationally (timestamp 5:19:34-5:19:48).

Polensek said council members are preparing questions and requests for city departments prior to the budget season. The goal is to allow more time for departments to respond to council inquiries for information and updates.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:40 p.m.

Links

[The Consent Decree-Cleveland](#)

[Cleveland Police Department-Facebook](#)

[Public Safety Ambassador program](#)

[International Association of Chiefs of Police](#)

[The Marshall Project: It's not just a police problem. Americans are opting out of government jobs](#)

[WKYC-After heated debate, Cuyahoga Council approves \\$38 million land purchase for new jail in Garfield Heights](#)

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