



Commission on Police Practices

Attached is a letter to the Public Safety Committee from the Commission on Police Practices General Counsel. Please feel free to contact me if you any questions or concerns.

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Commission on Police Practices

DATE: February 6, 2025

TO: Members of the Public Safety Committee
San Diego City Council

FROM: Douglas Case, Chair, Commission on Police Practices
via Bart Miesfeld, General Counsel
Commission on Police Practices

SUBJECT: PROPOSED CHANGES TO CITY OF SAN DIEGO MUNICIPAL CODE
SECTIONS GOVERNING THE COMMISSION ON POLICE PRACTICES

Yesterday (February 5), all members of Commission on Police Practices (CPP) received a letter, via email, from Councilmember Marni von Wilpert, Chair of the Public Safety Committee, inviting us to the February 12, 2025 meeting of the Public Safety Committee to discuss *unspecified* changes to “the CPP’s structure, processes, and operational guidelines.”

At the Commission’s meeting last night (February 5), we adopted a motion “to request the City Council Public Safety Committee delay any action on proposed amendments to the CPP implementation ordinance until the Commission and the community have sufficient time to review the proposals and provide input.” More specifically, we strongly oppose any motion at your February 12 meeting to direct the City Attorney to develop language for such proposals. It is premature to take any actions until the Commission and the community have a chance to study and weigh in on any proposed changes.

Members of the Commission do plan to accept the invitation to attend the Public Safety Committee to discuss the issues. They will be speaking *as individuals* and not on behalf of the Commission, since the Commission has not voted on a position on any proposals.

After hearing the Public Safety Committee’s concerns and learning what specific changes are under consideration, we will hold a community hearing at our March 5, 2025 Commission meeting. Afterward, the Commission will vote on recommendations for any ordinance changes. The meeting will be held at 5:00 p.m. at Southeastern San Diego Live Well Center, 5101 Market Street. We invite you and/or members of your staff to attend and *listen* to the public comments from the community and the Commission’s deliberations. The meeting will be recorded and the video will be available on the Commission’s website.

The independent Commission on Police Practices was established as a result of a multiyear, community-driven effort. In November 2020, the voters of San Diego approved Measure B by an overwhelming 75%. After the election, the interim Commission on Police Practices held multiple community townhalls to get input on the structure and processes of the Commission. The interim Commission assimilated and reviewed these community voices and submitted extensive and detailed recommendations to the City Council. The City Council incorporated most, but not all, of the recommendations into the first draft of the Commission’s implementation ordinance. Further, the interim Commission submitted

detailed feedback on the first draft, which were taken into consideration in drafting the final version.

Given the extensive and thoughtful process utilized in creating the implementation ordinance, we believe that it would be presumptuous for the Public Safety Committee to vote to move changes forward on February 12 – with only one week’s notice to the Commission, and without any specificity on changes being proposed.

Councilmember von Wilpert’s letter to Commissioners references recommendations submitted in the exit letters from our former Executive Director and Outside Counsel. The exit letters were requested in order to gain a thorough understanding of their unanticipated departures. The Commission holds both men in high regard and respects their perspectives. However, it is clear from the public and Commissioner comments at last night’s Commission meeting, that there is not a consensus on some of their recommendations – and in fact it became clear that there is substantial opposition to some of their suggestions.

We look forward to discussions with you on ways to strengthen the effectiveness of the Commission in order to best fulfill our mission. Only through collaboration and respect for community input can this objective be achieved.

We appreciate Councilmember von Wilpert’s commitment, as stated in her letter to us, that “the City Council has a duty to ensure that the Commission is equipped with the necessary resources, support, and structural foundation to operate effectively.”

cc: Members of the City Council
Mayor Todd Gloria
Members of the Commission