


CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE MEMORANDUM
#54-2022

DATE: Nov. 14, 2022

TO: Honorable Mayor Meredith Leighty and City Council Members

FROM: Heather Geyer, City Manager 

SUBJECT: Community Co-Production Policing Advisory Board Liaison Position

PURPOSE

At the request of Council member Nicholas Walker, a discussion item was added to the Nov. 14 agenda for City Council to discuss the Community Co-Production Policing (CCPP) Advisory Board liaison position.

BACKGROUND

City Council held a CCPP Advisory Board visioning workshop on Sept. 29, 2022. City Council discussed the BerryDunn assessment recommendations and changes to the Board. Staff provided background materials for this workshop and Council is encouraged to reference those materials for this discussion.

City Council will be meeting with members of the CCPP Board for a dinner workshop on Tues., Nov. 15 to discuss Council's vision for the Board moving forward. Attachments are being provided below related to the discussion.

Related to the Council liaison position, Ordinance No. 1802, Series of 2020, adopted on Dec.14, 2020, states:

Section 4-8-2(b). The Board shall consist of thirteen (13) members appointed by the City Council and one (1) ex-officio non-voting member who shall be a member of the City Council.

BUDGET/TIME IMPLICATIONS

This item is for informational purposes only.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

This item is for informational purposes only.

STAFF REFERENCE

If Council members have any questions, please contact Heather Geyer, City Manager, at hgeyer@northglenn.org or 303.450.8706.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Briana Mesa resignation letter
2. Terri Thompson resignation letter
3. BerryDunn Assessment

BRIANA MESA


May 1, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing today to formally resign my appointed position as Vice Chair and the Ward 4 Representative of the Community Co-Production Policing Advisory Board effective immediately. I was appointed in July 2021 and formally started on the board in August 2021. I wanted to join the Board because I deeply believe in the Community Policing philosophy and also was so proud of Northglenn for being at the forefront of implementing Community Based Policing. However, since my appointment, the CCPP Board has experienced consistent turnover and has been in constant turmoil. We have not been able to accomplish our goals and it seems we are consistently sent back to square one due to infighting and dissent.

There are many instances where I have been dissatisfied with the Board. I have discussed those instances with my City Council Representative, Jenny Willford (who elevated the concerns to the City Manager) and Assistant to the City Manager Rupa Venkatesh. During my first meeting, I was not introduced to the other board members, was told that I needed to watch videos online to catch-up and was essentially thrown into the work. I was not offered the opportunity to meet Chief May, Deputy Chief Darlin or Commander Walts but rather had to meet them when they came to present to the Board. There was no onboarding process. We have to use Robert's Rules of Order – or some variation of those – during the meetings even though we have not been formally trained and/or given rationale about why these parliamentary procedures should apply to a voluntary city board. These are just a few instances where I did not feel like I belonged and/or my presence did not matter and unfortunately these first experiences are reflective of my entire tenure on the Board.

I believe that if you are dissatisfied with something, then you need to step up to change it and I truly believed that with Terri Thompson as Chair and myself as Vice Chair, we were going to be able to rally folks around our common cause. However, in the two months since I have held this position, I continually ask myself “Who runs this board?” I believe the answer to that question should be the Chair, but in reality the Chair and Vice Chair are consistently up against both the City Council Liaison – Shannon Lukeman-Hiromasa – and Rupa Venkatesh who seem to have their own agendas. Specifically, Both Shannon and Rupa have a vision for the work that the board should do, but they are not bringing the rest of the Board along and it seems to be a top-down approach on a board that is meant to be community driven. When we meet to discuss an agenda, Shannon and Rupa push back on ideas that both myself and Terri have. During the meetings, Shannon and Rupa both engage in hushed side-conversations and generally seem exasperated by the work that Terri and I are trying to accomplish. Prior to my appointment to the Board, Shannon was the Ward 4 Representative. Her seat was vacated with her appointment to the City Council. She has said that she was planning on running for Chair and has her own agenda. It is clear that she may be unable to serve on the Board as a Council Liaison without being in control of the board or the processes as she is much more of an active participant in the meetings.

Since joining this volunteer board, I have spent hours trying to figure out how to move the conversation forward, to make this work and instead, I have lost sleep. My family, emotional well-being and work as a school leader take precedence over a volunteer position. I still deeply believe in our city, our police department and the officers that serve. I believe that I can continue to support our community in other ways that will have less bureaucratic red-tape. I still believe in the spirit of this board and know that with the right people, the Board will be able to accomplish the mission but I do wonder what it will take to make this board successful given the challenges that continue to be present. I will still be cheering you on from the sidelines.

Sincerely,

Briana Mesa

Terri S. Thompson

May 1, 2022

Dear Mayor Leighty, City Council Members, Heather Geyer, Chief May, Rupa Venkatesh, and CCPP Advisory Board Members.

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to you to inform you of my resignation from the community at large position I hold on the Community Co-Production Policing Advisory Board effective immediately. I have served on the board since the beginning of this board and have recently served as the chair of the board.

As many of you are aware, I resigned in December of last year because of ongoing issues that had derailed our board. I rescinded my resignation after conversations with Heather who addressed my concerns. I was invigorated because I value the voice of all board members, knew that we had clear purposes outlined in the ordinance that created CCPP, and believed that I could help this board move successfully forward. I ran for chair of the board believing that I could make a positive difference.

During our time as elected chair and vice chair, Briana Mesa and I have worked to bring all voices on the board forward, equally, respectfully. We have been successful in bringing the PD monthly report into the monthly meetings and defining our purpose for the board to get all board members on the same page. We have had positive meetings and worked on revising the bylaws (where there are still needed revisions) which was a stark difference from the 2021 board meetings. This year, there has been positive energy and lively conversations all centered on the purpose of the work we aspire to do to bridge the community and the PD. The energy from board members is markedly different. New members to the board have brought positivity as well.

When I was elected, I immediately spent time trying to understand how our city government operates. I asked a lot of questions to a variety of people. I was directed to ask questions through Rupa Venkatesh and Councilmember Lukemon-Hiramosa if I needed any information or had questions. I was discouraged from contacting the chief. I followed that process. This board has the purpose to increase transparency with the PD. Filtering my thoughts through other people is not how communication works. I felt uncomfortable asking questions or having direct conversation with police personnel which seems counterintuitive to me.

We have tried to continue to move the board forward but have felt pushback on ideas or challenged by our ideas. The pushback was not from the voting members of the board. It all circles back to the same question of who is in charge of leading the board? I will tell you that I do not believe that it is the chair and vice chair who are the active leaders of this board. Perhaps I was wrong for interpreting the ordinance as meaning that the board elected leadership and board members were the leadership. Either way, other than presiding over meetings, I believe that as a chair I am unnecessary. The leadership coming from inside the board is not as valued as the government liaisons.

As a human, I want to focus on volunteering in ways that are effective and meaningful. My family and my own health are my priorities. I believed that things would be different but too many things remain the same. Briana and I have been positive voices as community members of the board and have contributed hours learning, processing, planning, and volunteering for community events as board members. I'm glad that we live in the same neighborhood. I wish the best of luck to the board members I have had the honor to work with, especially Briana. There is good work this board can do. I wish the best for you all. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Terri S. Thompson



City of Northglenn, Colorado

CCPP Review



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July 29, 2022

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Section 1: Background and Environment

1. Establishment of the Northglenn Community Co-Production Policing Advisory Board

In July of 2020, BerryDunn completed a sophisticated operational assessment of the Northglenn Police Department (NPD). That assessment process resulted in BerryDunn introducing the City of Northglenn (City) to a model for the collaborative co-production of policing. This model is called Community Co-Production Policing (CCPP) and was developed by BerryDunn, along with national experts. CCPP is described generally as follows:

CCPP merges and unifies police agencies and communities through multiple collaborative pathways, resulting in shared responsibilities in areas such as guidance, oversight, and the development of policies, operational strategies, public safety priorities, and other shared goals. CCPP expands the focus of traditional community-oriented policing (COP) and includes a greater level of community participation and involvement in key policing strategies that affect the community. The key distinction is that although COP is informative, interactive, allows for community input, and is often collaborative with regard to problem solving, CCPP involves a greater level of influence and involvement by the community regarding the overarching policing strategies and priorities that ultimately affect those being served by the police agency. From a co-production policing perspective, influence and involvement from the community form the foundation for trust and confidence in the police agency and agreement in the processes, procedures, and practices used in pursuit of public safety for those who live in or visit the community. This level of involvement serves as a persistent external accountability process, which helps ensure consistent alignment between community desires and expectations and the actions the police use to meet them.

The City determined the CCPP model reflected the core values and goals the City shares with the broader Northglenn community. Consequently, the City committed to developing and supporting a customized implementation of CCPP and promptly began work towards that goal. Although BerryDunn assisted with establishing the Board and with some preliminary Board training, the City pursued this model independently.

2. Implementation of Northglenn CCPP Advisory Board

In late 2020, Northglenn enacted Article 4, Chapter 8 of the Northglenn Municipal Code, formally creating the Northglenn CCPP Advisory Board (Board). That Code (4-8-1) states:

- (a) The City finds and determines that the creation of the CCPP Board is intended to provide a resource to further the City's goal of aligning the provision of police services and resources with the community vision for public safety, including addressing the following:
- (1) Reducing the potential separation between the community and those responsible for policing it;
 - (2) Increasing transparency in terms of accountability, policymaking, and strategizing regarding the reduction of crime in the community; and
 - (3) Empowering residents to get involved in shaping the vision for public safety services, while also equipping those who police the community with the resources they need to effectively provide such services.

The codified goals of the Board are:

- Increasing community trust by sharing decisional authority with the community in substantive policing matters;
- Enhancing public safety through the creation of public trust; and
- Improving racial diversity and equity in the process of policymaking regarding public safety in order to create greater understanding regarding community safety strategies.

The new code stipulates basic functional components of the Board, such as basic organization and rules; member composition, qualifications, obligations, and removal parameters; and procedures for meetings. The remainder of Board operations are reserved for determination by the Board itself. The City developed a web page for the Board¹ which states the overarching goals for CCPP:

- **Reducing fractionalism** – correcting the inharmonious separation which has occurred between the community and those responsible for policing it
- **Creating transparency** – there can be no more secrecy in accountability, policymaking, or in determining strategies to address and reduce crime and disorder
- **Balance of influence** – empowering residents to get involved in shaping the vision for public safety services while also equipping those who police the community with the resources they need to effectively provide services

¹ https://www.northglenn.org/public_safety/police/police_advisory_board.php

These goals describe desired outcomes which reflect the codified goals of the Board included in the City ordinance and stated above. Shortly after creating the Board via ordinance, the City began actively recruiting and selecting Board members and conducted its first official meeting in April of 2021.

3. Accomplishments of Northglenn Community Co-Production Policing Advisory Board

The Board began work immediately after its formation and engaged in substantive work which included but is not limited to the following actions:

- Created foundational documents for the Board in the form of by-laws
- Participated in an 11.5 hour mini-academy to learn about policing in Northglenn
- Reviewed and provided input on body-worn camera (BWC) policy
- Hosted a hate crimes forum
- Reviewed crisis response unit (CRU) proposals
- Hosted a series of five community listening sessions
- Participated in Safe Street Halloween in October

4. Current Status of Northglenn Community Co-Production Policing Advisory Board

BerryDunn noted that the Board experienced a significant amount of turnover during its first year (some of which was due to natural attrition). This turnover created gaps in knowledge and relationships. These gaps risked negatively impacting effectiveness and sustainability of the Board and the advancement of its goals. Consequently, the City decided to place Board operations on deliberate pause in order to engage a professional consultant as an independent party to collect data, assess function of the Board, solicit feedback from current and former members and other parties with direct knowledge of Board activities, and provide input on how to improve the cohesiveness and effectiveness of the Board in support of desired outcomes.

Section 2: CCPP Review Project

1. Objectives and Scope of Work

Subsequent to the decision by the City to place Board operations on pause, the City contracted with BerryDunn to assess the operations of the Board and offer suggestions for enhancing its effectiveness. BerryDunn was specifically asked to review and evaluate:

- Board structure, bylaws, and governance processes
- Board selection and on-boarding processes
- Council and staff liaison roles and how they support processes
- Board collaboration, interactions, and relationships
- Board operations and effectiveness

2. Process

BerryDunn conducted two multi-day on-site visits to conduct data collection. The BerryDunn team who conducted the data collection and assessment of the Board were the same two BerryDunn consultants who conducted the original operational assessment and introduced the CCPP model to the City. Accordingly, the BerryDunn team brought an in-depth knowledge of the CCPP model, the Northglenn Police Department, and the community it serves to the Board review process. BerryDunn conducted multiple interviews of stakeholders who have firsthand knowledge of Board operations, including current Board members, former Board members, City staff, Board liaisons, and Council Members. The observations in this report are all based on direct feedback provided by those stakeholders with direct knowledge of Board operations, including the challenges encountered.

3. Observations regarding Northglenn Community Co-Production Policing Advisory Board

Interviews of stakeholders elicited significant factual observations and recollections which were supplemented by personal insight and opinions of those stakeholders. BerryDunn identified several primary themes under which all of the many observations could be categorized. Those themes provide tremendous insight into the initial operations of the board and opportunities to address needs and gaps in performance for future Board contributions. Specifically, stakeholders with direct, firsthand knowledge and experience of the Board consistently revealed that Board efficacy could be increased by improving efforts in the following three main areas:

- Stronger shared understanding of a common vision and purpose

- Improved on-boarding process with more clearly documented procedures
- More active and deliberate planning for Board operations to outline short- and long-term goals and strategies

Common Vision

The Board never successfully developed a mutual understanding, commonly shared vision, and practical purpose for the Board. Overwhelmingly, the most commonly and strongly reported theme among stakeholders was that Board members did not feel they shared a commonly understood mission or purpose. Many stakeholders reported they lacked clarity on the practical mission and ultimate vision for the Board, that the Board lacked meaningful direction about how much control they have over determining activities and efforts, and that there was not a common understanding of desired short- and long-term operational goals or intended processes. Numerous factors contributed to this condition, including the inability to hold in-person meetings, the absence of various Board members from meetings, an early focus on onboarding and training that left little time for team and relationship development, and Board turnover, among others. Regardless of its origins, this lack of a common vision and purpose contributed to feelings of division, ineffectiveness, and lack of control.

There is significant sentiment among stakeholders that the Board was not empowered to be as independent as many members were led to believe it should be, and that activities and direction may have been guided by City officials more than was anticipated. Board members felt they were not initially well-supported in developing the skills and tools necessary to navigate crucial, if difficult, conversations in a productive manner. An outside facilitator was eventually utilized for diversity, equity, and inclusion orientation and this experience was universally reported to be beneficial and well-received. The deliberate ‘reset’ conducted for the Board with the engagement of a professional, independent facilitator was universally well-received and reported to improve Board operations and Board relationships.

Additionally, some suggested to BerryDunn that the CCPP Board’s experience contrasts sharply with that of the City’s Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Equity (DISE) Board, which reports a clear and common purpose and has experienced fewer instances of operational and relationship challenges. BerryDunn notes that although these two boards are similar and there are some common intersections between them, each has a different mission, which complicates direct comparisons and reported successes.

Board Member Selection and On-Boarding

Selection processes and on-boarding were inconsistent and lacked clarity. The criteria and standards for selection were not shared with Board members and remained unclear; this contributed to a lack of understanding about role expectations, and hindered Board members’ ability to engage each other as effectively as they would like or to develop prospects for future

Board participation. On-boarding, orientation, and training mechanisms did not substantially develop a clear and commonly-shared understanding of Board goals, member roles, short- and long-term goals, or operational expectations. Additionally, the manner and mechanisms for orientation, education, and communication had the potential to feel as if they were biased favorably towards the NPD instead of remaining neutral and supporting an independent posture for the Board. While most, if not all, respondents acknowledged this possibility for the appearance of bias, there was consensus that any such bias was not intentional, despite a recognition that the process may have produced unintended consequences.

Board members did not receive substantive training on the practical aspects of how to run and administer a board effectively and efficiently. This led to Board meetings that felt inefficient and an environment in which the Board did not feel empowered to direct activities such as who spoke to the Board, which topics were covered, and how long guest speakers contributed to the work sessions.

Meaningful Board Operations

The Board did not maximize, articulate, and document operational procedures for either short- or long-term operational horizons. Board members expressed eagerness to engage in meaningful activities and a desire for a clear framework that supports Council- and Board-desired outcomes in a more efficient and effective manner, supported by clearer rules and procedures about Board operations and supported by a well-documented operational plan. Many Board members expressed confusion and lack of clarity about what they should actually have been doing and what they were empowered to do. Many members reported they wanted to take more deliberate action to engage the broader community in order to develop two-way feedback mechanisms to educate the community about the Board and to hear what the community would like to see the Board address. This confusion and frustration caused feelings of inefficiency and frustration as there was a gap in knowledge about processes and procedures for the Board and the perception of power differentials, based upon who had information and access to the City and the NPD.

Section 3: Recommendations

This section includes BerryDunn’s high-level and sub-point recommendations. Each of these recommendations relate to the project scope and the common themes observed during BerryDunn’s overall assessment of Board conditions.

1. Develop and Maintain a Common Vision

- The City should establish a clear vision for CCPP and the Board. This should be a two-part process:
 - The first step in this process should include a half-day visioning session with the City Council, City manager, and police chief, to clarify the Council’s intent and overall vision for the board.
 - The second step in this process is to hold a similar half-day session with the Board (at a later date), to develop pathways, goals, and objectives for the Board that support Council’s vision.
- Given the importance of Board autonomy and the recommendation below (in paragraph 3) for regular reports and interaction between the Council to the Board, the City should consider whether there is an ongoing need for a council liaison on the Board. A staff liaison could manage regular communications as needed, and other formal reporting could be done by the Board chair.
 - If the Council chooses to maintain a liaison on the Board, BerryDunn recommends assigning a new Council member, to coincide with resetting the vision, purpose, and next steps of the Board.
- The Board should engage a professional facilitator to support Board operations and, importantly, model and mentor facilitation for Board leadership and membership.
 - The goals of providing this independent, third-party facilitation are two-fold:
 - The first is to help the Board develop productive and efficient working relationships and processes to support its practical work.
 - The second goal is to help the Board develop the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to allow it to eventually and independently navigate critical, if difficult, conversations in a productive manner.
 - The goals of this independent facilitation should also include developing Board cohesiveness around a shared understanding of Board vision and goals which contribute to Board operations and activities in support of desired outcomes.

- The professional facilitator should help the Board and its members learn how to navigate polarized opinions, understand the importance of crucial conversations, create safety in dialogue, and develop relationships that contribute to respectful interactions.
- The professional facilitator should provide for specific team-building experiences.
- Because of the infrequency of Board meetings, BerryDunn suggests engaging a professional facilitator to assist the Board Chair with running the meeting, managing Board tasks and conversations, and developing a cadence for long-term Board meetings and interactions. BerryDunn recommends the City engage a facilitator for a minimum period of one year, with consideration of extending this service, based on need.
- The Board should clarify and articulate any liaison, council, and/or administrative support roles and how those roles and persons should support desired Board outcomes.
 - Any liaison and administrative support role parameters should clearly indicate the purpose of those roles is to provide an efficient flow of information, support the Board's operations, and provide for efficient operations through administrative support and communication.
 - It should be clear that liaison roles are not intended to direct or influence Board activities or decisions.

2. Implement Effective and Transparent Selection and On-Boarding

- The Board should clearly articulate what it means by its stated objective of a desire for diversity, in all connotations of that concept.
- The City Council and Board should collaborate to develop and refine interview questions for prospective Board members that explore diversity of thought, diversity of lived experience, and sensitivity/openness to alternate perspectives.
- The City Council should provide more active clarity to Board members and prospective Board members on the selection process and selection criteria for Board members.
- The City Council should articulate a clear preference for professional Board members to also be community residents if at all possible.
- The City Council should create a permanent position for a DISE member on the CCPP Board to provide a consistent and permanent conduit for flow of information regarding diversity, inclusion, and social equity issues.

- The City Council and Board, with assistance as needed from the Police Department, should collaborate to create a formal, documented on-boarding process in the form of a written manual which includes a Board ‘playbook’ or set of standard operating procedures for the Board.
- The Board should designate a veteran Board member as a trainer or mentor for each new oncoming Board member with on-boarding duties articulated in the formal on-boarding procedures.
- City Management, the Police Department, and the Board should collaborate to develop a series of short videos to consistently orient new Board members on the fundamental aspects/terminology of policing and the organization of the NPD; the origin of the Board; the importance of diversity, inclusion, and social equity; and the history and nature of the Northglenn community, particularly relative to its relationship with policing. These videos should include voices from community advocates as well as from City officials, and should discuss the interests of diverse community stakeholders.
- The city should provide for a professionally-facilitated annual Board orientation to provide opportunity for shared education on purpose, processes, and procedures, while also contributing to building Board cohesiveness. That education and training should include how a Board should be run to ensure that even Board members without previous board experience understand how boards typically operate and how this Board, in particular, operates.

3. Plan and Implement Meaningful Board Operations

- Consider having Board meetings in community locations to help community members feel safe and comfortable attending, and to ensure Board operations reflect its intention to build relationships and feedback mechanisms with the community. Those locations should include locations designed to highlight minority and traditionally marginalized or underserved communities.
- The Board should institute procedures for regular reporting to Council, including written reports and in-person presentations.
- The Board should be reminded they have complete autonomy over Board operations, including who appears, who presents, and how long outside guests speak at meetings, in order to improve the efficiency of Board meetings and support the independence of the Board and its leadership.
- The Board should prepare a formal plan for mid- to long-term activities, projects, and operations to provide structure and guidance for Board members, increase deliberate community interactions, develop opportunities for broader community input, and identify

future areas of focus. One promising starting point would be to focus on the completion of the recommendations in the recent operational assessment.

- The Board should develop processes, which it controls, to strategize opportunities to collaborate with the police department about areas of focus and pathways for meaningful contribution from Board in police operations.

Section 4: Overall Summary

Northglenn enjoys a healthy relationship with its community and that relationship is reflected in the participation in CCPP efforts and the constructive feedback provided by those with knowledge of CCPP operations. While members expressed frustration with the pace, progress, and internal relationships of the Board in its first year, the overall sentiments were of hope and enthusiasm. Stakeholders identified the following three main themes that need to be addressed:

- Maintain a Common Vision
- Implement Effective and Transparent Selection and On-Boarding
- Plan and Implement Meaningful Board Operations

All stakeholders expressed a desire to continue with co-production policing utilizing the CCPP model, and there was a great deal of optimism and enthusiasm for the possibilities provided by this approach. Furthermore, stakeholders helped illuminate possible productive measures that will help address the areas of concern. These recommendations provide a practical path forward for CCPP in Northglenn.