



Ohio Collaborative Community- Police Advisory Board

January 14, 2020 Meeting Summary

The Ohio Collaborative Community Police Advisory Board (Collaborative) is a multidisciplinary group consisting of a diverse group of Ohioans including, law enforcement, community members, elected officials, academia and the faith based community. The Collaborative was created by executive order 2015-04k on April 29, 2015 after the Governor's Task Force on Community Police Relations completed its work and produced a report with recommendations on how to improve the important relationship between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

The Collaborative is chaired by Assistant Director Karen Huey, Department of Public Safety. Members appointed by the Governor, including ex officio members, are identified below:

- Commissioner Lori Barreras— Chair of the Ohio Civil Rights Commission
- Representative Juanita Brent – Ohio House
- Dr. Ronnie Dunn—Cleveland State University, Associate Professor of Urban Studies and Interim Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer
- Dr. Robin S. Engel—University of Cincinnati, Professor of Criminal Justice and Director of IACP/UC Center of Police Research and Policy
- Officer Anthony L. Johnson—Columbus Police Department and member, Fraternal Order of Police
- Sheriff Tom Miller—Medina County Sheriff's Office and member of the Buckeye State Sheriff's Association
- BCI Superintendent Joe Morbitzer— Ohio Attorney General's Office
- The Reverend Walter S. Moss— Pastor and CIRV Project Director, Stark County Prosecutor's Office
- Chief Michael J. Navarre—Oregon Police Department and member of the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police
- Honorable Ronald J. O'Brien—Franklin County Prosecutor

Ex officio members:

- Senator Sandra Williams, Ohio Senate
- Representative Phil Plummer, Ohio House
- The Honorable Tom Roberts, former Ohio Senator and President, Ohio Conference of Units of NAACP
- The late Honorable Louis Stokes, former member of Congress
- The late Honorable George V. Voinovich—former U.S. Senator, Governor of Ohio, and Mayor of Cleveland

The purpose of the Collaborative is to advise and work with the Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) in the Ohio Department of Public Safety to implement the Task Force's recommendations, as identified in the Executive Order.

January 14, 2020, Columbus, OH Meeting of the Ohio Collaborative Community-Police Advisory Board

The Collaborative meeting was held on January 14 at the Ohio Department of Public Safety. The meeting began at 10:06 AM. The following members were present at the meeting:

- Assistant Director Karen Huey
- Executive Director Karhlton Moore
- Dr. Ronnie Dunn
- Chief Michael Navarre
- Commissioner Lori Barreras
- Officer Anthony Johnson
- Representative Phil Plummer
- Rev. Walter Moss
- Sheriff Tom Miller
- BCI Superintendent Joe Morbitzer
- The Hon. Ronald J O'Brien
- Dr. Robin Engel
- Special guest: Commander Rhonda Grizzell, Columbus Division of Police

Assistant Director Karen Huey welcomed all attendees, and then introduced Commander Rhonda Grizzell, a 25-year veteran of the Columbus Division of Police (CPD). She and her colleague, both hostage negotiators for the department, created the Peer Assistance Team for CPD officers.

Commander Grizzell

- The Wellness Bureau was developed in March 2019. Although the bureau was new, the concept of officer wellness was not—the department had developed a Peer Assistance Team (a CISM, or Critical Incident Stress Management team) in 2012.
- The mission of the Wellness Bureau is to “enhance and improve the quality of life for employees within the Columbus Division of Police, thereby improving any interaction between those employed by the Columbus Division of Police and anyone they encounter.”
- See handout titled “Health and Wellness Initiatives” released by the Columbus Police Wellness Bureau.
- Initiatives are being developed around six spheres of wellness: Emotional, Spiritual, Social, Physical, Occupational, Financial.
- Efforts will be focused at three career stages: 1) Basic training; 2) Advanced (incumbent) training; 3) Retirement preparation
- Key building blocks
 - Educate/normalize—teach on the importance of mental health as an aspect of overall health; the effects of cortisol and the hypervigilance cycle; emotional intelligence and how awareness can add benefit to health and performance at work
 - Incorporate techniques—mindfulness, yoga, fitness; wellness app; department-sponsored social and/or volunteer opportunities; incorporate families
 - Ongoing practice and evaluation—mental health check-ins (initially voluntary perceived stress scales); annual training on relevant wellness topics

- Mental health check in—Such a ‘check-in’ would be voluntary, but some are seeing a trend in mental health check-in as a mandatory part of one’s annual wellness exam. Mental health wellness check-ups should be a normal, routine part of an exam.
 - Some subsets of officers already have mandated mental health check-in, such as hostage negotiators.
- A comprehensive wellness program is needed to ensure success throughout an officer’s career and into retirement.
 - While trauma may be caused by one big event, there is just as much (or more) trauma in the repetitive exposure to small and medium events.
 - For many officers, their career is their identity, so retirement can be traumatic as well.
- Officer Johnson talked about his experience being a peer assistant, and the value that the program provides. He further noted the importance of creating an officer wellness standard.

The Advisory Board asked questions of Commander Grizzell.

- Police agencies are really starting to respond to officer wellness. Are there best practices? Are there available resources that evaluate what is working?
 - Commander Grizzell reported that there is not much available on the effectiveness of certain interventions, and that her years of experience and training have helped her identify specific initiatives that she thinks are helpful, but that have not been evaluated.
 - The Commander noted that CPD is working with Dr. Maryanna Klatt from Ohio State University on a mindfulness study. Dr. Klatt’s previous research has shown a decrease in physical symptoms of stress amongst surgery nurses.
 - There is also a “positive psychology” group out of the University of Pennsylvania that has created a resiliency training. The University of Cincinnati is evaluating the training.
 - Is there funding to evaluate wellness programs at the state level so that successful ideas can be pushed to other agencies?
 - OCJS has seen an increasing number of requests for funding and resources on the issue of officer wellness. We want to make sure that we are making the best investment we can make and do no harm.
- BCI Superintendent Morbitzer used the peer assistance program when he was chief of Westerville Police Department, which was very helpful. But law enforcement agencies need to be doing more to ensure the most appropriate personalities are being recruited. The number one killer of officers is suicide.
 - Some evidence suggests that individuals with high ACE (Adverse Childhood Event) scores are likely to pursue ‘helping’ careers, including law enforcement. While those with high ACE scores can be good officers, it is important to uncover whether they have been given the tools to effectively deal with those traumatic past experiences before going into a career in which exposure to trauma is high.
 - There is a move toward using behavioral tests during officer recruiting.
- Often, the people who recognize potential officer mental health issues first are friends and family. Is there an opportunity for friends and family to let the agency know if they suspect an officer is having mental health issues?

- Commander Grizzell stated that more needs to be done to educate the family to the issue of officer wellness, who may only briefly be exposed to the issue during family night at basic training.
- The law enforcement family also needs to be empowered to check on one another.
- Ron O'Brien inquired as to the details of confidentiality.
- What about use of technology (such as Fitbit monitors) as an approach to gauge officer wellness?
 - Such technology is in the experimental stages. It is used as a biofeedback tool, generally to measure heart rate. There is no research available assessing its effectiveness. The technology is meant to be used after a call to see how an officer 'comes back down' and whether they are prepared to move on to another call. Such technology is meant to be helpful, not punitive.
- What does collective bargaining think about these approaches to officer wellness (e.g., mental health check-ins, use of technology to gauge officers' performance)?
 - They recognize the need but worry about the consequence. Unions see it as more of a hammer than a help. This mindset needs to change.
- What is the size of the CPD Wellness Bureau?
 - The Wellness Bureau has five therapy dog trainers/handlers; a court liaison, and about 60-70 personnel that volunteer for the Peer Assistance Teams (PAT).
- How are therapy dogs used in the workplace?
 - The dogs are used in a variety of ways. They work with individuals upon request, they are used during incident debriefing, they are provided to various departments, such as the crime lab, where staff are constantly exposed to evidence of trauma.
- Is there an inventory of documents related to wellness initiatives that is available?
 - Unsure, but this would be good to have, especially when creating a standard. We need to be able to help agencies be able to comply with this standard.

Sheriff Miller noted that most agencies and officers have access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). His agency has used it more recently than in the past, and he has found that newer officers tend to have less stigma toward using EAP. Others reported that older officers tend to better understand the impact of trauma on an officer's mental health.

Assistant Director Huey and Executive Director Moore noted that work has already begun on developing a draft standard on officer wellness. This presentation was helpful to understanding what one agency is doing in the area of officer wellness, and the information learned today can help ensure that the standard is comprehensive yet achievable regardless of the size of the organization.

Officer Johnson requested that the standard include a statement on confidentiality, as he feels the reason their program is successful is the presence of someone bound by confidentiality with whom an officer can speak.

Assistant Director Huey stated that a draft standard will be sent out for review and feedback is encouraged.

Assistant Director Huey moved on to discuss the juvenile policy. A copy of this policy was provided to everyone. Executive Director Moore stated that this is a difficult policy to put together because the

number of topics is voluminous, which makes a standard very difficult to create. It is meant to give an agency a baseline to guide them if they want to develop their own policy. Everyone should look it over and give feedback to OCJS.

Prosecutor O'Brien asked whether the goal was to create a model policy. Executive Director Moore stated that there are two types of policies: a sample policy and a model policy. A sample policy is created for every standard. A model policy is more of a public statement. The Board can decide to do either. Prosecutor O'Brien noted that the juvenile court is addressing some of the same issues being identified in the current policy, but some of the recommended procedures have no legal backing, which can be problematic. Also challenging is the length of the policy—the longer the policy, more difficult it is to follow.

Executive Director Moore requested feedback from the group before sending it to Dr. Celeste for her input. Once all input is received, the Board can decide if a sample juvenile policy or a model juvenile policy should be created.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:27 A.M.