

To: Mayor Jenny Durkan

From: Police Chief Search Committee Co-Chairs
Tim Burgess, Colleen Echohawk, Sue Rahr, Jeffery Robinson

Date: May 25, 2018

Subject: **Semi-Finalist Recommendations for Chief of Police**

As you know, the Police Chief Search Committee met on Monday evening, May 21, 2018, and selected five candidates to advance to the next stage of the police chief selection process for your consideration. They are listed below in alphabetical order.

Carmen Best, Interim Chief of Police, Seattle Police Department

Eddie Frizell, 1st Precinct Inspector (equivalent to SPD Captain), former Deputy Chief of Patrol, Minneapolis Police Department

Cameron McLay, Former Chief of Police, Pittsburgh Bureau of Police; former Captain, Madison, Wisconsin Police Department

Ely Reyes, Assistant Chief of Police, Austin, Texas Police Department

Jorge Villegas, Assistant Chief of Police, Los Angeles Police Department

Each of these candidates has the professional training, experience, and ability to serve as Seattle's next chief of police. (Full background and local community checks will be completed once the finalists have been identified.)

The Search Committee selected these candidates based on the opinions and perspectives each member developed following our community outreach (14 neighborhood meetings and 2,687 responses to an online survey), Committee discussions, review of candidate application materials, and an online media search. The Committee also conducted a two-hour in-person interview with each candidate. (Only committee members who participated in all interviews were allowed to vote Monday evening on which candidates to advance.)

In addition to the work of the full Search Committee, and to fulfill your assignment, the co-chairs sought additional perspective from a variety of individuals who have in-depth perspective on the state of the Seattle Police Department, including community members, police officers, the federal monitor, other police chiefs, the City Attorney, and members of the

King County Prosecuting Attorney's senior staff. These discussions were extremely helpful. Of course, we individually, to one degree or another, have our own perspective about our Police Department based on our collective 106 years of direct experience with policing in Seattle.

Grounded in this overall process, we now want to share with you our personal observations about the state of the Seattle Police Department (SPD). We hope this perspective will help inform your final decision.

1. SPD has made remarkable improvement in the breadth and quality of in-service training, especially related to de-escalation, crisis intervention, and use of force. (All training is not centralized or vetted through the Training Division; for example, investigations training for new detectives is handled by the Investigations Bureau itself, posing the risk that training curriculum could be inconsistent with other department-wide training standards.)
2. SPD has achieved significant reductions in use of force, most particularly with regard to encounters with individuals experiencing mental health crisis. Overall, use of force is now very low compared to national indicators.
3. SPD has significantly improved use of data in crime analysis and performance reporting (e.g., use of force documentation) and has created a Real Time Crime Center where sworn and civilian employees identify problems, trends, and assist patrol officers and detectives with active incidents and investigations.
4. SPD has many, many officers and civilian employees who excel in their work and are committed to Constitutional, fair, and effective policing. The work of these members of our Police Department doesn't always get the recognition and affirmation it rightly deserves.
5. SPD faces significant resource deployment challenges. Less than half of all sworn officers are assigned to patrol, a percentage that is inconsistent with a national practice of 60% or more of sworn officers being assigned to patrol. Some patrol shifts and individual patrol squads are consistently understaffed, response times for Priority 1 calls too frequently exceed the desired time threshold, response times to other priority call categories can be exceedingly long, and "on loan" officers (temporary assignment to a specialized unit, most frequently from patrol) number in the hundreds and are often undocumented. This lack of a sufficient number of officers in uniformed patrol assignments leads to the response time challenges SPD faces and reduces public confidence. (SPD in 2016 corrected inaccurate reporting of response times, a problem that had persisted for many years and masked the challenges the department faced in responding to 911 calls for service.)

6. SPD uses a community policing model that assigns specific officers to this work, segregating them from the main patrol force, thereby signaling others that they are not responsible. This is a serious error and prevents adoption of a community policing culture across the entire Police Department. Further, it seems like “community policing” is viewed in SPD as a public relations effort instead of a crime, fear, and disorder reduction strategy. Effective community policing is built on relationships between community members and front-line officers. It embraces a problem-solving methodology, is rigorous and data-driven, and above all is designed to empower the natural guardians in neighborhoods—residents, workers, shop owners, etc. SPD remains 911 response-driven instead of prevention or problem-solving driven.
7. SPD lacks supervisor accountability standards and capabilities. When officers are found to have engaged in misconduct there is sometimes evidence of supervisory failure or even misconduct. Supervisors are not held accountable today. Chief Best acknowledged this shortcoming during her in-person interview when asked why patrol supervisors were not disciplined for an officer’s failure to carry his Taser, a failure that had been known for approximately two weeks by other officers and supervisors.
8. SPD lacks formal succession planning for senior command positions, lacks a leadership development program for field supervisors (there is one for Lieutenants and Captains, but not Sergeants), and does not have a formal rotation policy for officers and detectives to share and develop skills, build bench strength, or contribute to professional development. These are serious shortcomings that stifle continuous improvement in the delivery of police services to the people of Seattle.
9. SPD officers and detectives produce an inconsistent work product in terms of thoroughness and accuracy. The quality of work depends, to a certain extent, on who is producing the work. Specifically, we were told some detectives work hard and diligently pursue their case work while others consistently produce incomplete and sloppy work. Prosecutors told of individual cases where the integrity of an officer was in doubt and another where a detective was kept from testifying because of her sloppy work. This reflects a supervisory and management failure and a culture that accepts poor performance.
10. SPD began hiring more civilians for specialized positions when Chief O’Toole was appointed in 2014, a change that is highly appropriate and consistent with national best practices. Civilians are now used in Human Resources, Labor Management, Crime Analysis, the Real Time Crime Center, Legal, and as Chief Operating Officer. There has been strong internal pushback against this civilianization. Care must be taken to protect this diversification.

11. SPD has over the years developed a discipline practice (i.e., consistency, predictability, fairness, etc.) that sometimes blocks imposition of appropriate discipline. Discipline imposed by the Chief of Police is sometimes overturned by arbitrators because it is deemed inconsistent with what was imposed in previous cases. There needs to be a reset. New standards, including a range of potential discipline for various types of misconduct, needs to be established, an opportunity for the new Chief of Police that should not be missed. Getting discipline right, and minimizing the chance of arbitrator reversals, is essential for strengthening public trust and confidence.
12. SPD lacks systems for the management and monitoring of department-generated overtime and off-duty employment. These issues have been discussed and wrestled with for several years without resolution. This is an area that the new Chief will need to address immediately.
13. SPD culture has started to change, but much more remains to be done, especially related to innovation, review of what other cities are doing successfully, the rigor of crime analysis, concentrated deterrence strategies for high frequency violent offenders, and addressing biased policing and disparate enforcement impact. Continuing Chief O'Toole's practice of selecting the best possible command staff members—from inside or outside of SPD—is essential to foster this continued cultural change. It's also crucial that SPD adopt a more open, collaborative, and partner-seeking orientation with other law enforcement agencies in Washington and with the State Training Commission. The culture that promoted a Lone Ranger, "we're the best and only" orientation must be eliminated for the sake of policing effectiveness and community trust and confidence.
14. SPD front-line officers have been the focus of criticism related to community trust and many believe they are under siege, underappreciated, and unsupported by their leadership and the city's political leadership. In order for officers to deliver service to the community in a procedurally just manner, they must experience the same procedural justice for themselves inside the agency. The new Chief has an opportunity to create an honorable culture that focusses on officer wellness, coaching, and mentoring to improve officer performance and restore their satisfaction in their work. Basic fairness, accountability, and transparency must become the norm.

While significant and very positive progress has been made, and we are very grateful for that progress, our personal observations reinforce what the Department of Justice found in their investigation of SPD—a police department with a lack of effective leadership and a culture that tolerated that deficiency. Chief O'Toole positioned the department for its next steps and it is our opinion that our next Chief must have strong, proven management, systems, and culture-changing leadership skills to sustain and expand that work.