

**COMMUNITY POLICE REVIEW COMMISSION  
(CPRC)**

**Wednesday, September 2, 2020 – 7:00 PM  
Zoom Meeting**

**MINUTES**

**I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, PLEDGE**

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by **Chair David Brown**

**Present:** David Brown (Chair), Yenny Garcia (Vice-chair), Diego Garcia, Oscar Garcia, Carol Hegstrom, Randy Joseph, Steven Lacy

**Absent:** None

**Vacancies:** 2

**Administrative**

**Staff:** Shané Johnson, Staff Liaison – Present

**Council Liaison:** Jael Myrick, Council Liaison – Present

**City Attorney's**

**Office Representative:** Bruce Soublet, Senior Assistant City Attorney – Present

**II. OPEN FORUM BEFORE CLSOED SESSION – No Comments**

**III. REPORT OF FINAL ACTIONS TAKEN IN EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- Tyelah Garrett (#2019-5) The Commission voted 6:1 to accept the report of the investigative officer. They also voted unanimously to accept a finding of “Not Sustained.”
- Nahur Perez (#2019-3-appeal) The Commission did not take a final action. The matter was put over to the October 2020 meeting.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (June 3, 2020) – Upon motion by O. Garcia and seconded by C. Hegstrom, the minutes for the meeting of June 3, 2020, were approved by the following vote: **Ayes:** Chair Brown, Vice-chair Y. Garcia, and Commissioners O. Garcia, C. Hegstrom R. Joseph, and S. Lacy. **Noes:** None. **Absent:** D. Garcia **Abstained:** None**

**V. AGENDA REVIEW – No changes**

**VI. PUBLIC FORUM**

Cordell Hindler – Refer to attached comment(s)

**VII. COMMENTS BY CHIEF OF POLICE (Interim Chief Bisa French or designate) – Chief French began her report with an update on homicides in the city. There have been 10 homicides since the beginning of summer. The month of July saw four homicides with the first occurring on July 3<sup>rd</sup> in the 500 block of Dubose where a 63-year-old transient male was shot and killed. There are not many leads on the case. The second homicide occurred on July 11<sup>th</sup> in the 200 block of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street where a 27-year-old Hispanic male**

killed another 27-year-old Hispanic male. The suspect is in custody and has been charged. The third homicide occurred on July 25<sup>th</sup> in the 500 block of Alamo Drive where a 34-year-old male was killed in his home while he was sleeping. RPD does not have any leads in the case. The fourth homicide occurred on July 28<sup>th</sup> at 9<sup>th</sup> & Lucas where a 32-year old male was shot by a 36-year-old male who is now in custody and charged. The violence continued into August where homicides occurred on August 9<sup>th</sup> and August 11<sup>th</sup>. The victims included a 50-year-old Black male and, separately, a couple in Parchester Village – the result of a murder-suicide.

The Chief reported that there have been numerous shootings over the summer with an increase in the Iron Triangle area. There has also been an increase in gang activity between the Norteños and Sureños affecting the lower Macdonald Avenue area. RPD has four homicide detectives to deal with shootings in the hot spot areas and have had to use officers from other units to cover the investigations.

Chief French's report on officer injuries disclosed that multiple officers have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus. RPD has safety plans in place to keep their staff safe. The department lost Sgt. Virgil Thomas who died of complications of COVID-19 after being exposed to the virus in July 2020. A memorial service was held on August 28<sup>th</sup> to honor him. Aside from COVID-19, there are 10 officers off on injury leave and another 6 officers on modified duty leaving RPD with approximately 133 officers to serve the community.

The department is focusing on deployment for 2021 with a goal to have the schedule finalized by the end of October. Chief French is also prioritizing the review and finalization of the RPD Policy Manual. She discussed some proposed policy changes that were forwarded to the Commission for review and input. The Chief has also been participating in community meetings regarding policing.

- VIII. COMMENTS BY COUNCIL LIAISON JAELE MYRICK** – Councilmember Myrick updated the Commission on the meet and confers regarding the proposed CPRC policy changes. He met with the City Manager and the goal is to have a first and second reading by the end of the year. Councilmember Myrick will be placing an item on the September 21<sup>st</sup> City Council agenda for discussion. The Councilmember Myrick concluded his report by saying a few words about Sgt. Virgil Thomas in Thomas' memory.
- IX. REPORTS BY RICHMOND POLICE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION (Ben Therriault, President)** – Detective Therriault began his report echoing the comments of Chief French. He made special reference to staffing levels at RPD and the department's ability to address violence on the street. Mr. Therriault participated in a lot of outreach and feels that community policing is part of the overall solution.

Ben Therriault spoke about the loss of Sgt. Virgil Thomas, what he meant to the department, and the effect that his passing is having on RPD. According to Mr. Therriault, Sgt. Thomas was one of approximately 10 officers in the state that has contracted and died from the COVID-19 virus. Mr. Therriault ended his report with a response to comments made by Councilmember Myrick regarding Sgt. Thomas.

**X. OLD BUSINESS, DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- A. Update on reports status (Jerry Threet)** – The Keyon Williams investigation is stalled and unknown whether it will continue. Mr. Threet is waiting for Mr. Williams to provide additional evidence, but Mr. Williams has become unresponsive to inquiries. Mr. Threet is also nearing the end of his investigation on the officer-involved shooting of Luc Toan Chanh Ciel, as well as being far along in the investigation of the Reason/Thomas case.
- B. Approve Public Summary for Complaint #2020-3 (Harrington)** – Upon motion by C. Hegstrom and seconded by R. Joseph, the public summary was approved by the following vote: **Ayes:** Chair Brown, Vice-chair Y. Garcia, and Commissioners O. Garcia, C. Hegstrom, R. Joseph, and S. Lacy. **Noes:** None. **Absent:** D. Garcia **Abstained:** None
- C. Discuss and vote on recommendations re appropriate level of discipline for AVR policy breaches** – Chair Brown summarized the CPRC’s understanding of the current discipline policy for AVR violations. Commissioner Joseph expressed satisfaction with Chief French’s explanation that the severity of the AVR violation determined the level of discipline. Commissioner Hegstrom asked if the Commission could receive information about the level of disciplinary action given to the violation. Chair Brown suggested that research be conducted to learn about how other agencies handle AVR policy violations. Commissioner Joseph suggested NACOLE as a good resource. Commissioners Hegstrom and Joseph will do further research and bring the subject back to the CPRC for more discussion.

**XI. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Discuss whether to continue with investigation of the shooting of Eric Reason in Vallejo by Sgt. Virgil Thomas in light of Sgt. Thomas’ death** – Mr. Threet is far along into his investigation. Chair Brown raised the question of whether commissioners were in favor of continuing with the investigation or dropping it. Discussion between the commissioners raised arguments in favor of continuing, dropping, and postponing the investigation.
- Commissioner O. Garcia motioned to drop the investigation and Commissioner Lacy seconded. The motion was denied by the following vote: **Ayes:** Vice-Chair Y. Garcia and Commissioner O. Garcia. **Noes:** Chair Brown and Commissioners C. Hegstrom, R. Joseph, and S. Lacy. **Absent:** D. Garcia **Abstained:** None. Based on the vote, Chair Brown advised CIAO Threet to continue the investigation.
- Deb – She felt that the CPRC made the right decision to keep the investigation going.
- B. Discuss need for policy recommendations or referral to City Council for CPRC to obtain all AVR footage of any matter within its jurisdiction and to facilitate commissioners’ ability to review AVR footage directly** – Chair Brown framed the issue and encouraged the Commission to challenge current rules surrounding the release of AVR footage to commissioners. Commissioner R. Joseph questioned the

timing of footage released to the public and thought the timing issue may be a larger state law issue. The Commission discussed the need to acquire footage more timely. The discussion will be brought back to another meeting at a future date when the commissioners have more time to discuss.

**Ben Therriault** – He said that state law does not allow the commissioners to view it and is in place to protect the City and the commissioners from any wrongdoing. Mr. Therriault said that past commissioners violated confidentiality which put the City in a bad position.

**XII. REPORTS OF SUBCOMMITTEES, COMMISSIONERS, CIAO AND STAFF – None**

Randy Joseph – Spoke about the death of Eric, a young man who frequented the RYSE Center, and the impact of his death on the community.

Yenny Garcia – Attended the Latina’s Center Women’s Health and Leadership program virtual graduation

Oscar Garcia – Asked to be on the RPAL webinar centered on policing and the concerns that the Richmond youth have.

David Brown – Attended the virtual Reimagining Policing meeting.

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned to the public at 9:45 p.m.

***Approved by vote of the Commission on November 4, 2020***

## Shane Johnson

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**From:** Cordell Hindler <cordellhindler@ymail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 31, 2020 10:11 PM  
**To:** Police Commission  
**Subject:** Public comments

good evening Chair Brown police commissioners and staff, i have a couple of comments to go on record

1. as far as the vacancies is concern i will be reaching out to the administration to have students to participate with the police review commission

2. i am really glad that the listening session went grand

sincerely  
Cordell