

Police Reform Recruitment Working Group  
Meetings Minutes  
February 2, 2021

Mayor Whaley and Judge Parker welcome everyone to the meeting.

The group discussed recommendation principles that were submitted via email about the civil service selection process.

Torey Hollingsworth shared the draft recommendations.

The recommendation suggested by Travis Dunnington was discussed: Propose banding as suggested by percentiles: 100-90, 90-80, 80-70, etc. But if there is not a commensurate percentage of applicants of color in individual band considered then the band will be expanded in a way that does permit a commensurate percentage of applicants of color to be considered. For example if 40% of total applicants are of color (or female), but only 10% of folks in the 90-100 band are of color (or female) then the second banding group can ALSO be considered.

Ken Thomas said he did not want to tie future administration's hands by laying out a new selection system that could not be abandoned, similar to the rule of one.

William Gillespie said he like Travis Dunnington's thoughts and hoped his suggestion would stand up to legal scrutiny.

Ofc. Savage said she was concerned about allegations of reverse discrimination.

Gillespie continued that he thought if we didn't do something big, we will continue to get the same results.

Ofc. Savage reinforced the point that recruitment is the key issue in racial diversity.

Mayor Whaley agreed. But said we have a once in a lifetime chance to change this process, so we should push boundaries and allow the Law Department to reel us back in if it is not legally defensible.

Travis Dunnington said he didn't know much about employment law, but thought that the reverse issue could also be true. Could not having a commensurate number of diverse candidates in a band open the city up to liability in a different way?

Mayor Whaley said that the Civil Service Board could also kick back recommendations, but agreed with Bill Gillespie on the need to try something new.

Chrisondra Goodwine agreed, saying we need to push boundaries and we might need to change laws. We as a committee are here to think of possibilities to make things better.

Ellis Jacobs said it seems like we don't know the best practices that are out there. We need to really try something different.

Chrisondra Goodwine's suggested recommendation was put to a vote: Ensure that the interview panel is diverse and includes representation from the community alongside relevant city staff.

Chrisondra made the motion, Cornell Trammell seconded. The recommendation passed.

William Gillespie said he thought moving to a banding system alone would be a big step. Travis's idea could turbo-charge that. He wondered how to tweak it to make it defensible if it is not currently.

Ellis Jacobs made the motion, Travis seconds. The recommendation passed.

Ken Thomas presented the recommendations that came from civil service:

- Civil Service Commission should develop a selection process for the City safety forces that utilizes a validated assessment, grounded on merit and fitness, that will continually evaluate how to maximize a more diverse and inclusive recruitment class. This will be in concert with the City Manager, Police and Fire Departments and be provided the requisite budgetary needs to achieve the outcomes.
- Civil Service Commission in the development of their assessments will seek to have processes that are inclusive of diverse groups, individuals, vendors, panels, thoughts, backgrounds that could have both input on development and selection criteria.
- Civil Service Commission will also consider adaptive processes for scheduling, interviewing, applying, collecting of necessary and relevant information that can better meet the opportunities to attract and retain a diverse and inclusive group of candidates.

Mayor Whaley asked what these recommendations would change.

Ken Thomas said not really anything. David Lawrence said it would provide Civil Service with flexibility to figure out the right method.

Mayor Whaley suggested that the group hold the civil service recommendations and do something more comprehensive later.

Sgt. Heyob then kicked off a discussion about goals, underscoring that recruitment is key.

David Lawrence gave a presentation about the city and county current demographics

William Gillespie suggested that we want to get the department to be 40% African American to match the city. He suggested that should be done in 10 years.

David Lawrence suggested working to get each class to be 40% Black, meaning 7 or 8 new Black officers per class. David also suggested building in accountability mechanisms.

Currently, the applicant pool is typically 10 to 15 percent Black. That is then the same on the eligible list.

Joshua Ward asked if we could have a goal for recruitment and for the class

David Lawrence suggested a goal for each step of the process, which holds up accountable for any points in the process that might be disproportionately affecting Black applicants.

Natasha Spears suggested that the city's demographics might change in 10 or 15 years.

David Lawrence reiterated a class-by-class strategy, which would allow for demographic change over time.

Mayor Whaley suggested a recruitment goal, a per class goal, and an audacious goal for the force overall.

Sgt. Heyob said that DPD is pushing for incremental increases – a percent increase in nontraditional applicants, but does not have the info to share for the meeting. He will email later.

How do we create a culture to support this? It will have to be a group process. Need to cater to applicants.

The group was interested in 10 or 15 years to get to DPD being 40% Black. Asked DPD and Civil Service to be ready to discuss what that would take in the next meeting.

Chrisondra Goodwine said she liked the idea of being able to adjust over time. Start slower and speed up.

William Gillespie asked about a full time recruitment unit.

Sgt. Heyob said it was being created and strategic planning was underway. They have a \$12,000 budget for 2021. It is heavy on ads because of COVID. There is a 6 person team when actively recruiting, 3 year round.

William Gillespie said he did not think \$12,000 was a robust budget.

Cornell Trammel asked how to get a consent decree

Ken Thomas explained that you must be sued by the Department of Justice for discriminatory practices. Dayton has had one before. DOJ imposed standards.