

August 25, 2020 – Recruitment Working Group Meeting

Mayor opens with an acknowledgement of Jacob Blake's shooting and the unrest in Kenosha. Adds additional urgency to this conversation.

Judge Parker adds in that he is grateful for the working groups' candor, and the good discussions so far.

Meeting begins with a quick recap of the listening sessions on civil service that occurred the week prior.

- Issues that emerged included the timing of the civil service test (ie, proctored during the day) and the challenges of securing facilities for the physical fitness exam. Both of these issues draw out the recruitment timeline.

Civil Service presented data on applications over the last five years

- Total number of applicants is down
- High number of people self-selecting out of the process, ie, not showing up for the next step
  - o WG member William Gillespie suggested that this is because of the long timeline for the process

Discussion on the meaning of "diversity" in this context. The data conversation has mostly focused on recruiting black officers, not "all diversity." This led to a discussion about training, and whether or not the racial makeup of the force was most important, or if officers of all races need to be trained to be anti-racist

- Group, through adopted charter, agreed that diversity would include racial diversity, but also diversity of background, educational experiences, etc.
- WG member suggestion that the group create goals for recruitment on different measures of diversity.

Officer Savage discussed the training she was currently doing at the Academy on Diversity and Procedural Justice. This training always occurs within the first two weeks of the Academy.

- Clearly significant intersection between Recruitment and Training groups to make sure police have adequate background and skills to behave in an antiracist manner
- WG members, including Natasha Spears and Rev. Xavier Johnson asked for more details about the training itself. Will Smith proposed an inter-group listening session with the training group to get an update on what they've learned about the training in implicit bias and cultural competency

Sgt. Heyob gave a presentation on recruitment (available at <https://www.daytonohio.gov/898/Recruitment-Promotion>)

- Oregon District shootings created small jump in applicants, but didn't result in many more recruits

WG member Natasha Spears asked the group not to use the term "minority" and to be more specific about groups that are being discussed.

She also pointed out that the presentation given by Sgt. Heyob didn't seem to align with the DPD recruitment videos (available here) that were militaristic. The county sherriff's office produced a video with a very different tone that seemed to emphasize a diverse set of skills and people that were needed to be a good officer (available here)

- Sgt. Heyob said that who was creating the videos produced that result. The videos are typically produced by the recruiting officers themselves, who are often "volun-told" to take on the position early on in their careers. These officers were attracted to the job for those reasons, so they recreated that in the video.
- WG member Chrisondra Goodwine pointed out that there doesn't seem to be sufficient departmental focus on recruitment. The job of recruitment falling to new staff, especially without resources, is not a recipe for success. She also asked why the age cap was at 35 for recruits.

Sgt. Heyob mentioned that they are now accepting applications for the full-time recruiting position. Last year, when it was initially created, it was hard to get people interested. Now that it has been established, he thinks there will be more and better applicants this time around.

Mayor Whaley noted that there has not been enough organizational focus – including by the Commission – on the issue of police recruitment. Not just within DPD.

WG member Travis Dunnington suggested that there needs to be an intentional focus on hiring recruiters of color if the goal is to hire recruits of color.

WG member David Fox mentioned that his sister was a recruiter of color. He asked for the last 50 years of data on how many graduates of the Academy were black in each class.

- Could a reachable goal be 10 black recruits per class by 2025?

WG member Rev. Josh Ward suggested it may be useful to have listening and learning sessions with young African Americans about why they are not interested in becoming police. He agreed that setting goals would help to guide concrete strategy development to meet those goals. Natasha Spears mentioned that the Community Police Council had done something along those lines through the Speak, Be Heard, Be Considered program.

Sgt. Heyob gave a presentation on the Homegrown Heroes program that is available at <https://www.daytonohio.gov/898/Recruitment-Promotion>

- He outlined one of the key challenges for why DPD has not had the success that Dayton Fire has in the program. Dayton Fire can recruit directly out of high school, but sworn Dayton Police must be 21 by OPOTA rules because they deal with alcohol and firearms.
- However, they have begun to explore options for hiring 18 to 20 year olds into NON-SWORN positions

Officer Savage discussed the new program they are beginning at Ponitz HS to prepare high school students for careers in law enforcement. The class just began, and is now all online due to COVID-19.

- The program started at Ponitz, but they would like to expand to all DPS high schools. The program is completely voluntary, and targets 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders.
- They are looking specifically at creating a private security certificate program that could allow recent HS grads to get a job in security until they are old enough to become DPD recruits.
- Sgt. Heyob pointed out that Ofc. Savage is doing this program alone
- Several working group members, including David Fox, Rev. Rockney Carter, and Cornell Williams said they would like to help Ofc. Savage. David Fox mentioned the previous iteration of the Ponitz program, which started in 2013 but then was cut by DPS in 2017 or so. Ofc. Savage said she felt confident it would stay in place this time because it has city support

Ofc. Savage talked about how she believes it is also important to hire more people who grew up in Dayton. Only 6 people in the current recruit class are from the city. While the recruitment efforts are focused on Dayton, they have not been yielding high numbers of recruits,

- Ofc. Savage talked about how she focused her recruitment efforts at the grassroots level – talking to aunts and grandmothers about policing as a career. But when she would leave her information with them, she would never get the call from the kid.
- She said she thought many families considered police to be a “necessary evil” and didn’t encourage their children to have careers in law enforcement. If they want to work for the city, they think of jobs in street maintenance or waste collection, not law enforcement. It will take the community to change that.

WG member Susan Souther talked about the need to focus on recruiting black officers and people of color.

- Sgt. Heyob discussed the efforts to recruit at HBCUs, specifically Wilberforce and Central State, but that had not produced many applicants.
- He also talked about attending NAACP meetings with Derrick Forward to try to recruit, but had not gained applicants through that venue either
- But DPD keeps trying new things when other things don’t pan out (ie, Homegrown Heroes, DPS program)

Chrisondra Goodwine requested the 2021 DPD recruitment budget. It is not yet finalized.

The meeting wrapped up with Mayor Whaley thanking people for their participation. The next meeting will be in one week on September 1.