

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
TUESDAY- - JUNE 29, 2020- -5:30 P.M.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft convened the meeting at 5:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL - Present: Councilmembers Daysog, Knox White, Oddie, Vella, and Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft – 5. [Note: The meeting was conducted via Zoom.]

Absent: None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, NON-AGENDA

(20-439) Paul Foreman, Alameda, stated the routine invoking of reducing public speaking time gives the public the impression that their thoughts are not valued; urged that the Mayor first ask if there is a motion to waive the time limits prior to just invoking the limit.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

(20-440) Recommendation to Develop a Work Plan, including Community Dialogue, to Address the Following: 1. Unbundling Services Currently Delivered by the Police Department; 2. Systemic Racism; 3. a Review of Police Department Policies and Practices; 4. Police Department Accountability and Oversight; 5. a Review of Laws that Criminalize Survival; and 6. Other Matters which may be Pertinent, including Vacancies.

The Assistant City Manager made a brief presentation.

Councilmember Oddie inquired whether Council is looking at systemic racism as a broader societal, Citywide issue, and not focusing specifically on accusing the Police Department or Officers in the Department, of racism; stated that he just wants to be clear what Council is looking at.

The Assistant City Manager responded that he has heard it to be a conversation about either organizationally or with the community; the particular component of the work program has not been directed towards the Police Department; it has been organizationally as the City of Alameda and as the broader community, which is why it is not embedded in the work plan tonight.

Councilmember Oddie stated in the future, it would be helpful to bifurcate the topic on the agenda that addresses Police reform so there is not confusion that the focus is on one particular department.

The Assistant City Manager stated the work plan could do that going forward.

Stated some suggestions to codify now, in terms of goals and measurements that everyone can agree on, include defining unacceptable behavior, making sure it stops and the requirement for practical transparency: Ben Calica, Alameda.

Expressed concern about the serious problems of using Police to handle situations involving mentally ill citizens; urged unbundling of Police services to find a better solution: Lorin Salem, Alameda.

Discussed the recent Council decision to remove the use of the Police Department's emergency response armored vehicle and Officers in school: Jason Horvath, Alameda Police Officer.

Stated that she supports changing policing in the City, including defunding the Police Department by 50%, defunding the pay of Officers involved in detaining Mr. Watkins and investigation in the 2018 Gattenby incident: Jenice Anderson, Alameda.

Stated that she hopes for progressive, solid actions as a result of the public comments; she is interested to know how many civil rights incidents have happened resulting in payouts to victims' families: Cheri Johansen, Alameda.

Urged Council to proceed with three things in mind when creating the work plan: listen, act, and be accountable: Laura Cutrona, Alameda.

Stated that he is glad Council is keeping the issue on the agenda and moving it forward; suggested any community participation be a robust process, inclusive and fact-based; urged against a Council-led committee: Jono Soglin, Alameda

Stated policing as an institution was built on racist ideals and principles; she does not believe Councilmember Oddie's recommendation regarding training is a solution; urged unbundling of Police services: Alexa Arocha, Alameda.

Urged Council to use the many resources available in the community when developing the work plan; reminded Council of important youth demands: Lean DeLeon, Alameda.

Requested to be placed at the end of the speaker line so that Black and Brown speakers can be centered: Seth Marbin, Alameda

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft received consensus from the Council to rearrange the speaker order to center Black and Brown speakers.

Stated that she appreciated Councilmember Oddie sitting with dispatchers for three hours to see first-hand how things work; changes need to be made and people should put themselves in other's shoes: Keisha Brooks, Alameda Dispatcher.

Stated that he does not understand how Council can run its own process when they are a part of the systemic racism; a community process cannot be held until there is

accountability of elected and public officials; an independent oversight committee should be formed, but not without first reallocating Alameda Police Department (APD) funds to community support programs and services or enacting an immediate 50% reduction in the APD budget: Amos White, Alameda American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) People Power.

Stated that he experienced Police injustice in Alameda at a young age; suggested the framework for the process should be truth and reconciliation; urged the Council and the City to engage people who have been targeted to be able to come forward to speak their truths; until that happens, there can be no justice: Rasheed Shabazz, Alameda.

Stated that he encourages the City Manager and Council to consider a change of leadership in the Police Department; he is looking forward to the independent review of the May 23<sup>rd</sup> incident: Walter Yonn, Alameda.

Stated the Council should be better educated to truly represent the community's interest; there is an urgency to deal with the issues and a work plan must be community-led to be worthwhile: Thomas Mariadason, Alameda.

Expressed appreciation for the Council's continued attention to all the Police issues; suggested looking at the Police union agreement: Cheryl Taylor, Alameda

Stated Officer Horvath's comments were disparaging to some speakers; needing Police in schools because of crime and an armored vehicle because there are guns are faulty arguments; urged community members to pay close attention to which side Councilmembers are taking so they can elect officials that represent the people: James Bergquist, Alameda.

Stated systemic racism is about unequal outcomes; the school-to-prison pipeline creates psychological and physical risks to students of Color; he agrees with defunding the Police by 50%; training has negative consequences for People of Color; expressed support for community-led organizations separate from Council: Wesley Swedlow, Alameda.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft inquired the status of School Resource Officers (SROs) in Alameda.

The Police Chief responded that he informed the City Manager and the School Superintendent a month ago that he intended to pull SROs out of the schools; the primary reason is staffing issues and school has not been in session since March 16; Council voted to approve a temporary suspension of the SRO program.

Discussed the importance of finding creative ways to center Black and Brown voices in the future; stated no matter how well-intentioned the community is, there is not the lived experience: Seth Marbin, Alameda.

Stated that she was upset about the perceived Police policy of not answering non-criminal calls from the public; urged that the City have a clear decision making process on policies regarding City services so the public is not confused: Toni Grimm, Alameda.

Stated taking until 2022 to establish Police accountability and a review board seems like a very long time; the events of May 23<sup>rd</sup> seem like clear cause to fire someone; expressed support for reductions in the Police budget: Jeff Lewis, Alameda.

Stated there are underlying issues of cultural and structural racism in the Police Department; urged Council to consider a community-based approach and critical cases of mental illness when unbundling Police services: Quinn Weaver, Alameda.

Stated a 50% defunding of the Police is a good start; a citizen oversight committee needs to be implemented immediately: Annie Murray, Alameda

Stated that he appreciated the quick response of the Council to center Black and Brown speakers; encouraged Council to continue a creative mindset going forward; he is impressed by the local young people who have become models in the role of transforming Police: Indi McCasey, Alameda.

Stated Alameda needs better oversight and better accountability; urged Council to take action sooner rather than later because she feels Black and Brown people are still being targeted: Melodye Montgomery, Alameda.

Thanked Council for putting together a thoughtful process for re-imagining policing in the community; urged Council to think about the needs, wants and what can be achieved; stated there is a lot of opportunity to do good and build a system that works and is part of the community: Michele Ellson, Alameda.

Stated City Hall needs to take a public stand and use the recent car vandalism incident as a teaching moment to stand against racism; she hopes a citizens oversight board includes People of Color who have been hurt by racism: Jannette Eng, Alameda.

Stated that he appreciates the Council's commitment to address important issues in a timely fashion; he endorses the comments made about re-evaluating policing; he hopes the Council seizes the moment and understands the importance of making the community more compassionate: Robert Deutsch, Alameda.

In response to Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft's inquiry regarding COVID-19, Dr. Deutsch responded there is an increase in cases at Alameda Hospital, Highland Hospital, Alameda Health System and in the Bay Area; masking protects not only the wearer, but those around them; urged everyone to continue to not let their guards down until a vaccine is available.

Public Comment read into record:

Thanked Council for its commitment to make Alameda safer by directing more resources towards community programs that support mental health and public safety; stated that she supports reducing the Police budget to invest money into community programs; it is important to highlight the voices of Black residents and Black youth in Alameda; urged Council to take immediate action by no longer accepting donations from Police Unions and committing to defund the Police by 50% in the long term and 10% in the upcoming budget cycle: Molly Montgomery, Alameda.

Asked several questions of the Council regarding the Mali Watkins incident; stated APD needs to run independent of politics and should not be defunded; urged support for the Police Department and Chief Roller: Marilyn Grabina, Alameda.

Stated that she supports the ACLU People Power's demand of a 50% reduction of APD's budget; the process moving forward should center Black voices and the voices of those who have experienced harm from policing; urged Council to address reducing policing and re-imagining public health and safety with clear, actionable goals: Savanna Cheer, Alameda.

Urged Council to pledge to return all campaign or lobbying funds received from public sector Unions or stakeholders during the process and to commit to defunding APD by 50% in the long term; stated it is important that Black and Brown Alamedans have several prominent roles in the committees and boards to come: Erin Fraser, Alameda.

Thanked Council for its efforts in establishing a work plan; expressed support for a 50% decrease of the APD budget; urged unbundling of Police services to include an increased budget for community programs; stated the steering committees should select members who are committed to directly addressing the various inequalities in Alameda, especially racial inequality; expressed support for centralizing the voices of Black people and those most impacted by the harms of policing; urged Council to commit to not take any public safety Union or lobbyists' money at this time: D.N., Alameda.

Stated that he is a senior citizen and does not support cutting or defunding the Police; the Police have been courteous, committed and diligent in protecting Alameda citizens; now is the time to stand up and support our Police; the community moto is "Alameda stands against hate" and that includes the hate shown towards Alameda's wonderful Police: Robert K., Alameda.

Stated that she is concerned about the recent the direction Council has taken on behalf of the City that APD is to continue business as usual and must do so with less staffing, less lifesaving and protective equipment and must respond to all calls for service, including non-criminal calls; the conversation from thousands, including advocacy groups who are seeking equality, evaluations of Police policies, and for minimal police interactions for non-criminal offenses, is important and long overdue: Michaelia B., Alameda.

Expressed support and thanks to APD for the investigation of the 15 year old student, Iko; stated that she does not support defunding the Police and believes that more funding, more training and support of Alameda's Police Department is the only way to keep the community safe: Anna S., Alameda.

Stated that she demands serious and swift reallocation of money from the Police Department to community services, such as mental health, education, health care and homeless services; urged Council to show other cities and governments that Alameda cares about its citizens' lives more than its Police badges: Amy DeSmidt, Alameda.

Expressed support for the Police Department; stated that she is concerned about the changes Council is proposing; she does not agree with removing the armored vehicle and feels sorry that the City is being misrepresented: Maria Gutierrez, Alameda.

Stated that he strongly opposes the call for an immediate full defunding of the Police or an immediate large budget reduction; there is a need to reallocate funding to other agencies for services that can be performed without Police intervention, but not until going through the process of determining what services to transfer, the cost and the funding necessary to provide for Police response to serious crimes; Council has acted prudently in temporarily freezing the hiring of new Police Officers until the allocation process is worked through: Paul Foreman, Alameda.

Expressed concern about Councilmember Oddie seeming more concerned about accusing the police of being racist than he is about the conduct of the Police Department; stated the issue of systemic racism within APD is the concern being addressed; there is work to do in the larger society: April Madison-Ramsey, Alameda.

Expressed support for the Police Department; stated Black lives do matter; having a fair judicial system is absolutely necessary; racism on the Island is not okay; applauded APD for taking self-initiated steps in addressing matters; stated that she is concerned by Council policy changes that put the Island and the lives of People of Color in jeopardy: Tiffany Jackson, Alameda.

Urged Council to respond to questions regarding the system of policing in Alameda and to listen to Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC) about where funds will be directed when redistributing the budget; expressed concern about Police Officers wearing Blue Lives Matter face masks: Anonymous Alameda resident.

Shared a link from "ShowingUpForRacialJustice.org" that outlines how White supremacy manifests in organizational culture and common problematic characteristics and dynamics that emerge in particularly White-led institutions, as well as constructive actions to take in order to change organizational culture; urged Council to thoroughly read the piece and take into consideration its suggestions when making institutional reforms: Melissa Scott, Alameda.

Expressed support for the Police and distress over recent proposals to defund and alter the current leadership structure; stated the Police need more support and funding from Council; the Department is already understaffed and under-represented in the community; vacancies must be filled, overtime shortened, leave taken and training improved if the goal is to have a quality Police force: Anthony Russell, Alameda.

Stated Police budgets grow because the prison industrial complex grows; contact between oppressed people and Police must be decreased in order to make a meaningful change; Police dispatchers repeatedly try to trivialize the issue by individualizing the crimes of Officers, which is an institutional problem: Carlos Williams-Moreiras, Alameda.

Stated a 50% deduction of funds to the Police Department will not make Alameda a safer community; urged everyone to do a ride along with Police Officers to see what a day is really like in their shoes: Brittany Benvenuto, Alameda.

Urged Council to make an amendment to the City Charter and create a citizen-led oversight committee with members representing the system impacted; people should be appointed by the Council, not the Mayor; Alameda needs oversight and power with accountability; suggested redistributing \$150,000 earmarked for the 4th of July Parade to the Black residents of Alameda as a beginning gesture and action towards reparations: Debra Mendoza, Alameda.

Stated the plan put forward by Vice Mayor Knox White and Councilmember Vella is a good starting point; he is concerned about the need to give every Councilmember a subcommittee in the plan; suggested reducing the complexity the five subcommittees given the great amount of overlap of the topics: Zac Bowling, Alameda.

Expressed concern about issues related to the Mali Watkins incident and mental health and support for keeping the armored vehicle; stated Alameda Police do an excellent, professional job, given the resources that they have; he does not support defunding the Police; recommended Councilmembers go on monthly or bimonthly ride-alongs with the Police: Rowland Wing, Alameda.

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Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft recessed the meeting at 7:30 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

(20-441) Councilmember Oddie moved approval of waiving the nine minute Council speaking limit.

Vice Mayor Knox White seconded, which carried by the following roll call vote: Councilmembers Daysog: Aye; Knox White: Aye; Oddie: Aye; Vella: Aye; and Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft: Aye. Ayes: 5

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Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated the process is about finding solutions to serious long-standing issues in the community; it should not be about further dividing community or increasing mistrust; all energy needs to be directed to achieving important objectives; she would like to look at the most effective ways to accomplish the goals; she has thought a lot about the topic of systemic racism; one definition is a system or structure that have procedures or processes that disadvantage African Americans; it is important to address and acknowledge racism exists outside of community institutions; while Council may not be able to legislate to address it, it needs to be part of the discussion; she would like to have input from all five Councilmembers working together; she was surprised by the ready-made proposal brought to the rest of the Council by two Councilmembers; she prefers organic discussion with Councilmembers starting from the same place, also keeping in mind transparency and bringing the public along; expressed concern about comments regarding the details of the Vice Mayor's proposal, which were not included in the proposal or staff report from the last meeting; she learned the comments were from Vice Mayor Knox White's detailed Facebook post; a lot of people many not have seen it; she anticipated the Council would be addressing the issue starting fresh today; expressed concern; stated that she was a little thrown-off; she would have preferred details be posted be part of the staff report or as an attachment so all Councilmembers can be on the same page; inquired how the Council can have a participatory discussion given she, and perhaps others, have not had an opportunity to read Vice Mayor Knox White's post.

Vice Mayor Knox White responded it was not his intent to just drop his proposal and ask for support; he likes to get a lot of community input; he worked with Councilmember Vella on thinking of ways to move forward and what it would look like; it has to be fair, center Black and youth voices; members of the community who are not often led to the table have been brought forward; he posted on Facebook and asked for feedback.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft inquired whether Vice Mayor Knox White shared the document with the rest of the Council, to which Vice Mayor Knox White responded that he sent it to the City Clerk to be distributed; the reason Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft had not seen it yet was because he wanted to make sure everyone had their say first before diving into something that had bullet points; he tried to outline a way forward, but did not anticipate there would be support for any one particular proposal; he is happy to discuss his thoughts rather than defending why he thought engaging with the community before the meeting was worthwhile.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated that she does want to hear Vice Mayor Knox White's thoughts and she also believes in engaging with the community; her concern is that it is a limited community as he did not share it with people other than those that follow him on Facebook; she wants to have a full and robust discussion from all Councilmembers and staff.

Councilmember Oddie stated it would be good to hear thoughts before getting into a specific plan of action.



Vice Mayor Knox White concurred with Councilmember Oddie; stated talking about what everyone had to say rather than focusing on a specific proposal was what he had in mind for the discussion.

Councilmember Oddie stated the job of the Council as elected representatives is to set policy; the City Manager's job is to take policy direction and implement it; inquired whether Alameda Police Officers have worn Blue Lives Matter face masks.

The City Manager responded that he is hearing about the masks for the first time tonight and will check on it tomorrow; stated the Police Chief may be able to provide more information.

Councilmember Oddie stated if it is true; it is not conducive to working together; pretty divergent views were heard today; there was also lots of commentary about the fate of the Officers involved in the Mr. Watkins incident; requested an update on what information can be made available to the public and whether or not it is against the Charter to ask the City Manager to fire the Officers involved.

The City Attorney responded it would be a violation of the Charter for Council to ask the City Manager to take any disciplinary or termination action against the Officers; stated very little information can be made public as State law makes it clear that any information related to an investigation of a Police Officer is considered confidential; the City could not invite public participation in the interview of an Officer or allow the public to review any investigator's findings or conclusions; the City could confirm the employment status of the Officer.

Councilmember Oddie inquired whether the Alameda Police Union contract includes the State law regarding confidentiality.

The City Attorney responded the confidentiality provision is covered by State law; the Council would not have the ability to adopt ordinances or have contracts changing the confidentiality provisions.

Councilmember Oddie stated that he wants to make sure people understand Council is not taking action one way or another, which is not because they are being idle or incompetent or ignorant of the public outcry, but because it is what the State law guarantees for the Officers whether the public agrees with it or not; there is a limited amount of information that Council can provide other than employment status; he has been on the Council nearly six years and has not had an issue that was so emotional and has such a dichotomy of viewpoints; Councilmembers have been called insensitive, racist, reactionary, too slow, corrupt, and complicit, which is such a wide gamut of things that all cannot be true; what was missing from the conversation, and is disappointing, is that there is an 'either/or' which is not what policy-making is about; he will never know the experiences of being an African American teen walking to his car or a Central American immigrant with a tail light out; quoted the Mayor of Chicago, Laurie Lightfoot, regarding how defunding the Police ignores how reform works and would hurt diversity

of the force; he will not make policy by hashtag; Alameda has done a good job in terms of diversity in hiring, which is lost if blanket percent cuts are made; he has not met a racist cop in Alameda, but others say they have, which everyone should remain cognizant of; what Council needs to do is talk about building authentic, lasting relationships; what that means to him is that everyone has to put in the hard work to build partnerships and have some empathy in trying to understand what it is like to be in the other person's shoes; he sat in with dispatch and saw how much is asked of the Police Department; the onus is on the Council to make changes; empathy is important; the Council are everyday human beings; the same goes for the Police Officers; they are diverse and have families; a broad brush should not be painted against every single Police Officer who works in Alameda or against every Councilmember; on the flip side, Alameda's Officers need to do a better job of empathizing; there has to be a willingness to change culture; there are a lot of systemic race issues in the country and the City; gave an example of when his children were in school at Bay Farm; stated the school was able to raise \$64,000 through the Parent Teacher Association; Paden School could not even raise 10% of that and Bay Farm did not want to share with Paden; there are new schools on one side of town and crumbling schools on the other side; there are constant battles over the homeless; there are zoning issues; attitudes need to change; there are things in the Charter that have racial impacts; the entire criminal justice system outside the Police Department needs a lot of reform.

Councilmember Daysog thanked the residents for participating in tonight's meeting, an indication of democracy clearly at work; discussed his experience with the Alameda Police as a youth in Alameda; stated the Police are here because they serve the residents; described a March 2016 break-in incident at his significant other's house; stated he was impressed by the responding Officers who put their lives at risk at a moment's notice in order to protect and serve all; when he looks at reforming the Police, he sees it as an opportunity to institutionalize new ways of doing things in light of what has happened in the past and also the recent May 23, 2020 incident; he looks forward to the conversation of improving the Alameda Police force; it is his opinion that there is no need to frame the discussion in rhetoric where there is no reconciliation or middle ground; he sees the Alameda Police force as people who will put their lives on the line in time of emergency; he also sees the Police force that has always been a vital part of the community's social fabric, as coaches or members of the rotary; Council should seize the opportunity to improve the Alameda Police force; as he discusses the ways he thinks the Police force could be improved, he wants to be clear to the citizens what he is for and what he is not for' he is not in favor of a 50% defunding of the Police Department; his sense is that the Council will not defund by 50% and will look at ways to generate some efficiencies to provide the new level of services needed; he is not in favor of removing the use of the armored vehicle and would like Council to reconsider the matter; he agrees with the Police Chief and Officer Horvath that the armored vehicle may be the type of civilian vehicle needed in times of emergency; he agrees with the rest of the Council not to militarize the Police; he is in favor of three items in the staff report: 1) unbundling Police services, which should be more specific; he likes the Eugene, Oregon CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets) program which could be a solution to changing the way the Police deal with mental health issues;

budget-wise, the program could be scaled to the size which would work in Alameda; 2) the power of dealing with systemic racism occurs when it is married with Police Department accountability and oversight; if a Police commission or advisory board is pursued, Council must be upfront in stating one of the reasons for the creation is to deal with long-standing issues of racism that have been a part of Alameda's Police force; one particular task to come out of a Police commission could be strengthening the manual or policies with regard to training and racial profiling; 3) reviewing Police Department policies and practices, including dealing with crowd control issues; he would like to move forward on the three issues concretely; Councilmembers have to try their best to speak the truth as they see it and sometimes that might not coincide with how the world is seen; his responsibility to the people is to articulate what is on his mind and what he sees are the best policies for the City of Alameda going forward; growing up in Alameda has put him in a unique position to see the Police through a different lens; he respects the perspective of others affected by the events that have been happening nationally; he hopes the community can move forward around concrete issues he has put forward and come out better for it.

Councilmember Vella discussed a better method for centering Black and Brown voices during public comment; stated the robotic voice is really hard to follow; the inflections are sometimes disconcerting; expressed concerned about the order of the public comment being read; stated some came through via email and some through anonymous text, which seems to be a way to get around the time limits; the process needs to be figured out; suggested going back to having someone read comments; stated that she is glad to hear some members of the community talk about how safe and secure they feel in Alameda; it is her goal, and the goal of her fellow Councilmembers, to make sure that is the experience of everybody in Alameda and not at the expense of others who do not feel the same; Council needs to acknowledge the members of the public who say they do not feel safe and secure or comfortable moving around in the community; Council needs to take heed, listen and find ways to respond; Alameda can move towards being a community that provides safety and security for all; safety and security for all are loaded words; however, part of how community services are structured is about redefining what those words mean and making sure there is space for everybody in the community to feel those things, regardless of race, gender, creed, and ethnicity; every City department serves residents and are not independent, autonomous wings of government; the City and Council are all accountable; she likes to think that she has over 80,000 bosses; all Councilmembers do; Council represents the entire community, not just segments or districts; she is concerned when there are people in the community who feel like they are not being served; she would like to find ways to improve that, which is a value and virtue shared by her colleagues; the trauma from a bad response is life-changing; shared an anecdote reflective of a bigger picture; stated that she is a woman of color, member of Council and was heavily pregnant when Police banged on her door trying to do a mental health call, which was made by a criminal stalker misusing Police authority; the anecdote is a commentary in the discussion for anti-racism beyond the four walls of the Police Department; it should inherently be part of the review of policies within the Police Department and also a part of the larger conversation throughout the City, the hiring process, through policies and

practices; it is about diversity in all areas Citywide; there is also a bigger problem of the community and people weaponizing the Police force; it is a problem when there are people who feel confident and comfortable enough to call the Police and misuse their authority in that way; it is not just about systemic racism, it is about anti-racism, about misuse of different types of governmental, structural or institutional power; the issue is also more than just law enforcement; she would like to make it very clear that she stands by the direction Council unanimously gave to review policing policies; however, the conversation is also about the overall reimagining of services; if the title of the conversation includes law enforcement, then the responses will continue to be about law enforcement; she thinks Council would want to transcend and move beyond that; services need to be provided that are responsive to what people need; it is a disservice to the Officers and the public when armed Officers are sent to respond to a mental health scenario; Alameda can do better and has done better; there are models and Alameda has the ability to shift how services are reimagined; she would also like to focus on the process; she wants to talk about the end goal; she is not married to what the subcommittees would look like; there are five issues which may have some overlap; there are also issues that would require a deep-dive; she thinks having one group focus on the deeper issues may be helpful to inform policy and practices moving forward; there will always be tension when discussing issues of systemic racism, racism, anti-racism or power structures; it is not an either/or conversation and sometimes it is uncomfortable; acknowledging the tension leads to a better conversation and better work product; Council needs to be deliberate and thoughtful and create a safe space for people; create the space and let the people lead; thematically the question is how will Council create safety and security for all people in Alameda; she would like to spend time considering the bigger questions regarding the steering committee, such as who will do the selection, what is the process, what is the commitment being asked of the individuals; Council needs to be thoughtful, inclusive, consider offering a stipend and find a way to include other voices and trying to find individuals who have had unique experiences and can speak from that perspective; she feels very strongly that space needs to be created in the short term to begin working; although she is not married to the number of people on a committee, it will be difficult to have too many people; she does not want to have too few seats that people are not included; it would be perfectly appropriate for the Mayor to be part of the over-arching conversation; a process needs to be created where the people can tell the Council what they want within the finer lines; then, Council can work with staff; having ad hoc Councilmembers involved reminds people of the confines of the City Charter and Council authority; she supports the overall structure of the process laid out by herself and Vice Mayor Knox White, but also tried to hear what her colleagues want included; she would like a process that everyone can stand by and that will get to an end product which will really be transformative.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated her preference would be that all Councilmembers throw out ideas and suggestions for moving forward; she does not want to work from the attachment, which can be sent on to staff to be factored into the mix.

Vice Mayor Knox White stated he was taken aback for being called out for talking about ideas to the people Council represents; noted the Police Chief, as well as other

Councilmembers, received an email about Police Officers wearing Blue Lives Matter face masks; the Police Chief stated it was not a big deal, but there is now a policy against wearing the masks; he raised the issue because he was very concerned by Councilmember Oddie's comments trying to equivocate that everyone's experiences are the same; everyone's experience is not the same; he has to remind himself to stay centered on how lucky, entitled, and privileged he is as a middle-aged White man; he agrees that the Officers are people; they do a difficult job and he has a lot of respect for them; he has done ride-alongs and has talked about how they impacted him; the impact of the Officers hearing the community complain about the racists system is not equivalent to the impact on people and speakers; he looks forward to having many conversation regarding the issue; racism is not an individual action, it is a system; making it an individual action allows us to feel that somehow we are morally superior to people that we label as racists; the incident on May 23<sup>rd</sup> seems that we are indicting specific people as being immoral, which is not what is happening; he has never once talked about the specific action of any given person involved in the incident; at the end of the day, it is a system that the Council perpetuates; when people are told to calm down and step back, the system is being perpetuated; he echoes all of Councilmember Vella's comments; he was a little disappointed that the Council asked for a conversation to come forward on a topic that turned into a conversation about law enforcement when actually the adopted language was regarding the City provision of community services, responses and law enforcement, including policy review of existing policies; it was intentional so as not to get into the argument of whether the Police are good or bad; there will be law enforcement in Alameda to provide crime and violence prevention; when he talks to the Police Department staff at all levels, they talk about all the types of responses Council has made them responsible for; all Council has done is say there are plans and programs in place to be responsive; Council cannot one day say the Police are no longer responding to 5150 calls and have the Fire Department do it, but not talk to them or the City Manager about it; he thinks Alameda needs a community-led process, not a staff-led process; Council needs to trust the community to tell them which direction to go and to help identify goals and objectives; what he is proposing tonight is to identify a couple of Councilmembers who could work to find seven to nine people to fill a steering committee; tonight's meeting can be continued so the names can be approved by the Council next Tuesday; he proposes to hold some Town Halls this month to get community feedback and propose the objectives and goals before the whole Council; the steering committee members should not all be of like minds and should represent a diverse range of voices; most people would agree with what Council wants to provide, which is safety and security for everybody; because of tonight's conversation, which is perpetuated by City staff and is extremely problematic, people are under the idea that Council is somehow suggesting the Police are not going to come if someone is being attacked or if their house is being broken into; nobody has proposed that; what he proposes, as a general idea, is for a community-led process that is kicked-off tonight; Council is a month into this; next week will be a month since the video came out; Council needs to start moving forward to identify the two Councilmembers to serve as ex-officio non-voting members of a steering committee to bring back input from the document and have staff start looking at the Police Chief's June 10<sup>th</sup> policy direction to identify ways to put things into action and come back for discussion so that when the

community is told the Police are not going to respond to non-crime calls, Council will also be able to tell them what that means and how concerns will be responded to; what is important is to get going so by the end of the month, there are goals and objectives Council has agreed to; systemic racism is what Council is trying to overcome, but the question is how the City can start acting like anti-racists and how actions can be taken that work against racism and it imbues everything Council does; he has benefitted from and participated in racism; he is part of a racist system and every time he does not speak up or take action, he is perpetuating that; he rejects the idea that law enforcement, community services, planning, or anything can be talked about without talking about racism; Council needs to work with law enforcement staff and help them understand that racism and racist outcomes can be discussed without impugning the people's moral goodness or badness because that is a false dichotomy; we cannot set up the dichotomy that if we are not cheering on the Police as saviors and patriots that somehow we are anti the people and the job that they are doing; every year Council should meet with them outside the Police Station and honor the Officers that have been shot and killed; he appreciates Mr. Horvath speaking out and being open, even though they may disagree on the tactical vehicle; at the end of the day, he is here to represent the people that voted; he does not want to talk about law enforcement being good or bad; he wants to talk about what the community want; and how to get to the outcomes desired; he understands the frustration and perception that Council is dragging its feet; the budget can be cut tomorrow, but there is nowhere to put the money and Council will not fire half the Police Department overnight; he does not think Council will fire half the Police Department, but everything is on the table; tonight the Council needs to identify and approve a process; he hopes it will be community-led, not staff-led; he appreciates staff's input, but does not want to put more on their plate right now; staff will be engaged and involved but the people who do not generally get to sit at the table should be heard and be put front and center.

Councilmember Oddie stated he respects Vice Mayor Knox White and enjoys working with him, but there was recently passed a Code of Conduct which basically says Councilmembers are not supposed to attack the integrity or impugn other colleagues; he has tried to live up to that Code of Conduct and is not sure Vice Mayor Knox White's remarks lived up to that; he does not think a person can be called a racist just because they want folks to see the human side of someone behind a badge; as leaders, when things are said, whether they are important or not, they mean things and people react to them; when Councilmembers get up in public or go on Facebook and accuse people of things whether or not it is true, it will incite hardening of feelings; he witnessed a hardening of feelings on one side with a group that will not even utter the phrase Black Lives Matter and another group that wants to abolish the Police Department; neither one of those are feasible alternatives; in trying to ask people to calm down the rhetoric, he is being criticized in violation of the Code of Conduct for asking for a rational approach to solving a major problem; he does agree with a lot of what has been said and believes goals can be set today; if the goals are centered around Black Lives Matter and everyone regardless of age, race and gender; everyone has to feel secure and be secure, then everything else can fall into place; he is open to however the process can be done; he likes the ideas Vice Mayor Knox White and Councilmember

Vella mentioned; at some point, Council, as leaders, have a responsibility to chill the rhetoric and act like leaders, not inciters; people are looking for the Council to be leaders; if one goes against the Code of Conduct and attacks another Councilmember by name, it incites people; he respects and has a high opinion of Vice Mayor Knox White, but inciting people is not helpful for a solution; he concurs with Vice Mayor Knox White in that he wants to envision where to be and build to that; hopefully Council spends the rest of today talking about that and figuring out how to get there.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated she wants to acknowledge all the hard work the Council is doing; the Council has had more tough issues in a short period of time, than any other Council; it has been 24/7 starting with the COVID-19 pandemic; then, the second crisis; it has not been easy; many of her colleagues have said they are all humans with feelings and everyone chose to get involved; Council is committed and passionate and also impacted by everything happening; there are impact of hearing public speakers who are very one-sided, which is absolutely their first amendment right; however, it is Council's responsibility to rise above the fray and understand that there is more to an issue than meets the eye or it simply is not possible to do some of the things people are calling for Council to do; advised engaging in self-care; stated these are tough times to be a leader; she does not want to be seeming to attack each other; stated she was not chastising Vice Mayor Knox White at all and was sharing her feelings and concerns about the way his proposal was put forward, along with her fervent desire for the Council to do their best to work collectively; suggested everyone take it a little easier on themselves; stated everyone has been working really hard on really tough issues that are not just local, but national and worldwide; she reminds herself every day that this is not the White House and does not have to be divisive; it is not us against them; Council will always stick to the truth.

Vice Mayor Knox White stated he respects Councilmember Oddie; pointing out certain behaviors is not an attack on a person's character, although he understands it can land that way; he looks forward to talking more about the issue offline.

In response to Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft's inquiry regarding policy changes, the Police Chief stated that he appreciates everything said tonight; he agrees with Councilmember Vella that tension is good in conversations and nothing moves forward without it; he is happy to be part of tension-filled conversations; it is a regular part of what he does in his office; he also appreciates that behaviors can be called out without calling out people; he wanted to point out to Vice Mayor Knox White that some of the comments he might have been hearing from members of the Police Department do not have to do with toning-down rhetoric, but has to do with some of the things that were happening early on after videos of the May 23<sup>rd</sup> incident came out; some of the dialogue has been dialed-back a little bit, but people have been feeling a little hurt and attacked personally; he would also add it has happened with him even with members of Council, which has caused some lack of confidence in some members of the public when hearing statements on the news or theories that somehow he was looking the other way or engaged in some kind of cover-up, which is all absolutely false; as far as the policy changes, on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, the department dialed-back on a lot of self-initiated enforcement

because of COVID, not because of anything that happened, which was a month and a half before the May 23<sup>rd</sup> incident; the policy change were an effort to protect the Officers and the public from COVID, which he reported to the City Manager and Council; in his interview on June 10<sup>th</sup>, he was not making a drastic departure from what was already being done; the statement about not going to mental health calls was edited as he went on to say that he had hoped to start a conversation at City Hall about how to approach mental health calls, which has now happened; unfortunately, that portion was not included in the television report, which is regrettable; he has apologized to the City Manager that it could have been done in a better way; the policy direction, which is a procedural thing, was already in place on April 3<sup>rd</sup> and 100% COVID-related; he did not mean to cause any consternation in the community or with City Hall; he was also trying to respond to the reporters on what he can say to the people of Alameda to make them feel safer and be responsive; it is important for everyone to hear the clarification.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated she appreciates all the comments from the public; being able to walk in someone else's shoes becomes a useful attribute; she believes the youth today who have had negative experiences with law enforcement; she believes Alameda could do better; she met with the family whose car was vandalized and explained to them what the City is doing about racism issues in Alameda, including meeting about the issues; it is her hope to see some community task forces; the husband said he would love to be involved; as a former Marine, he protected and served people without knowing their skin color, which is the way things should work; the issue of unbundling Police services has some exciting possibilities; she has reached out to the coordinator of the CAHOOTS program; hopefully, he will be her guest this Friday at her Mayor's Town Hall; Alameda's Police Chief has reached out to the Eugene, Oregon Police Department to get information on how the Department works with the CAHOOTS program; there are also County services available; the Assistant City Manager has reached out to the Alameda County Behavioral Health Department Director to talk about how the City may be able to work with the County on some services; anything done should be fact-based and data-driven; she would like to look into more information on collecting and analyzing data on the number and types of calls received by Alameda's Dispatchers; it would be important in deciding how to reimagine the delivery of Police services and how mental health calls might be handled differently; the CAHOOTS program is unique because it is connected to a 30 year old health care institution, which is something Council would need to think about for Alameda; implicit biased training is important; it is also important to have stakeholders and Police at the table; she does not want it to be us against them and it is appropriate to have someone from the Police Department present when discussing the issue of Police policies and practices; she hopes Council would consider a youth advisory commission similar to the City of Oakland; it gives youth a voice in real time to talk about and raise issues; it is reasonable to say Council cannot do everything set forward at once, notwithstanding the public's desire to move quickly; Council will move with deliberate speed, but also needs to do it right; the one issue that could be set aside or referred elsewhere might be the laws that criminalize survivors; some of the topics might be good subjects for task forces; Council does need to talk about the size, mission, expectations and objectives of the task forces; she agrees with some of the speakers who said the process should be



community-led and that Council should not be a part of it; Councilmembers sitting in on a task force takes it in a different direction; the preferable way is for members of the community to meet with staff; there are some concerns with Brown Act issues that come into play when Councilmembers sit on subcommittees; she is happy to work with another Councilmember to work with staff on how to move forward; she would like to give staff direction and come out with a work plan and timeline; it would be helpful to have a Council subcommittee; she would be happy to work with Councilmember Vella on a subcommittee, subject to the approval of her colleagues.

Vice Mayor Knox White stated he would absolutely support a collaboration with Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft and Councilmember Vella; he is less interested in task forces; he prefers a steering committee, which does not make the decisions, but develops the process and figures out ways to bring in the community; he hopes to move forward tonight with the subcommittee as well as have a solid plan to have things come back; he would like a subcommittee that is actually an ex-officio, non-voting committee that comes back with a proposed process and goals and objectives by the end of month.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft concurred with Vice Mayor Knox White; stated that she would like the decision for a proposal and other considerations to be brought back to the Council through the subcommittee; she does not want to take an inordinate amount of time, just enough time to think it through well; Council also has to consider meetings will all have to take place virtually during this time of COVID.

Councilmember Oddie stated Council had an ad hoc committee for the America's Cup that held public meetings; he likes the idea of Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft and Councilmember Vella working together; guiding principles going forward can include basic categories and goals, geographic diversity, gender diversity, members of the Black community, community interest groups, business high impact, and centering Black and youth voices; as long as the proposal comes back quickly and is open and the community can be part of it; he agrees with Vice Mayor Knox White that Council can come up with the goals and objectives by the end of the month; the issue of accountability and the possibility of a citizens board has not been fleshed out, but ballot language would need to be considered.

In response to Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft's inquiry regarding how a citizen's oversight committee might be formed, the City Attorney stated the Council has wide-ranging discretion on how to ultimately form a committee and how it would function; depending on the function assigned to the committee, there may or may not need to be ballot action; for example, the Charter assigns administrative functions to the City Manager, and policy-making duties to the Council; if enough decision-making authority is assigned to the body, it could begin to infringe on the City Manager's authority to administer the Police Department; at that point, it would need voter consent; on the other hand, if a committee is established that gives Council and the City Manager recommendations about policy changes, ballot approval is clearly not needed as it would be an advisory committee.

Councilmember Oddie stated people would need to understand that if the ultimate outcome is to have a civilian body with more authority, it would have to go to the ballot; because of timing, implementation would not happen as quickly as people would want; Council would have to find a path forward.

The City Attorney stated the Council could not modify the Charter by Special election; it would have to be done at a general or primary election; so if not this year, it would go middle or end of 2022.

Councilmember Vella reiterated consensus she heard, which includes having a steering committee lay out the process; stated there would be a Council subcommittee; she would be happy to work with Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft; inquired whether there is agreement on the general scope of consideration and proposed over-arching goal; stated that she believes everyone agrees the issue goes beyond the law enforcement; she would like to hear from her colleagues on what they would like to see Council achieve; while many of the laws that criminalize survival are State laws, it will be a larger part of the conversation regarding policing policies and practices; she would like to get a sense of meeting dates and an overall timeline; Vice Mayor Knox White's goal was to get it done by the end of the month; she thinks the issue of community calls for oversight and accountability should be part of the community-led process; she would like change, but in order for it to be transformative change, getting something on the ballot should not be rushed; she is looking forward to robust conversation about what the community wants, what are the best practices and what has been effective in similar-sized communities; part of leadership would be outlining the process and then empowering the people to inform Council of their wants; she is excited to get buy-in and be able to say the process is community-led; she recognizes and does not want the digital divide to be an issue when it comes to the meetings; she would like to figure out ways the City would be able to provide devices to committee members who need them or solutions to make it work.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated that she would like to build into the process a way to measure outcomes; what makes Councilmember Vella ideal to be on the subcommittee is her understanding of policy as a labor lawyer.

In response to Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft's inquiry regarding staff timing, the Assistant City Manager stated staff could take the month of July and work through what the work plan is going to look like; using the sub-committee and steering committee concept works well; he would have to sit down and schedule specific dates with the Council; July is realistic.

Councilmember Daysog stated that he thinks the issue of unbundling Police services might require a separate community input process; one of the big reasons why Council is here is because the community was concerned about the way in which Mali Watkins was treated; the CAHOOTS program is a touchy-feely program that people are attracted to.

Vice Mayor Knox White stated he is not ready to move forward with any specifics tonight; he is not going to be able to support having a subcommittee come up with a process tonight that does not have dates or cannot come back with finalized amended goals and objectives by the end of the month; he cannot support the direction if there are no milestones; Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft's proposed subcommittee working with staff will slow things down; the community expects and deserves some action so they are not waiting another month; if Council is going to move forward with some model, he would like to know when it will be brought back, who will be on the steering committee and the process, so that there are goals and objectives by the end of the month; he does not want to wait another month.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated what she intends to work with Councilmember Vella very quickly come up with proposals that can be brought back to Council for finalization, but she would like to see specified plans, a timeline, measurables and how to decide outcomes; she would like to get a better idea of what body will help shape the process; July is very busy; Council may need to carve out time in August.

Councilmember Oddie stated with COVID, he is not going anywhere; he agrees with Vice Mayor Knox White that there has to be a definitive date; one of the beauties of the proposal is that it has a fixed, rapid schedule; there is unanimity regarding the unbundling; he wants to know how Council should proceed.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated there is agreement across the board that Council does need to unbundle Police services; she has a general sense and aspirational goal of what the resources would look like, but there is the need to analyze data; the question is what is the right model and how to get there in terms of funding.

Councilmember Oddie stated Council direction qualifies under Vice Mayor Knox White's definition of a pre-determined outcome.

Vice Mayor Knox White stated his proposal is that Council give staff, and the experts on the staff, the Police Chief's list of five different policies to come up with a model and return to Council with a recommendation; unbundling can be an ongoing conversation.

Councilmember Oddie inquired what the deliverable on unbundling would be from the steering committee.

Vice Mayor Knox White responded the steering committee would come back with community-derived goals and objective definitions, and also a process for having a conversation with the community to identify what unbundling looks like and what are the important things to unbundle; then it comes to Council for a decision.

Councilmember Vella stated she thinks everyone is in agreement that Council would come back by the end of July; a special meeting can be scheduled to actually get concurrence with the proposals; there will also be a number of town hall opportunities, recognizing that there are other committees and groups that are meeting; there also

needs to be discussion whether there should be consistent membership within the subcommittee; it is important to know whether members will be asked to be on the steering committee for a month or if they need to carve out time for a longer duration.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft concurred with Councilmember Vella regarding the amount of time envisioned for the community engagement; stated that she hopes the economy would open back up soon and people can get back to their livelihoods; inquired what the timeframe would look like.

Vice Mayor Knox White stated that he has heard comments from community members that Council will disperse too much; there is a lot of validity to that; anti-racism and unbundling are long term projects; he has a personal interest in engaging in the anti-racism work and how that looks at a City and City government level; he thinks the two issues should be reviewed by the end of the month; the other policy issues can be looked at on separate tracks, but have two or three tracks going on at the same time; he trusts the steering committee for the timeframe.

Councilmember Oddie stated he trusts that the steering committee would communicate to the members the expectations on the timeframe.

Councilmember Daysog stated he would be looking at the end of July or early August; the City of San Leandro has made major decisions regarding de-funding Police rapidly; he believes Alameda can make similar decision on the same timeframe; he would like to look at the CAHOOTS program as a model and Council can begin to make good decisions; staff can look into an additional range of other issues which he thinks can be done by the end of month.

In response to Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft's inquiry, the City Manager stated staff has some good direction and he will work with staff to set up the steering committee format and hopefully come back with staff report to Council by July 21<sup>st</sup>.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated she was looking for more than just status report.

The City Manager clarified that, at the minimum, staff would come back with status and a recommendation.

Councilmember Oddie moved approval of authorizing the creation of a steering committee comprised of Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft and Councilmember Vella to develop the scope and goal, with the membership based on the policy documents by Vice Mayor Knox White and Councilmember Vella, with a deadline to report back by July 31<sup>st</sup>.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated she would like the motion to base the work on both the policy document and the entire Council discussion.

Councilmember Oddie concurred with Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft and accepted the amendment to the motion.

Vice Mayor Knox White seconded the motion, added the clarification of reporting back with the proposal and the definition; stated that he wants to be clear there will be a final recommendation for goals, objectives and work plan.

On the call for the question, the motion carried by the following roll call vote: Councilmembers Daysog: Aye; Knox White: Aye; Oddie: Aye; Vella: Aye; and Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft: Aye. Ayes: 5

### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft adjourned the meeting at 10:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Irma Glidden  
Assistant City Clerk

The agenda for this meeting was posted in accordance with the Sunshine Ordinance.