

CITY OF REVERE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

August 5, 2021, Meeting

5:00 pm EDT

Location: City Hall Council Chambers or via Zoom

Meeting Minutes

1) Chairperson Janine Grillo Marra calls meeting to order.

2) Roll Call of Commissioners

- Lynn Alexis and Dr Garcia – present remotely on Zoom.
- Rev Tim Bogertman absent.
- All other Commissioners are present in person.

3) Arrive & Settle - Brief Silence

4) Approval of Minutes from the July 1st Meeting.

Chief Callahan MOTIONS to approve the minutes and Jalon Fowler seconds; All are in favor.

5) Topics for Discussion:

a. Presentation from Revere Police Department (RPD) on the Updated Use of Force Policy

Sergeant Joseph Turner presented the following key points:

- Failure to share information in the past has been an issue and this is huge progress to share “how and why” what the RPD (or any PD) does.
- Two components – A. What is Use of Force and B. Policy and Upgrades
- Reasonable Force is based on the Supreme Court ruling in Graham v. Connor
- Use of Force Continuum – Perceived Subject Actions, Threat Perception Categories, and Reasonable Officer Responses
- Officers are trained to consistently assess and be capable to increase or decrease level of response
- De-Escalation (time is most important factor)
 - Techniques to decrease the intensity of an encounter
 - Enable additional options to increase compliance or mitigate need to use higher level force
 - Historically these were naturally “good officers” with “good tactics” but now there is much more training
- Use of Force Training (why/when) – Defensive Tactics (how)
- Academy training includes 80 hours Use of Force training and Defensive Tactics; Also 40 hours of Firearms training
- During career, Officers receive 4-8 hours annually (RPD is at 8 hours - combined classroom and hands-on)
- Past 5 years includes Crisis Intervention Training
 - In future, additional Mental Health training

- New De-Escalation Instructor Training
- Future-Progressive Steps
 - More scenario-based training (Simunition)
 - Seek funds for additional training hours for Use of Force and De-Escalation
- Progressing Forward – RPD Policy
 - As of July 2021, RPD overhauled Use of Force Policy to stay current with reform mandates and national trends
 - New section: Mental Health “Encounters with Minors, Emotionally Disturbed, Mentally Ill, and Physically Disabled Persons”
 - De-Escalation emphasis
 - Chokeholds never trained or allowed (per MA) for more than 20 years
 - Officer Bystander Liability – includes training, is included in policy, and officers are mandated to report
 - Use of Force Reporting – now has its own form with more comprehensive data collection and standards
 - Planned Mass Demonstrations
 - Recent State Reform – new section incorporated in policy

HRC Members’ Questions and Discussion:

Kathi Reinstein: What is reasonable use of force for public protests?

Sergeant Turner replies with example of Berkely protests as a bad illustration – using pepper spray without cause

Vice Chair Hossaini: What about Officers’ medical training, i.e., to discern diabetic reaction from intoxication?

Sergeant Turner responds that Officers undergo First Responder training (fundamentals), but experience is what really matters.

Lynn Alexis: Are there standards around physical training and Use of Force, i.e., 5’2” Officer vs. 6’2” Officer?

Sergeant Turner replies there are general physical standards to be a Police Officer. However, in MA there is no requirement to pass annually (only State Police). He also states that increased use of force is often due to an Officer in fear, not experienced, or having an ego issue. Good supervision and ongoing training are essential.

Kourou Pich: What about Bias Training for Officers?

Sergeant Turner replies the State is staying current with this and offers more courses.

Jalon Fowler: How receptive is the RPD staff?

Sergeant Turner feels overall the staff wants to learn, share their opinion and experience. Many in the field are losing passion and feel hurt due to the current state.

Chair Grillo Marra: How is the RPD addressing Officers who react from ego and power struggle?

Sergeant Turner states that good supervision and ongoing training are important.

Lynn Alexis: What about accountability if the Use of Force is not followed appropriately? Do Unions affect this?

Sergeant Turner states that now there are quantitative measures and analytics for Use of Force reporting (historically there were none). If an investigation is triggered, it goes to Internal Affairs and further (State Licensing Commission). Both City and State have upgraded Use of Force investigations. Unions represent the Officer but have no role in disciplinary actions.

Lynn also asks why more time on De-Escalation is not emphasized over Firearm training and inquires about patrol rifles.

Sergeant Turner replies that firearms are lethal force and must include appropriate training. He states that patrol rifles are only used under specific conditions/situations.

Vice Chair Hossaini: How is the RPD addressing racism? What measures are taken for RPD to not be racist?

Sergeant Turner feels that in his experience few of RPD are/were racist. He feels that the hiring process is key.

Kourou Pich: How is the RPD working to have a more diverse force?

Sergeant Turner replies that the State (Civil Service) has a system based on testing scores that RPD must follow – they have no control over this.

Dr Garcia: Builds on the previous question and is concerned about the State's position and reliance on test scores. He feels this must be addressed to diversify the force.

Chair Grillo Marra states this is a first important step in ongoing collaboration between RPD and HRC for continued, deeper discussions. Details to follow as these steps are determined.

Chief Callahan states that we will arrange for the updated RPD Policy to be included on the HRC webpage.

Community members can submit feedback for the RPD presentation on a Google form by visiting the HRC webpage: <https://www.revere.org/boards-and-commissions/human-rights-commission>

6) **Other Business** - NONE

7) **Adjournment**

Lynn Alexis MOTIONS to adjourn, Vice Chair Hossaini seconds; All are in favor.

Meeting adjourned. We will reconvene on September 2nd for the next monthly meeting.