

From: "Thorp, Kristen"

Subject: RE: Questions, concerns about oversight board applications from former PAC

Date: March 7, 2025 at 4:35:08 PM PST

To: "Brown, Heidi" , Debbie Aiona , "Ames, Sarah"

Cc: <info@portlandpolicemonitor.com>, "Geissler, Jonas", Councilor Kanal , Councilor Novick , Councilor Morillo , Councilor Zimmerman , Councilor Smith, Councilor Green , Councilor Dunphy , PCCEP Info , CRC Mail

Thanks for adding me to this email Heidi.

Hello Debbie, Faythe, Cameron, Dan, Seemab, Charlie, Christian, and Tim,

I appreciate your interest and engagement with the selection process of the new Community Board for Police Accountability (CBPA). Thank you for taking a proactive approach and reaching out to us with questions. I know we haven't had the opportunity to meet in person yet so as I onboard into this role I look forward to getting to know you all better. I've created a link for folks to schedule one-on-one time with me for follow up questions or to just to have the opportunity to get to know each other better. You can schedule time with me by following this [link](#).

Here are my responses to your questions: (Your question will be **bold**, my responses will be below.)

1) Was anyone other than the City Attorney's office involved in drafting the invitation and the application?

My understanding is that City staff from the Mayor's Office and City Attorney's Office (CAO) worked on a draft application last summer, before the court delayed appointment of the nominating committee until this year. Once I came on board, I edited and streamlined it, asking for CAO review and guidance as I finalized it.

a) --We have heard that Kristen Thorp, the staff person charged with the initial start-up of the CBPA, did not begin work until mid-February. Was she involved, and if so, can that be made clear?

My first day was February 11. In addition to typical onboard work, my first week was focusing on learning as much as possible about the complex history of our City's Police Bureau and Accountability systems. I consider myself a life-long learner so my work learning and of listening to understand will continue as I grow with this position.

During my second week is when I started focusing on the recruitment. Time was of the essence because I know we have deadlines coming up later this year with the DOJ settlement agreement, in addition to the fact that this new system was voted on in 2020 and people in the community are ready for the new system.

b) --Were any City Council members, community members or police involved in reviewing the application and documents before they were posted?

Best practices for equitable recruitments are to have checks and balances throughout the process. The folks who worked on the application, me and City Attorney's Office, aren't involved in the scoring of the applications or the appointments of future members. While City Council appointed members of the nominating committee and will approve the eventual appointees, they were not directly involved with the creation of the application. Neither community members nor members of the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) had any direct feedback in the process. I did listen to past public meetings and had those public comment sessions in my head when writing and editing.

This won't be the last time we do a recruitment for CBPA members. I am open to feedback and do take that feedback into consideration when working toward increasing access to this important opportunity.

2) Why was information about the applications being open published at 5:30 PM on a Friday night? *-1

I was notified that the volunteer posting for the CBPA went live on [governmentjobs.com](https://www.governmentjobs.com) at 8:36 am Friday, February 28. The delay in communication about the posting to the website was because I was working with folks to make sure our flyer was screen reader accessible. After I shared the posting with City Council and the Mayor I had other key stakeholders to communicate with like PPB, PCCEP chairs, the City of Portland's Civic Life Listservs and the members of the nominating committee.

As a City, we also had important information about our upcoming budget process that needed to be communicated that Friday. The application was posted on the City's [Records Request Center](#) Friday afternoon, and anybody can sign up for updates through that site to be notified of future postings.

3) Has or will the information be sent to those on the Police Accountability Commission's distribution list?

My work this week has been supporting the nominating committee to get them training materials and to be ready for scoring applications. I have also been learning more about communication resources the City has â€” including establishing [a website](#).

While I haven't had the opportunity to connect to all the groups I've wanted to yet, including the Police Accountability Commission, my outreach efforts have only just begun.

I would encourage you all to share the flyer I've attached in this email to your networks! I am happy to schedule time with folks who have questions or go to meetings throughout our community. I hope we can all work together to share this news about this opportunity.

a) --People who attended those meetings were informed by the PAC staff members that they would receive notice when applications were ready.

Thank you for bringing this up! I believe that staff in the Public Safety Service Area (not my service area) still have access to that distribution list, and I will plan to use it early next week to introduce myself.

4) How were decisions made to include information that is not in the Charter or the City Code?

I did my very best, under the guidance of the City Attorney's office, to follow the current Charter and City Code. I'll address your specific questions below.

a) --Why is it stated that CBPA meetings will take place monthly and on weekday evenings?

The CBPA members will be empowered to decide their meeting times and schedule. I looked at public meetings across the City and used my best judgment to say the general meetings would take place monthly and on a weekday evening as a starting place. If the membership wants to meet at different times or more frequently, that can occur -- it will be one of the first decisions they make as a board.

I also thought about how hard it will be for community volunteers to participate in this process if all of the general meetings are during the day. As a city employee, it's important to me to be able to work outside of traditional 8am-5pm schedule to make sure it's easier to create space for others in our community to participate.

a1) ---> Hearings for the Police Review Board take place during the day. Won't it be up to the CBPA and participating City staff including the Police Bureau to determine when meetings will occur?

Yes, it will be up to the CBPA, PPB, and City staff to determine meeting times for investigations and working meetings. The vague time presented in the application is my best suggestion for general public meetings.

b) --The invitation on the jobs website says the City wants "people from every part of Portland here to share their voice on this committee, especially people who have not been involved before." Why not say "including people who have not been involved before?"

I really love this call out. In our anti-racist work, it's important that we strive to include folks who are underserved and often marginalized. While this exact wording is standardized language for all City boards, it in no way discourages people who have previously been involved to continue to be involved. However, I like using "especially" because it is an active call to action for us to invite those who have previously felt left behind and for us to work on welcoming new faces, ideas, abilities, to be involved in a process that impacts us all.

We are all at different stages of our learning on this journey to true inclusion and belonging. There is so much history and experience to learn from with everyone who has been involved in this work for a long time. I trust you will welcome all of us who are eager to learn and be involved.

b1) ---> The existing language seems to discourage people who served on the Citizen Review Committee, the Police Review Board or the Police Accountability Commission from applying. These folks will have a great amount of experience to lend the new Board. This discouragement of a variety of experiences is a barrier to get a well rounded CBPA to avoid potential pitfalls.

It was never my intent to discourage folks from any of those important groups from applying, but I acknowledge the impact felt. I want every person interested in this Board to apply. I agree with you that a truly diverse group of lived experiences will be paramount to the CBPA's success.

Before I joined the team to support the CBPA I was a librarian. I looked for systematic barriers and do my best to reduce or remove them. I listen to others because I want to hear how I can best support their access to resources and increase participation.

5) Why were contentious requirements left out of the invitation notices?

a) -- The invitations mention the required background checks, but not the language that developed from PAC's plan. City Code provides for authorities to grant waivers to allow access to information, and City Administrator decides if a person passes the check.*-2

a1) ---> The application should include a blank under the question about the background check for people who wish to be forthcoming about issues that might arise.

I appreciate this suggestion. However, I thought it best to protect applicant's privacy and not have people self-disclose information on an application that could unintentionally create a bias in the application scoring. This is why the language is specifically calling out their willingness to participate in a background check and not asking if they will or won't pass a background check. Folks who are moving forward can have conversations with the folks administering the background checks at the point of need.

b) -- The invitations talk about training, but do not explicitly mention the requirements to go on police ridealongs or attend community academy.

Question 10, specifically calls out that ride-alongs and attending the community academy are a part of the required training for the position and folks must acknowledge their willingness to participate in those, and other required trainings.

b1) ---> There is also no mention that training will include hearing from people who've been "negatively impacted by police interactions."

Question 10 also states directly that their training will include hearing from folks who have been negatively impacted by police interactions. It is listed right before the ride-alongs and attending the community academy.

b2) ---> We recommend that the application itself have a space under the question about whether people are willing to participate in all trainings (#10) for comments.

I appreciate this suggestion! I added Question 13 as a space for people to disclose if they needed a reasonable accommodation to participate in the meetings, trainings, or

other volunteer responsibilities to flag if we needed to have private conversations with individuals about their needs instead of requiring them to disclose personal information on an application. It is important to me to work with people where they are at in order to have them participate meaningfully, and to help them maintain privacy, but I will take this suggestion under consideration for future recruitments.

6) There is no indication of which City program area is in charge of the CBPA. We understood it was to be under City Operations due to similarities with the Bureau of Human Resources. Has that changed?

Great catch - this is something I can make clearer in the next recruitment! The CBPA and my office, the Office of Community-based Police Accountability, are within the City Operations Service Area. Even though we are under City Operations, the CBPA is also an independent governing body. It is listed in the [city's organizational chart](#).

Notably, we are cc'ing both the Labor/Workforce and Community/Public Safety Committee members, but it does seem a conflict of interest if the City Administrator for Public Safety (instead of for Operations) will be determining whether people pass their background checks, for instance.

We hope that it's not too late to make amendments to these documents as suggested. We believe following through and making amendments will improve community response and trust in the new system.

Once the posting is live, we do not make edits. That wouldn't be fair to the folks who have already applied. I appreciate your thoughts and really appreciate you taking the time to read my responses.

I just want to also reiterate that any folks interested in applying for the CBPA should! If you would like me at a meeting or outreach event, please let me know. Thank you for your time and I appreciate all your support in spreading the word about this opportunity in our community.

In partnership,
Kristen

Kristen Thorp

Coordinator II (She/her)

City of Portland

Office of Community-based Police Accountability

City Administrator's Office