

# Portland Police Bureau Training Advisory Council

**Date:** July 8, 2020

**From:** Shawn Campbell  
Chair, Training Advisory Council

**To:** Mayor Ted Wheeler  
Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty  
Commissioner Amanda Fritz  
Commissioner Chloe Eudaly  
Chief of Police Chuck Lovell

**Subject:** The Five Pillars of Public Safety Structural Reform

On behalf of the Portland Police Bureau's Training Advisory Council (TAC), I am writing to you today to convey our belief in the need for significant structural reforms in the providing of public safety services to the communities of the City of Portland. As demonstrated by widespread public demand, not only rethinking how we achieve the goals of public safety, but also how we implement and transition to such changes, are challenges that can no longer be ignored. We have an opportunity to make things better, and an obligation not to waste it.

Towards this, we believe that there are five primary areas of structural reform that must be addressed in order to transform the PPB into the 21st century public safety service which our communities deserve. While each of these pillars may involve challenges, we believe that we must strive to make Portland an example for others to follow. These five pillars of structural reform include:

- **Accountability** requires a sense by the community that those entrusted with public safety are answerable to the communities they serve. It requires transparency and a willingness to recognize that with power comes responsibility. The PPB has made strides in increasing transparency over the past decade, which has aided in significant reductions in the use of force, but transparency in and of itself is not enough. Accountability is not just about outcomes, it is about the internal and external processes which lead to the outcomes. Protections which block the ability of the bureau to remove those who fail to uphold the public trust must be rolled back via either contract negotiation or legislative action; independent oversight must be given true powers of oversight rather than an advisory role; the bureau must actively monitor data for troubling patterns by individuals or the bureau as a whole; a culture must be established regarding the obligation of reporting when actions are out of policy; instances of deadly and excessive force must be investigated by parties who do not work directly with the bureau; all personnel records

must be as available to public scrutiny as with any City of Portland employee; and issues must be discussed and dealt with in a transparent manner.

- **Procedural Justice** is the art of giving people voice, exhibiting neutrality, building a rapport, and creating trustworthiness. The focus is to overcome biases, implicit and explicit, to form a true and open understanding of situations and incidents. The PPB has made strides in this area over the past two years, with promising plans to further move forward, including adding training in related areas, such as emotional intelligence. Procedural justice practices need to be fully integrated into every level of training and ingrained into police culture. This should include factors related to procedural justice being included in all training scenarios, and other lessons when applicable, and short reminders of proper practices during roll calls.
- **Restorative Justice** provides an alternative approach to the traditional justice system which involves bringing together offenders and victims to share experiences, create consensus, and make amends. Public safety in Portland, especially in the case of disputes and low-level crimes, needs to shift towards utilizing a restorative justice model, partnering with local organizations and communities, rather than depending wholly on the threat of punishment. This would involve a significant shift in current public safety practices and strategies, but is seen as the most likely avenue to help reduce issues such as disparities in police contacts and subjects being taken into custody. It should be noted that the PPB's Youth Services Division was introducing restorative justice techniques and training prior its disbandment.
- **Officer Wellness** involves the establishment and full funding of a comprehensive wellness program for all employees of the bureau, with a focus on both physical and mental health. It must be recognized that working in public safety invariably results in individuals experiencing numerous traumatic incidents. By failing to provide needed tools and services to help officers cope with and overcome the negative effects of this exposure, we are propagating a system that is setting up people to fail. The bureau launched several new wellness program initiatives last year, but they should be expanded, especially access to appropriate mental health services. As well, a greater focus must be put on shifting the culture of the bureau to overcome biases and resistance regarding officers seeking help. If we are to hold those who serve in public safety roles accountable, then we must invest in the tools and services needed to keep them mentally and physically fit.
- **Public Safety Specialization** is the recognition that no one person can be fully trained to successfully meet all of the challenges involved in modern police work. Rather than continuing the current model, which does not work for either the community or officers, the bureau needs to create three distinct branches of service; sworn officers who make arrests and handle high risk calls, Public Service Support Specialists (PS3) who handle low risk and non-criminal disputes, and Portland Street Response (PSR) teams who handle calls involving addiction and mental health issues. The three branches should work in concert with each other, combining their skillsets as needed. Furthermore, the PS3 program can be utilized both as an apprenticeship for those wishing to become sworn officers and as a separate career path. Both the PS3 and PSR programs are currently in the pilot stage of development and need to be expanded significantly.

We believe that in order to successfully move forward into the utilization of a better model of public safety, that all five pillars of structural change need to be addressed and fully ingrained

into the culture of public safety. However, we feel that it must also be recognized that even after such a transition is completed, many issues will remain until we as a society successfully resolve broader societal issues regarding inequity and public biases. Without broader societal reform, these efforts will not provide solutions, but rather only mitigate the negative effects of these broader issues on public safety.

With the proper support and leadership, we fully believe that significant and effective change is possible. However, it will require leadership that sets clear goals, involves the community in decisions, and rolls up its sleeves to do what is needed rather than what is expedient. We look forward to providing further input regarding needed changes and strategies for implementing these changes. If you need to contact me, you can do so via email at [ppbtac@gmail.com](mailto:ppbtac@gmail.com).

Yours Truly,

Shawn Campbell  
TAC Chair

***About the Training Advisory Council:***

*The TAC was created in 2012 as a police bureau advisory body by city resolution 36912. The TAC is a citizen's group with the mission of providing ongoing advice to the Chief of Police and the bureau's Training Division in order to continuously improve training standards, practices, and outcomes through the examination of training philosophy, content, delivery, tactics, policy, equipment, and facilities. The TAC is also tasked by Section 86 of the DOJ settlement agreement with the City of Portland to identify and report to the Chief of Police any patterns in the bureau's use of force. Website: <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/police/61449>*