

**Civilian Review and Accountability Board
Meeting Summary**

Tuesday, October 19, 2021

Members Present: Jennifer Green, Chair; Turney Berry; Stachelle Bussey; Scott Dickens; Barbara Haigler; Charles Keyes; Marianna Michael; Antonio Taylor; and Kellie Watson.

Guests and Staff: Mayor Greg Fischer, Deputy Mayor Ellen Hesen, Councilwoman Paula McCraney, President David James, Councilman Bill Hollander, Councilwoman Jessica Green, Edward Harness, Wanda Mitchell-Smith, Jessica Wethington, Lena Muldoon, Alice Lyon, Hollie Hopkins, Stacey Ayers, Faith Augustine, Alison Shaw, Kala Kachmer, Mark Vanderholt, and Darcy Costello.

I. Chair's Opening Remarks and Welcome

Jennifer Green, Chair

Jennifer Green, Chair, thanked members of the Civilian Review and Accountability Board (CR&AB) for participating in the special meeting. She advised that Mayor Fischer in partnership with the search committee and with input from the Board has decided to extend an offer to Mr. Edward Harness to serve as the Inspector General. She noted that Mr. Harness is joining the meeting today to answer any questions that members may have.

II. IG Search Update

Chairwoman Green introduced Mayor Fischer to provide comments. Mayor Fischer thanked the Board for their efforts to date and participating in the search process. He noted that there is great enthusiasm for the Board. He provided an overview of the Inspector General search process and reminded members that Chair Green appointed Vice-Chair Kellie Watson to serve on the search committee. In addition to Kellie, the search committee included Councilwoman Paula McCraney, Chief of Public Safety Matt Golden, and Metro Human Resources Director Ernestine Booth-Henry.

Mayor Fischer noted that the search process initially began in January but with input from the Civilian Review and Accountability Board the job description was revised, and the search process was expanded to gather additional applicants. The search committee presented a slate of three candidates to the Mayor to interview. Mayor Fischer noted that he and Vice-Chair Kellie Watson interviewed three candidates, and an offer was extended and accepted by Mr. Edward Harness.

Mayor Fischer reminded everyone that the ordinance requires approval of the appointment by the Metro Council and asked Councilwoman McCraney to explain the approval process. Councilwoman McCraney expressed her excitement on the selection and welcomed Mr. Harness. She thanked Mayor Fischer and President James for the opportunity to serve on the search committee. She explained that Mr. Harness will be given an opportunity to attend a meeting of the Metro Council's Government Oversight and Accountability Committee. Once

the Committee approves the resolution, the appointment will go to the full Metro Council for approval. She advised that she will work with President James to accelerate the appointment process. President James advised that the new business deadline is October 25th, first reading by the Council is October 28th, the GOAC meeting is November 2nd, and the Council will meet November 11th.

Mayor Fischer called on Vice-Chair Watson to say a few words related to the search process. She thanked Chair Green for designating her to serve as the Board's representative on the search committee, and extended appreciation to the Board for their attention and quick response when information was needed. She also thanked the search committee for their time and attention to the process and noted that she felt that the committee put forth a candidate that will do a great job in Louisville.

The Mayor advised that a press release would be distributed that explains the process and next steps. He reported that for the last six years, Mr. Harness has been the Executive Director of the Albuquerque Civilian Police Oversight Agency, which he helped establish in 2015. He has the experience building an agency from the start which will be very valuable as he starts up the OIG in Louisville. Mr. Harness is an attorney who also served 12 years as a police officer in Milwaukee, where he also provided oversight of law enforcement as a volunteer police commissioner.

Mayor Fischer introduced Mr. Harness to the Board. Mr. Harness stated that he is honored and truly excited for the opportunity to serve as the Inspector General. He thanked everyone involved for having the foresight to create an oversight agency. He noted that his background is unique and his experience as an attorney, police officer, and an advocate for processes will be valuable. He advised that he will be an advocate for the oversight process. He explained that there will be conflict on both sides, but that he will work collaboratively and always be true to the process.

Chair Green expressed her appreciation that Mr. Harness has accepted the position and asked him what is needed from the Board to help with the creation of the OIG. Mr. Harness advised that from his experience clear communication with the Board on its aspirations and initially strong and experienced administrative support will be needed. The Mayor reported that the OIG budget includes funding for staff support with a total budget of \$763,500. Mr. Harness noted that senior administration that knows the city processes and procedures is extremely important. In response to a question from Board Member Antonio Taylor, Mr. Harness acknowledged that his contract was expiring in Albuquerque and he was interested in exploring new options and he is looking forward to the opportunity to start up a new agency in Louisville.

Charles Keyes asked for the timeline and reminded everyone that some of the Board members terms may be expiring soon and should be addressed. Mayor Fischer noted that Board member terms would be extended, and President James advised that an ordinance was introduced to extend Board member terms another year due to the extended search process. In response to a question from Stachelle Bussey, Mr. Harness responded that his background helps to open doors from all aspects of the community and it is important to

speak to all members of the community to hear their concerns and to listen to the same questions from the police department and to move forward with the initiatives that the Board wants. He noted that he will be steadfast while collaborating with everyone and being an advocate for the process.

In closing, Mayor Fischer thanked the Board for serving in an important capacity. Mr. Harness thanked the Mayor, the Board, and all participants at today's meeting, and noted that he looks forward to getting to Louisville. Stachelle Bussey asked if there were any local applicants, and Kellie Watson stated that although she didn't know the exact number there were a few local applicants. Councilwoman McCraney reported that there were more than 100 applicants, and the search committee recommended three candidates to the Mayor for consideration. Mr. Harness was at the top of the list for a number of reasons including his demeanor, his background, experience and skillset. She thanked Mr. Harness for accepting the position and noted that the Council will do everything they can to make the experience worthwhile.

III. Adjourn/Next Meeting Date

Chairwoman Green reminded members that the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 27th from 9:00am – 11:00am. A meeting notice will be sent to members prior to the meeting.