



2007 Police Accountability Review Panel

NEWS ADVISORY

For Immediate Release

Aug. 10, 2007

Contact: Judge Terrence Carroll, ret., 206.223-1669
carroll@jdrllc.com
Bob Scales, 206.684-8050
bob.scales@seattle.gov

Police Accountability Review Panel Meets Aug. 20

Meeting will focus on the structure of Seattle's police accountability system

SEATTLE – Judge Terrence Carroll, ret., chair of the 2007 Police Accountability and Review Panel, announced today the panel will focus on the structure and processes of Seattle's police accountability system at its Aug. 20 meeting. The meeting will be held between 7 and 9 p.m. in the Bertha Knight Landes Room, located in the City Hall lobby, 600 Fourth Ave.

The panel will hear from Seattle Police Chief Gil Kerlikowske, Office of Professional Accountability Auditor Kate Pflaumer, Office of Professional Accountability Review Board Chair Peter Holmes and Sam Pailca, the former director of the Office of Professional Accountability.

Carroll also announced the launch of the panel's Web site:
www.seattle.gov/policeaccountabilityreviewpanel/ Materials from meetings, including audio and/or video of the panel's public meetings, are available on the site.

The Aug. 20 meeting will be the panel's second meeting. At its first meeting on July 30, Kathryn Olson, director of the Seattle Police Department's Office of Professional Accountability, provided an overview of Seattle's police accountability system. The panel also heard presentations on labor relations and contract issues, the public records and open meetings act, and discussed its work program, schedule and staff resources. The panel's third meeting is scheduled for Sept. 10, from 6 to 9 p.m. A location will be announced closer to the meeting date.

On June 29, 2007, Mayor Greg Nickels appointed an 11-member panel to review Seattle's police accountability system and recommend improvements. The panel is expected to deliver its report to the mayor in November.

--more--

The panel will examine both the structure and processes of Seattle's police accountability system producing a final report offering its assessment of the system, as well as any recommendations for improving the structure or function of the system. Those recommendations will be given to the mayor and will provide the basis for moving forward to ensure Seattle has an effective and transparent process of accountability.

The panel members are: Judge Terrence A. Carroll, ret., chair; Bob Boruchowitz, vice chair; Jenny A. Durkan; Lorena González; Pramila Jayapal; Gary Locke; Hubert G. Locke; Judith Krebs; Mike McKay; Norman B. Rice; and Jennifer Shaw.

Police oversight in Seattle is three-pronged, with investigatory oversight the responsibility of the Office of Professional Accountability (OPA). OPA's purpose is to receive and investigate citizen complaints about police misconduct. The Office of Professional Accountability Auditor and the Office of Professional Accountability Review Board review and report on the OPA's work.

The Office of Professional Accountability was created in November 1999, in response to recommendations of a citizen review panel appointed by then-Mayor Paul Schell to evaluate the issue of employee accountability within the Seattle Police Department and the process used to investigate reports of police misconduct.

In 1999, after more than three months of investigation, the panel issued its final report. Although no evidence of widespread corruption or misconduct was found, the panel's report offered a series of recommendations to increase confidence in the department's ability to maintain standards of professional integrity.

The cornerstone of the panel's report was the creation of an Office of Professional Accountability. The first OPA director, Sam Pailca, was nominated by the mayor and confirmed by the Council in 2000. Under city law, OPA directors can serve a maximum of six years. The current OPA director, Kathryn Olson, was appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the Council in 2007.

The mayor also appoints the Office of Professional Accountability Auditor, an independent civilian contractor who reviews open internal-investigation files and may provide advice on investigations. The Office of Professional Accountability Review Board, a three-member citizen panel created and appointed by the City Council, reviews closed internal investigations to determine the way they have been handled by the OPA. The group reports to the City Council.

###