

# Seattle Community Police Commission

**2018 Annual Report**



**Published July 2019**

# Annual Report

## Requirements in Ordinance

*SMC, 3.29.370.A (2017)*

CPC shall produce annual reports that are readily understandable and useful to policymakers. The annual report shall be posted online and electronically distributed to the Mayor, City Attorney, Council, Chief, OPA Director, and Inspector General, as well as to the City Clerk for filing as a public record. The annual report shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. An evaluation of the extent to which all of the purposes, duties, and responsibilities detailed in this Chapter 3.29 have been met;
2. A summary of all recommendations for changes in policies and practices, collective bargaining agreements, City ordinances, and state laws;
3. A summary of the implementation status of any previous recommendations and, for any that have not been implemented, the reasons; and
4. Information about CPC's outreach to SPD employees and the public, the perspectives gathered by CPC from such outreach, and how the outreach informed CPC's work.

# Table of Contents

**04**

Letter from the Co-Chairs

---

**07**

About the Community Police  
Commission

---

**18**

Implementation of the Police  
Accountability Ordinance

---

**28**

Looking Forward

---

**06**

Seattle's History of  
Police Reform

---

**09**

Community Engagement

---

**26**

Recommendations on Policy,  
Training, and Practices

---



# Message from

# the CPC Co-Chairs

Friends:

We begin this, the Community Police Commission's (Commission) first annual report, with an expression of gratitude.

We are grateful to all of our commissioners who have served on the Commission, who have given thousands of hours in volunteer time over the past six years for the cause of community oversight and police reform. A list of all current and past commissioners is included on page 7. Commissioners have served, in solidarity, under often difficult circumstances and immense pressure from city leaders, participants in the federal consent decree process, and community members. They have come from all walks of life—including longtime activists, civil liberties advocates, public defenders, business owners, police officers, ministry, and more. Collectively, our commissioners have brought a broad range of expertise and experience in police accountability that have enriched the Commission's

work.

We are grateful to our community partners. We must never forget that the community initiated the police reform process in Seattle overseen by the federal court in December 2010 when a group of 35 community organizations asked the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Washington and the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice to open a pattern or practice investigation of excessive force by the Seattle Police Department. Those 35 individual signatories were, in a very real sense, Seattle's original community police commission, representing many of Seattle's diverse racial, ethnic, and immigrant and refugee communities which had historically troubled or challenging relations with SPD and including community advocates with social service, faith, civil liberties, and legal backgrounds. Our community partners—a group that has grown from the original 35—continue to provide us with essential support.



We are grateful to our accountability system partners: The Office of Police Accountability (led by OPA Director Andrew Myerberg), the Office of the Inspector General (led by Inspector General Lisa Judge), and of course the Seattle Police Department (led by Chief Carmen Best). We envision our communities and Seattle’s police aligned in shared goals of safety, respect, and accountability. To make this vision a reality, we look forward to continuing to build relationships—grounded in mutual respect—with our partners.

We are grateful for our current and past staff members and technical advisors. Judge Anne Levinson (Retired), who served as OPA Auditor during much of the Commission’s existence, was one of the key architects of the Commission’s accountability reform recommendations—which culminated in the passage of landmark accountability legislation in 2017—and she continues to be an indispensable resource for the community and the Commission. We thank Betsy Graef, who served as Interim Executive Director early in the Commission’s existence and

a consultant afterward, and Fé Lopez, who served as Executive Director through most of the consent-decree process and at the time the Commission first became a permanent community oversight body. Now, we are excited about the leadership of Interim Executive Director Bessie M. Scott, who is shepherding the commission at a time of growth.

Finally, we are most of all grateful for community members who have placed trust in us and to the police who serve our communities. The Commission was originally created to leverage the ideas, talent, experience, and expertise of the community in the reform process. Its membership was designed to be representative of the many and diverse communities in Seattle, including members from each precinct in the city, police officer unions, faith communities, minority, ethnic, and other community organizations, and student and youth organizations. We believe this continues to be the formula for success. With that in mind, we encourage anyone who wishes to be considered to serve as a commissioner to visit the CPC’s website and submit an application.

**Rev. Harriett Walden**

**Isaac Ruiz**

**Emma Catague**

# A brief history of reform

From the earliest days of the Seattle Police Department (SPD), community has always driven police reform. Throughout the 1900s, groups largely led by women, Seattle's African-American communities, and other marginalized communities led the way.<sup>1</sup> They stood up against police corruption, brutality, and were the first to call for some of the civilian-led oversight agencies we have today.

In recent years, the killing of First Nations woodcarver John T. Williams by an SPD officer galvanized community's push for police reform.<sup>2</sup> This and other incidents involving Seattle police and people of color ignited tremendous public concern. In December 2010, 35 community groups came together and wrote a letter to the Department of Justice (DOJ) to request that they investigate whether SPD had routinely violated people's civil rights and shown a pattern of using excessive force.<sup>3</sup>

The DOJ investigation found SPD in violation of the United States Constitution for using excessive and unnecessary force and raised questions about potential racial and disability-based bias in SPD's policing.<sup>4</sup> As a result of the investigation's findings, the City of Seattle and DOJ entered into a Consent Decree—a settlement agreement to eliminate unlawful practices through reform overseen by a federal judge.<sup>5</sup> Under the settlement agreement with DOJ, the City of Seattle created the Community Police Commission in 2014. The Commission played a significant role in drafting what would become known as the Police Accountability Ordinance, a historic legislation enacted by the City of Seattle in 2017.<sup>6</sup> The legislation made the Commission permanent and brought forth significant reforms to policing and police accountability in Seattle including creating an Office of the Inspector General.

2018 was the Community Police Commission's first full year as a permanent, self-governing, fully independent body. It was also the Commission's first full year with an expanded scope of work and added capacity in commissioners and in staffing. With our expanded capacity and our permanent, independent status, we are more equipped now than ever to follow in the footsteps of those who worked tirelessly before us to center community and improve policing in Seattle. We strive to always be grounded in Seattle's long history of struggle and perseverance in the fight for police accountability.





# About the CPC

## Our Vision

We envision our communities and Seattle’s police aligned in shared goals of safety, respect, and accountability.

## Our Mission

The Community Police Commission listens to, amplifies, and builds common ground among communities affected by policing in Seattle. We champion policing practices centered in justice and equity.

## 2018 Commissioners

- Rev. Harriett Walden, co-chair
- Enrique Gonzalez, co-chair
- Isaac Ruiz, co-chair
- Jay Hollingsworth
- Aaron Williams
- Ben Goldsmith
- Claudia D’Allegri
- Lisa Daugaard
- Melinda Giovengo
- Joseph Seia
- Kevin Stuckey
- Colleen Echohawk
- Joe Kessler
- Emma Catague
- Helen Gebreamlak

*Past commissioners: Josias Flynn, Kay Godefroy, Taylor Hoang, Bill Hobson, Kate Joncas, David Keenan, Diane Narasaki, Tina Podlodowski, Marcel Purnell, Ron Rasmussen, Jennifer Shaw, Kip Tokuda*

# Organizational Structure

## Commission

### Strategy Committee

- Enrique Gonzalez
- Isaac Ruiz
- Rev. Harriett Walden
- Emma Catague
- Claudia D’Allegri
- Lisa Daugaard

### Community Engagement Committee

- Emma Catague, Chair
- Colleen Echohawk
- Joseph Seia
- Aaron Williams

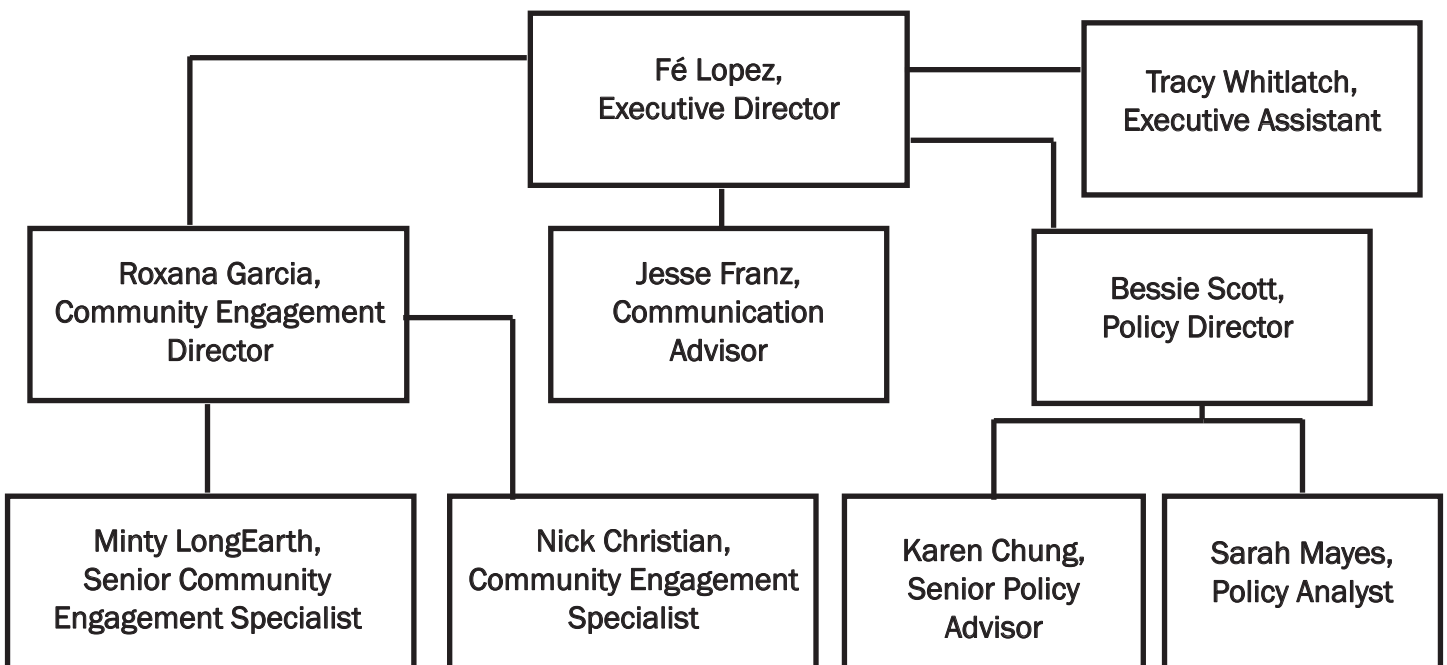
### Behavioral Health Workgroup

- Claudia D’Allegri, Chair
- Helen Gebreamlak
- Melinda Giovengo

### Police Practices Workgroup

- Lisa Daugaard, Chair
- Ben Goldsmith
- Jay Hollingsworth
- Isaac Ruiz
- Rev. Harriett Walden

## Staff





# Community

# Engagement

## Background

Under the Police Accountability Ordinance, the Commission's role is to be responsive to community needs and concerns by engaging community to obtain a variety of perspectives on policing and police accountability, connecting with representatives of disenfranchised communities and other community groups, and providing the police accountability system partners with community feedback regarding their operations as well as technical assistance on community matters.

In addition to engaging community in a way that fulfills legislative mandates, the Commission's Community Engagement Committee and staff created foundational values for how to strategize and conduct engagement. These values are respect,

consistency, reciprocity, being trauma-informed, and being healing-centered.

In 2018, as a newly permanent and growing body, the Commission defined community engagement as centering community in action and in dialogue, as well as building, cultivating, and stewarding relationships with community in a way that is intentional and reciprocal. This year, the Commission's community engagement efforts were focused on implementing the Police Accountability Ordinance; building capacity to engage community on a larger scale; creating processes and systems to track engagements and inform strategy; and building relationships with community members, organizations, stakeholders, and system partners.

## Ordinance Implementation

The Commission conducted community engagements throughout 2018 to fulfill mandates in the Police Accountability Ordinance. For example, the Commission's community engagement staff provided critical support to the Serious and Deadly Force

Investigation Taskforce (SDFIT), a taskforce that was created to meet a requirement for the Commission to convene a group of stakeholders to assess the feasibility of independent investigations of serious and deadly uses of force by police officers. To

ensure the success of the Taskforce, the Commission's community engagement staff played an integral role in the design of the Taskforce, ensuring that community members were represented on the Taskforce and included in the Taskforce's deliberations. Staff maintained relationships with Taskforce members, provided input on recommendations, and developed

and executed the Taskforce's community engagement strategy.

As the Commission works to fully implement the Police Accountability Ordinance, community engagement will be a key tool with which the Commission will ensure that community voices continue to be represented and amplified in conversations about police reform and accountability.

## Capacity Building

### Community Engagement Committee

In 2018, the Commission created the Community Engagement Committee to ensure that community engagement drives the work and strategy of the Commission as a whole. The Community Engagement Committee is made up of commissioners and Commission

staff and provides guidance and leadership on commission-wide community engagement strategies and approaches. The committee meets on a monthly basis and was chaired by Commissioner Emma Catague in 2018.

### Staffing

The community engagement staff team experienced significant growth in 2018, going from one to three staff persons. In February 2018, the Commission hired a Community Engagement Director to oversee community engagement strategy and supervisor community engagement staff. In December, the Commission hired a Community Engagement Specialist. The Commission also added a Communication Advisor to assume responsibilities associated with media and social media, which were previously assigned to community engagement staff members.

With additional staff, the community engagement team has the capacity to strategize and conduct community engagements on issues beyond the Consent Decree. In the effort to expand the Commission's community engagement strategy, the community engagement team assigned specific engagement areas to each staff person, such as SPD engagement and youth engagement, to streamline engagement efforts and ensure that staff will be able to develop strong relationships with various communities and stakeholders across Seattle.



## Community Police Commission 101

As a permanent body, the Commission has prioritized sharing its extensive knowledge regarding the history of police accountability, the new police accountability system, and its access and relationship with the Seattle Police Department and other system partners. In this endeavor, the Commission created a series of presentations called “Community Police Commission 101.” The presentations

vary in material depending on the intended audience. For example, there are specific presentations for law enforcement, youth, immigrant and refugee communities, and the general population. In 2018, the Commission conducted research and worked with its police accountability system partners to refine these presentations for 2019.

## Tracking and Reporting

*The Commission created various tools and processes to facilitate and elevate community engagement as a part of its work.*

## Community Engagement Review

The Commission utilizes a process called community engagement review to identify and determine which community events to attend. In this process, commissioners, staff, community members, and system partners alert the Community Engagement Team to a potential event for commissioners or staff to

attend. The Senior Community Engagement Specialist vets the events to ensure that attending the event would align with the mission and vision of the Commission, and assigns relevant events to commissioners and staff.

## Tracking Form

The Commission created a tracking form to collect and maintain data about the engagements attended by commissioners and staff. The data collected will allow the Commission to identify trends regarding

engagements, document highlights of meetings including concerns of specific communities, inform the work of the Commission, and facilitate a feedback loop with community.

## Relationship Building

*Throughout 2018, the Commission focused on conducting one-on-one meetings with its accountability system partners, stakeholders, community organizations, and community members. With new staff on board, many meetings were introductory, and the Commission's priority was to build lasting relationships between the newly permanent Commission and key partners, stakeholders, community organizations, and community members.*

## Community Engagement System Partners

In 2018, the Commission proposed a regular inter-agency meeting in which community engagement staff of all police accountability partners could meet, discuss their work,

and identify opportunities for collaborations, establishing a foundation for inter-agency partnership on community engagement.

## SPD Engagement

The Commission highlighted law enforcement engagement as a priority area of community engagement. In 2018, commissioners and staff worked to build sustaining relationships with SPD by going on ride-alongs, visiting precincts, meeting with leadership and with specific units, and connecting with union leadership. The Commission also invited SPD employees to present at commission meetings so that commissioners could learn more about SPD operations and practices. For

example, in February 2018, the Commission heard from SPD and their developer partners about RideAlong, a mobile app that aims to keep first responders and people with mental illness safe during interactions with law enforcement officers. The Commission also participated on SPD's Body-Worn Video Advisory Group, an advisory group that was formed to advise SPD on the implementation of body-worn cameras by officers.



## Youth Engagement

The Commission is mandated by the Police Accountability Ordinance to be representative of Seattle’s diverse communities. As a commission that is led by and staffed by adults, the Commission elevated youth engagement as a priority for its staff. Having hired a staff person to focus on youth engagement at the end of 2018, the Commission looks forward to conducting

meaningful engagements with young people and those who work with young people in 2019. By prioritizing youth engagement, the Commission hopes to create channels for meaningful conversations about the impact of policing on young people in Seattle and identify opportunities to improve the experience of young people in Seattle.

## Interdepartmental Engagement

As a newly permanent entity with an expanded scope of work, in 2018, the Commission connected with and built relationships with other city entities and partners whose work affects or is affected by policing and police

accountability. With additional staff, the Commission looks forward to expanding its interdepartmental partnerships and collaborations in 2019.



# Community Engagement Meetings

In addition to conducting over 200 meetings with community members and system partners, commissioners and staff attended and presented at numerous events throughout 2018. These events include:

- MARCH**
  - Presented at El Centro de la Raza regarding Commission updates
  - Presented at World Affair Council on Police Accountability System
  - Presented at YMCA Get Engaged
  - Attended King County Office of Law Enforcement Oversight Implicit Bias Training with King County Command Staff
- APRIL**
  - Attended the Northwest Network’s Community Gathering on Hate and Bias
  - Attended the ACTS AAPI Civic Social Conversation
  - Attended Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs Open House
  - Attended Proclaiming May 5th as Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls day
  - Attended May Day
- MAY**
  - Mayor’s Meeting on Public Safety in South Park
  - Attended Community Passageway Meeting
  - Attended Stories of Resilience: Indigenous Womxn of Seattle
- JUNE**
  - Presented at World Affair Council on Police Accountability System
  - Conducted phone interviews in Madison to Assess Chief of Police Candidates
  - Visited Austin and Minneapolis to assess Chief of Police Candidates
  - Conducted site visits in Seattle to assess Chief of Police Candidates
- AUG.**
  - Presented at World Affair Council on Police Accountability System
  - Attending Chief Swearing in ceremonies at City Hall, South Park Community Center, and Northwest African American Museum
  - Served as panelist at “a Community gathering against Hate and Bias” for the Northwest Network
- SEP.**
  - Attended the SPD Post-BLEA CIT Training
  - Attended the Not This Time meeting on “Budget for Justice Training”
  - Attended Mayor and Chief of Police Public Safety Community Discussion” in the Central District
- OCT.**
  - Attended How Culture Moves us Forward at University Friends Meeting
  - Held a teach-in on the Seattle Police Officers’ Guild contract
  - Attended “Charleena Lyles – Still Saying Her Name”



## Community Engagement Highlights

### Community Teach-In on Seattle Police Officers' Guild Contract

On October 25, 2018, the Community Police Commission hosted a teach-in on the Seattle Police Officers' Guild's (SPOG) tentative contract with the City of Seattle. Modeled after the lectures and discussions that were organized by students and community members in the 1960s as a technique of social protest against the Vietnam War and the discrimination and disenfranchisement of African-American people, the purpose of the SPOG Contract Community Teach-In was to exchange knowledge with community members on the tentative contract and its potential impact on community and the police accountability system.

Over 100 people, including community

members, city officials, and police officers, attended the teach-in at Seattle Vocational Institute. Attendees observed and heard a presentation from the Community Police Commission on the ways in which the proposed contract dismantled hard-earned reforms. After, they formed small groups to have deeper conversations about the contract and police accountability.

Lessons Learned: In presenting to a wide audience, it is important to make the complex language of legislation and contracts accessible. Providing more visuals and examples in addition to text in presentations is critical to reach and ensure understanding by a wide range of people.

## Presentation at YCMA's Get Engaged

YMCA's Get Engaged is a leadership development program that places young adults ages 18 to 29 on public boards and commissions of the City of Seattle. The program reached out to the Commission to learn more about the Commission's work. On March 12, 2018 commission staff attended a program meeting and presented an initial version of the Community Police Commission 101 presentation.

The attendees provided helpful input on how to improve the Community Police Commission 101 presentation, including expanding on the history of police reform in Seattle as well as the relationship between the Commission and SPD. The feedback the Commission received at this meeting helped shape the presentation, a key engagement tool for the Commission, into what it is today.

## Implicit Bias Training

The King County Office of Law Enforcement Oversight invited the Commission to audit a 3-hour training on implicit bias for King County Sheriff's Office command staff. Commission staff attended the training facilitated by Dr. Bryant Marks, the Senior Founding Director and Chief Education Officer of the National Training Institute on Race

& Equity. At the training, Commission staff acquired knowledge about how to speak to law enforcement officers about implicit bias, including specific skills and language that resonate with officers. The Commission will utilize the knowledge gained at this training in its formal engagements with officers in the future.

## Chief of Police Search Site Visits

In May 2018, the Office of the Mayor announced that after an extensive search, three individuals had been selected as finalists for Seattle Chief of Police. All three finalists hailed from cities outside of Washington. Many community members criticized the process for having omitted interim Chief of Police Carmen Best of the Seattle Police Department from the final list of three. The Commission learned that many community members were displeased with

the search process and the fact that Chief Best, the only candidate from Seattle, was not included in the final three candidates.

Given the widespread objection to the process in community, the Commission approved conducting site visits to the three finalists' cities of previous employment to build knowledge about the candidates. In June and July 2018, a commissioner and a commission staff member conducted phone interviews



with individuals in Madison, Wisconsin, and conducted site visits in Austin, Texas and Minneapolis, Minnesota prioritizing meeting with community members and leaders. The Commission also held a local site visit in Seattle to better understand our communities' perspective on interim Chief Best's leadership

and sought records from the search process to better understand how the final three candidates were selected.

In July 2018, interim Chief Best was eventually confirmed as the next Chief of Police. At her nomination hearing, Councilmember Lorena Gonzalez stated to the Commission:



**Councilmember Lorena González**  
**August 13, 2018**

“I want to thank you all for your advocacy in this space. I know that when we were considering making y'all permanent and funded and part of the three stools of accountability, there were people who had concerns, and people who were very enthusiastic about it, and then people in between who were wondering how it was going to work out. For me, the fact that we have Chief Best in front of us as the nominee is a testament to why I thought it was going to work out to support the Community Police Commission.

I want to thank you all for your vigilance, and for making a lot of folk uncomfortable in a moment when we needed to be uncomfortable. So, thank you for making sure those voices were heard across the spectrum of your membership, which is reflective of our city.<sup>7</sup>”

# Ordinance

# Implementation

## History of the Ordinance

In 2017, the City of Seattle adopted historic legislation to strengthen civilian and community oversight of the Seattle Police Department. The Police Accountability Ordinance added to significant reforms

enacted by the Seattle Police Department under the 2012 Consent Decree between the City of Seattle and the U.S. Department of Justice. Key reforms in the ordinance were mandates to:

- Implement a strong police accountability system;
- Establish an Office of Inspector General of Public Safety, charged with providing oversight of the Seattle Police Department and Office of Police Accountability and continuing the reforms made under the consent decree;
- Require civilian supervision of internal investigations by the Office of Police Accountability, with a mix of civilian and sworn investigators;
- Make the Community Police Commission a permanent entity with increased authority and increased its membership from 15 to 21 members;

## Community Police Commission in the Ordinance

The Police Accountability Ordinance made the Commission permanent, broadened its scope of responsibilities and authority, and increased the number of Commissioners from 15 to 21. While the Commission continues to be responsible for its obligations related to the settlement agreement, it is now mandated

to also provide ongoing, community-based oversight of SPD and the police accountability system. The following are the key requirements of the Commission within the ordinance, and the status of implementation for each mandate at the time of this report's publication.

# CPC Implementation of the Ordinance

## Ongoing

*The Commission has implemented and will do continuous work as needed for these requirements.*

1. Appoint 21 commissioners with ties to Seattle who represent certain communities and have relevant experience and expertise.<sup>8</sup>
  - The Commission had 15 out of its 21 commissioner seats filled in 2018. Of the six vacant seats, five had not yet been filled by City Council and one had not yet been filled by the Office of the Mayor.  
In early 2018, the Seattle Police Management Association's representative on the Commission resigned, and this seat remained unfilled through the rest of the year.
2. Serve on search committees for Office of Police Accountability (OPA) director and the Inspector General (IG).<sup>9</sup>
  - In 2017, two commissioners served on search committees for both the OPA director and IG. In 2018, two commissioners served on a search committee for the IG. The Commission will continue to serve on search committees for both offices as needed.
3. Convene an annual meeting to present annual report.<sup>10</sup>
  - 2018 was the Commission's first year as a permanent, fully independent body; therefore, the Commission planned for its first annual meeting to take place in 2019.
4. Review recommendations and monitor implementation of recommendations.<sup>11</sup>
  - The Commission has been and continues to review recommendations across the police accountability system and monitor the implementation of these recommendations.
5. Provide input on Office of Inspector General's work plan.<sup>12</sup>
  - On December 12, 2018, the Commission provided input on the OIG's 2019 work plan. The Commission will provide input on the OIG's work plan annually.
6. Review closed OPA cases.<sup>13</sup>
  - The Commission reviews closed OPA cases as needed when possible systemic issues arise.
7. Provide feedback on OPA manual.<sup>14</sup>
  - The Commission provided feedback on OPA's draft manual in late 2018 and will continue to provide feedback on future drafts.

8. Evaluate the Executive Director.<sup>15</sup>

- The Commission conducted an evaluation of its Executive Director in late 2018 and will evaluate its Executive Director annually.

9. Provide input on OPA Director performance.<sup>16</sup>

- The Commission will work with the Office of the Mayor to provide input on the OPA Director's performance in his first full year in 2019.

10. Provide input on Inspector General performance.<sup>17</sup>

- The Commission will work with City Council to provide input on the Inspector General's performance in her first full year in 2019.

11. Produce an annual report.<sup>18</sup>

- 2018 was the Commission's first year as a permanent, fully independent body; therefore, the Commission scheduled the publication of its first annual report of its first full year to be in 2019.

12. Work with OIG to periodically evaluate SPD processes in meeting diverse work force needs.<sup>19</sup>

- The Commission will work with the OIG to periodically evaluate work force issues, such as hiring timelines and impediments to hiring and retaining diverse officers, as needed.

13. Present a mid-year report to the Gender Equity, Safe Communities, New Americans, and Education (GESCNA-Ed) City Council Committee on the status of recommendations.<sup>20</sup>

- 2018 was the Commission's first year as a permanent, fully independent body; therefore, the Commission's first mid-year report to the GESCNA-Ed Committee will be in 2019.

14. Meet quarterly with accountability system partners.

- The accountability system partners have met quarterly since July 2018 and will continue to meet quarterly.

## In Progress

*The Commission has begun implementation but has not yet completed implementation for these requirements.*

1. Provide input on improving system transparency, such as public disclosures.<sup>21</sup>

- The Commission is working with SPD to better understand the department's public disclosure process and its efforts to improve system transparency. The Commission plans to produce recommendations for SPD in 2019.

2. Provide input on SPD workforce practices and help and deliver in-service training related to accountability system.<sup>22</sup>
  - The Commission worked with its accountability system partners including the SPD, OPA, and OIG to begin to develop in-service training for officers on the accountability system. The Commission aims to complete implementation of this mandate in 2019.
3. Compile and maintain a database of recommendations.<sup>23</sup>
  - With input from accountability system partners, the Commission began to develop a database of recommendations in which the Commission will collect and maintain recommendations across the police accountability system. The Commission plans to launch its database in 2019.
4. Work with Office of Inspector General to conduct a review of SMC Chapter 14.12 which governs the collection of information for law enforcement purposes.<sup>24</sup>
  - The Commission awaits the OIG's audit of SPD's collection and recording of police intelligence and surveillance data before partnering with the OIG to review SMC Chapter 14.12.
5. Convene meetings on external investigations of serious and deadly uses of force.<sup>25</sup>
  - The Commission convened the Serious and Deadly Force Investigation Taskforce.

## On Hold

*The Commission has not yet begun implementation for these requirements.*

1. Assign commissioners to districts.<sup>26</sup>
  - With many of its seats being vacant, the Commission is waiting to implement its district liaison program until more commissioners are appointed.
2. Convene meetings on assessing the need for a complainant appeal process.<sup>27</sup>
  - The Commission will convene meetings on assessing the need for a complainant appeal process after the Serious and Deadly Force Investigation Taskforce completes its work.



# Ordinance Implementation Highlights

## Police Contracts and the Accountability Ordinance

### **Summary:**

A mandate of the Commission in the Police Accountability Ordinance is to provide, in this annual report and subsequent annual reports, an evaluation of the extent to which the purposes, duties, and responsibilities detailed within the Ordinance have been met. In 2018, the Commission, working in partnership with dozens of community organizations, led a critical public review of how the newly negotiated Seattle Police Officers Guild's (SPOG) contract significantly nullified hard-won reforms in the Police Accountability Ordinance. For a comprehensive chart that

details the ways in which the Ordinance has not yet been implemented due to the contract, please see Appendix A.

### **Background:**

In late 2018, after more than three years without a contract, SPOG reached a tentative collective bargaining agreement with the City of Seattle. The tentative agreement was not made public until October 15, after the Seattle City Council (Council) had signaled it would vote to approve the agreement.

The Commission evaluated the agreement and identified that although agreement

The accountability system will not serve its full purpose if the community lacks confidence in its strength and transparency. That has been the case historically, and that will be the case going forward...

## Letter from 24 community groups November 8, 2018

would adopt much delayed pay raises for police officers, it undermined Seattle’s police accountability system by rolling back many reforms adopted by the City in the landmark Police Accountability Ordinance, which Council approved unanimously in 2017.

Based on its analyses, the Commission recommended that Council reject the tentative agreement, providing a chart and line-by-line review highlighting dozens of ways the agreement would abandon hard-won police accountability reforms.

“We support fair, equitable, and competitive compensation for Seattle police officers. Also, the CPC is on record in supporting the right of police officers to collectively bargain. The focus of our objection is the accountability aspects of the agreement,” said Commission Co-Chair Isaac Ruiz.

The Commission dedicated much of its resources and time to exchanging knowledge with the public about the impact the contract could have on police accountability. The Commission hosted the only public meeting about the contract to date. In November 2018, 25 community groups, including ACLU Washington and Seattle-King County NAACP, joined the Commission in urging the Council to reject the contract.

Despite the Commission’s recommendations, on November 13, Council voted to approve the tentative agreement and Mayor Jenny Durkan signed the agreement.

It was later revealed by a Seattle Times investigation that Adley Shepherd, a Seattle police officer who had been fired in 2016 after punching a woman who was handcuffed in the back of his police vehicle in 2014, had been reinstated to the force after appealing his decision and an arbitrator siding with him. The vote by an arbitrator to reinstate Shepherd had happened two weeks before the City Council voted on the contract, but lawyers for the City and SPOG had agreed to delay the release of that information meaning that news of Shepherd’s reinstatement to the police force would not be released until after Council’s vote on the contract.

It is not possible to know if this news would have changed the outcome of Council’s vote; however, had the Accountability Ordinance been in full effect, the decision to reinstate Shepherd could not have been made behind closed doors, and it wouldn’t have been made by an arbitrator.

In December, Judge James Robart, the federal judge who oversees Seattle’s Consent Decree, issued an order to show cause. In it, he asked the City to explain why he should not find that the City had failed to maintain compliance with the Consent Decree. Judge Robart had concerns about the contract’s impacts on police accountability—the same concerns the Commission had highlighted for the Court. He also questioned the integrity of a police accountability system that allowed a fired officer, Adley Shepherd, to be rehired.

## Serious and Deadly Force Investigation Taskforce

The Commission established the Serious and Deadly Force Investigation Taskforce (SDFIT) to assess the issue of external investigations of serious uses of force and to provide recommendations to City Council for its consideration as a basis for developing legislative changes. The Taskforce held six

meetings in 2018 and in that time, studied investigative models across the country, received input from community members and law enforcement officers, and adopted a set of values and expectations. The Taskforce aims to convene its final meeting and finalize its recommendations in 2019.

### SDFIT Values

- **Trust:** Community and police have confidence in the investigations of police officers' serious and deadly uses of force. (Also: Credible)
- **Clear:** The investigation process and reports are clear and consistent so that community and police understand them. (Also: Understandable)
- **Fair:** The investigations are conducted in a manner that is impartial and is not biased against the police or the victim. (Also: Objective)
- **Informative:** The investigations produce information that is useful for determining a finding or revealing the truth of a matter.
- **High-Quality:** The investigations are of high caliber, and investigators utilize generally accepted investigative and evidentiary techniques.
- **Respectful:** Investigators treat involved people, such as victims, suspects, witnesses, family members, and officers, with respect and dignity at the scene and throughout the investigation process, including adopting a response protocol that includes an immediate acknowledgment and recognition of the impact of the incident, a neutral stance, a clear commitment to conducting a full and fair investigation, and information concerning the type of investigation to be conducted and its timeline.
- **Timely:** Investigations are conducted efficiently and effectively.
- **Thorough:** Investigations are exhaustive, in which all relevant details and leads are examined.
- **Transparent:** The community and police understand the investigation process and understands how to access information about each investigation such as investigation reports.





## SDFIT Expectations

1. Investigators have expertise and experience in conducting high-profile, complex criminal investigations.
2. Investigators can and do respond to each incident promptly.
3. Investigators have sufficient capacity and resources to carry out high-quality, timely investigations.
4. Clear definitions and policies govern the investigations.
5. The investigation process protects against conflicts of interest and appearances of conflicts of interest.



## Recommendations:

### Policy, Training, and Practices

Within the police oversight system, the Commission plays a unique role in representing community voices in making policy and other recommendations on policing and police accountability. Since its inception, the Commission has issued numerous recommendations and reports on policing and the police accountability system in

Seattle. In 2018, in the spirit of partnership, the Commission made a concerted effort to deliver recommendations to SPD and other partners via in-person conversations, rather than formal written recommendations. The following are formal written recommendations issued by the Commission in 2018 and their status.

**Recipient:** Seattle Police Department  
**Subject:** Policy 5.140 Bias-Free Policing  
**Date:** March 30, 2018  
**Status:** Completed

Revise policy to change “subject” to “person,” remove binary gendering, include the newly established Office of the Inspector General as an entity SPD shall consult regarding disparate impacts.

**Recipient:** Seattle Police Department  
**Subject:** Policy 8.000 Use of Core Principles  
**Date:** July 18, 2018  
**Status:** Collaboratively resolved

Revise policy to align with the statutory language put in place by Initiative 940.

**Recipient:** Seattle Police Department  
**Subject:** 2018 Stops and Detentions Annual Report  
**Date:** October 18, 2018  
**Status:** Declined action

Include specific analyses and demographic data that have been included in previous reports, and/or include specific data points in SPD's online dataset available to the public. Data missing in the report and/or data set include:

- Stops and detentions by Watch
- Stops and detentions by Functional Assignment
- Stops and detentions by Administrative Assignment
- Duration of Stop

Response: SPD responded saying while SPD's bandwidth is limited to conduct exhaustive analyses, the department's data are public.

**Recipient:** Office of the Inspector General  
**Subject:** 2018 Work Plan  
**Date:** December 12, 2018  
**Status:** Completed

The Commission requested that OIG adopt the following as part of its 2018 work plan:

- Address disparate impacts/bias in policing in stops and detentions and use of force.
- Cease the use of coercive interrogation techniques
- Examine Federal Taskforce collaboration issues
- Audit/review of SPD responses to community rallies and protests
- Complete assessment of Force Review Board
- Audit/review 911 Dispatch Center
- Review closed SPD litigation cases

# Looking

# Forward

The Community Police Commission looks forward to what the future holds for us as a fully independent and permanent body. As the Interim Executive Director, I am excited to be at the forefront of our work in centering and amplifying the priorities of the Seattle's communities. Like no other time in Seattle's history, our communities have a way to make their voices heard in critical conversations about policing, police accountability, and police reform. It is an incredible responsibility that you have entrusted with the Commission, and we are ready to meet it.

The Commission is in a time of transition. With the addition of five new team members to Commission staff and the Police Accountability Ordinance increasing commissioner seats from 15 to 21, 2018 was a year of reflection and building capacity. The Commission in prior years had already laid a strong foundation for community-led police reform in Seattle. The essential addition of staff and key community members on the Commission have equipped the Commission with the ability to lift more community voices and expand upon on the great work of the Commission. With this new capacity, in 2019, the Commission will:

- Center the voice of the community
- Continue to fulfill the mandates listed within the Police Accountability Ordinance and companion resolution
- Conduct long-range planning for the Commission

I give my sincere gratitude and appreciation for the support that community and our system partners extended to the Commission throughout 2018. Without these partnerships, we cannot do the important work of achieving lasting positive change in policing in Seattle. We work in partnership with the understanding that efforts toward a socially just and equitable police accountability system benefit everyone. To live in the world we want, we need to create the world we want. Our efforts do not stop when barriers present themselves or when challenges seem insurmountable. Instead we get stronger, speak louder, and fight harder. There is no other option.



**In partnership,  
Bessie Marie Scott  
Interim Executive Director**

# Endnotes

- 1 Berger, Knute, “The New Wave of Police Reform in Seattle.” Seattle Magazine. November 2014. <https://www.seattlemag.com/article/new-wave-police-reform-seattle> (accessed July 22, 2019); Taylor, Jennifer. “The 1965 Freedom Patrols & the Origins of Seattle’s Police Accountability Movement.” The Seattle Civil Rights & Labor History Project. [https://depts.washington.edu/civlr/freedom\\_patrols.htm](https://depts.washington.edu/civlr/freedom_patrols.htm) (accessed July 22, 2019).
- 2 Miletich, Steve. “No charges against Seattle officer who shot woodcarver.” Seattle Times. February 15, 2011. <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/no-charges-against-seattle-officer-who-shot-woodcarver/> (accessed July 22, 2019).
- 3 ACLU Washington. “Civil Rights and Community Organizations Request DOJ to Investigate Seattle Police.” ACLU-WA.org. <https://www.aclu-wa.org/news/civil-rights-and-community-organizations-request-doj-investigate-seattle-police> (accessed July 22, 2019)
- 4 United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division and United States Attorney’s Office Western District of Washington. “Investigation of Seattle Police Department.” [https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/CommunityPoliceCommission/DOJ\\_Investig\\_Report\\_12-16-11.pdf](https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/CommunityPoliceCommission/DOJ_Investig_Report_12-16-11.pdf) (accessed July 22, 2019)
- 5 Settlement Agreement, United States of America v. City of Seattle (12-CV-1282, W.D. Wash, July 27, 2012)
- 6 Miletich, Steve. “Seattle City Council passes historic police-accountability legislation.” Seattle Times. May 22, 2017. <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/crime/seattle-city-council-passes-historic-police-accountability-legislation/> (accessed July 22, 2019).
- 7 “Full Council 8/13/2018,” Seattle Channel video, 32:52, August 13, 2018, <http://www.seattlechannel.org/FullCouncil?videoid=x97042>
- 8 Seattle Municipal Code (SMC), 03.29.340.A (2017)
- 9 SMC, 03.29.360.A (2017)
- 10 SMC, 03.29.360.C (2017)
- 11 SMC, 03.29.360.E (2017); SMC, 03.29.360.F (2017)
- 12 SMC, 03.29.360.G (2017)
- 13 SMC, 03.29.360.H (2017)
- 14 SMC, 03.29.360.K (2017)
- 15 SMC, 03.29.360.L (2017)
- 16 SMC, 03.29.360.M (2017)
- 17 SMC, 03.29.360.N (2017)
- 18 SMC, 03.29.370.A (2017)
- 19 SMC, 03.29.370.B (2017)
- 20 SMC, 03.29.400.B (2017)
- 21 SMC, 03.29.360.I (2017)
- 22 SMC, 03.29.360.J (2017)
- 23 SMC, 3.29.410.A.3 (2017)
- 24 City Council Resolution 31573 (2017)
- 25 City Council Resolution 31573, (2017)
- 26 SMC, 03.29.360.B (2017)
- 27 City Council Resolution 31573, (2017)