



Legislation Text

File #: Res. 2020-081, **Version:** 1

City Council Meeting Date: September 15, 2020

To: City Council

From: Ben Martig, City Administrator
Mark Elliott, Police Chief

CC: Rhonda Pownell, Mayor

Consider Resolution Establishing Citizen Police Department Administrative Policy Review Task Force and Related Mayoral Appointments.

Action Requested:

The Northfield City Council consider approving the attached Resolution Establishing Citizen Police Department Administrative Policy Review Task Force and Related Mayoral Appointments.

Summary Report:

In April 2020 the Northfield Police Department began a process to revise and update the policy manual the department uses to guide the operations of the department and the actions of its members. The department contracted with Lexipol to provide the framework for the policy manual through policies that follow federal and state laws as well as court decisions, and best practices guidelines affecting law enforcement service delivery. Shortly after this process began we all witnessed the death of George Floyd, the civil unrest that followed, and the calls for police reforms.

The department is currently reviewing and editing the standard policies provided by Lexipol to fit our department and community. As part of this review process the police department has requested assistance from the public in providing feedback on select policies that have been highlighted during recent calls for police reform.

Mayor Pownell, in consultation with the Police Chief and City Administrator, is proposing the attached Resolution that will establish a task force of members of the public to provide feedback to the department on the policies through a series of meetings this fall and winter. Members of this task force were chosen as a community member and representative of a diverse cross section of organizations representing our city. The work they do and the people that make up their organizations including staff, clients, and stakeholders represent our community thus positioning them well to share the voices of many to this process.

Police Chief Mark Elliott has expressed his desire to follow guidance offered in the 2015 President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing report in creating trust and legitimacy for the Northfield Police Department through transparency and accountability. He feels this process is meaningful in providing community voice and

understanding into the work the police department performs.

The task force will consist of a diverse group of about a dozen community members and will meet about 5 times from October to January to review policies, ask questions, and provide feedback which will be used to formulate the final policies. The policies to be reviewed will consist of approximately 25 policies that have a nexus to the police reform discussions that have recently occurred such as use of force, immigration, bias based policing, standards of conduct, hate or prejudice crime reporting and investigation, etc.. The time commitment is expected to be approximately 90 minutes for each meeting and a couple hours of review time of the policies and materials between each meeting. Upon conclusion of this process a report on the task force's work will be given to the City Council through a public meeting presentation, and the final policy manual will be posted online once completed.

Given the current pandemic, the task force will follow current Executive Orders on gatherings, and will meet through an online format for as long as that is the suggested best practice. In person meetings will occur only if allowed and will follow physical distancing guidelines.

Alternative Options:

None recommended.

Financial Impacts:

None.

Tentative Timelines:

As outlined in the summary report.