

Police Accountability Board - Regular Board Meeting**Date:** April 3, 2025**Time:** 6:00 PM**Location:** 245 E. Main Street, Rochester, NY**Livestreamed on:** YouTube
(youtube.com/rochesterpab)**Police Accountability Board Meeting Minutes****Date:** April 3, 2025**Start Time:** 6:13 PM**End Time:** 9:42 PM**Attendees**

- **Board Members:** Lawrence Knox (Chair), Rabbi Drorah Setel (Vice Chair), Rev. Keith Patterson, Arlene Brown, Lwam Tecleab, Yvonne Wilson
- **Absent/Excused:** William Clark, Victoria Harmon (Secretary to the PAB)
- **Staff:** Dr. Lesli C. Myers-Small (Executive Director), De'Jon Hall (Director of Policy and Oversight), Sandra J. Simon (Interim Director of Public Affairs and Community Engagement), Brianna Milon (Communications Manager)
- **ASL Interpreter:** Shannon Tracey

Meeting Agenda and Minutes**1. Welcome & Introductions (6:13 PM)**

- Chair Knox called the meeting to order and requested introductions. Board members and the Executive Director introduced themselves.

2. Approval of Prior Minutes (6:15 PM)

- **March 6 Minutes:** Motion was made by A. Brown to approve the minutes, seconded by Y. Wilson. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Staff Reports (6:16 PM)**Public Affairs and Community Engagement:**

- The PAB community survey, conducted from November 2024 to February 2025, concluded successfully with 212 responses from 43 zip codes. Key findings were presented in the Survey Presentation section of the meeting minutes. A press release was issued, and full analysis and action plans were completed.
- The Executive Director presented to the Youth Policy Task Force on March 12, 2025, and at the Youth Policy Task Force Town Hall at School 33 on March 27, 2025.

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Youth participants will be proposing 2 to 4 legislative policy recommendations to City Council.

- Interviews were conducted with Upstate New York Gospel Magazine focusing on transparency and faith-based partnerships. The article is expected to be published in May or June 2025.
- Following the community forum held in honor of Robert Brooks, Action for a Better Community has taken the lead on organizing the “Be the Healing Symposium,” a citywide event focused on justice and healing, set for April 11, 2025. The PAB was invited to participate, and board members are encouraged to attend.
- The Public Affairs and Community Engagement (PACE) team will begin monthly social media content featuring board members to increase visibility.
- Common Ground Health has invited the PAB to present to their Afro-Latino group, following a recent presentation by Measures for Justice that highlighted PAB’s community engagement efforts.

Investigations:

- Cooper Townsend, the newly hired investigator, was introduced to the board.
- Casey Asprooth-Jackson, digital forensic analyst, successfully completed the Level 1 Forensic Video Analysis and the Law certification.
- Reduct implementation is ongoing to streamline video review.
- Use-of-force documentation protocols have been discussed with RPD.
- Updates completed for SFT uploads, RPD packet preparation, Genetec, and misconduct data entry processes.

Case Management:

- As of March 31, 2025, a total of 10 cases were received:
 - 9 cases in English
 - 1 case in Spanish
- **PAB Reports by Disposition**
 - Closed: 3
 - Case Management Reviews: 2
 - Requests for Information: 4
 - **Total: 9**

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- **Internal Case Submissions**

- Investigation Review: 1
- Request for Information: 1
- **Total: 2**

- **Findings & Actions – Reports Closed**

- Board Closed – Findings and Decisions Submitted: 3
- **Total Reports Closed: 3**

Policy and Oversight:

- The Locust Club lawsuit is moving into the summary judgment phase. The court date is April 10, 2025, at 9:30 AM.
- The Director of Policy and Oversight presented to the board, an overview of RPD's engagement with federal immigration agencies, following internal discussions and a public complaint regarding General Order 502 (Equitable Policing Policy). He also discussed the Proposal for Change policy recommendations that policy team is working on to address concerns about transparency and gaps in RPD's interaction with federal immigration enforcement. A 30–45 day public comment period will be conducted using multiple formats.

Operations and Training

- **Staffing:**
 - Deputy Executive Director and General Counsel Ben Wittwer's last day was March 28, 2025, and his responsibilities have been redistributed to the other directors for the meantime.
 - A send-off was held for Ben, acknowledging his accomplishments and contributions to the PAB. Additionally, Luan Vu was recognized for his transition to full-time Webmaster, and Mary Elliott, Josh Singletary, and Tara Pearson were acknowledged for three years of service with the PAB.
 - Interviews for Director of PACE concluded; the new hire is expected to start shortly.
 - Two college interns selected through the Roc City program. Interns will assist the PAB with investigations and other areas.

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- **Training:**
 - Staff completed training on Implicit Bias and Anti-Racism with the Center for Dispute Settlement.
 - Six staff and one board member are participating in the Citizens Police Academy. The PAB Executive Director is scheduled to present at the Academy on May 28, 2025.
- **Website Analytics:**
 - Website Analytics shared with the board. Engagement increased significantly from September 2024 through March 2025.
- Planning for COPA site visit (Fall 2025) underway.

Meeting with Chief of Police and RPD Update

- The Executive Director met with the Chief of Police, and their discussion included the following topics:
 - Unredacted report implementation
 - Training models for investigators
 - RPD trauma support
 - Coordination with DA's office
- Captain Steven Swetman has resumed his liaison role.

PAB Survey Result and Action Plan Presentation

- **Key Findings:**
 - 66% of respondents feel the city is not doing enough to hold police accountable.
 - 75% support the publication of investigative reports.
 - 68% want the PAB to have disciplinary authority.
 - Significant gap exist confusion persists around how to file complaints.
 - Underrepresentation from non-English speakers and youth communities.
 - Fear of retaliation was identified as a barrier to complaint filing.
- An action plan was presented based on the analysis, outlining key steps to address identified issues and improve overall performance.

4. Chair Report (7:28 PM)

- Noted upcoming vacancies on the board, including two open seats and the upcoming end of terms for others.

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- Encouraged community members, particularly from underrepresented groups, to apply.

5. Formation of Youth and Community Engagement Committee (7:29 PM)

- Committee established under City Charter Section 18-7.4.
- Purpose includes: youth education, improving public access to PAB, strengthening partnerships, representing underrepresented voices.

6. Motion made by A. Brown and seconded by Y. Wilson to establish the committee. (7:32 PM)

- Motion passed unanimously. Membership and structure to be finalized.

7. Redact Policy Discussion and Vote (7:34 PM)

- Board discussed the implementation of NYCLU v. City of Rochester decision. Topics included:
 - Whether PAB should include officer names in published reports.
 - Whether board member names should be included, considering safety risks.
- First Decision: Cease redacting officers names: **(7:52 PM)**
 - Motion made by A. Brown and seconded by D. Setel to no longer redact officers' names in the reports. Motion passed unanimously 6-0.
- Second Decision: Include board members' names on the reports: **(7:55 PM)**
 - A motion was made by D. Setel and seconded by L. Tecleab. The vote resulted in a tie, with 3 in favor (L. Tecleab, L. Knox, D. Setel) and 3 against (K. Patterson, A. Brown, and Y. Wilson). As a result, the motion did not pass.
 - The matter will be revisited in the future.

8. Committee Reports (8:02 PM)**Training Committee**

- Board member Rev. Patterson participating in the Citizens Police Academy.

9. Old Business (8:05 PM)**10. New Business (8:05 PM)**

- The Syracuse Civilian Police Accountability Board reached out to request our organizational chart, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and other materials, expressing interest in establishing a supportive relationship with the PAB.

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- Updates on Albany CPAB's organizational transitions were shared.

11. Executive Session (8:07 PM)

- A motion was made by L. Knox to enter executive session and was seconded by K. Patterson. Motion carried unanimously.
- No votes taken during the executive session.

12. Adjournment (9:42 PM)**Next Meeting:** May 1, 2025, at 6:00 PM