



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT TO THE BOARD

August 2026

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Opening

Good evening, Chair Durwin, members of the Board, and members of the public.

Tonight, I want to provide a high-level look at our work during August. Not simply what we did, but what that work tells us about where the Police Accountability Board is today and where we are headed.

August was an important month for the PAB. We expanded our community presence, continued strengthening our relationships with key partners, advanced conversations regarding data access, further developed our legislative strategy, and continued building the New York State Civilian Oversight Consortium.

There is a common thread across all of this work:

We are continuing to demonstrate the value of civilian oversight today while preparing the PAB for what comes next.

August at a Glance

During August:

- The PAB received 10 complaints, compared with eight in July.
- We participated in 26 community engagement activities.
- Those activities reached 1,747 residents, compared with 1,328 in July.
- The Legislative Affairs Committee met twice during the month.
- We continued work toward formalizing the New York State Civilian Oversight Consortium.

- We advanced important conversations regarding access to information necessary for systemic oversight.

These numbers matter, but the larger story is what they represent.

Community engagement increased significantly. Residents continue using the PAB to bring forward concerns. And our policy, legal, community, and executive work is increasingly becoming connected around a broader model of civilian oversight.

July's report emphasized that meaningful oversight extends beyond investigations to policy review, trend analysis, public education, transparency, community engagement, and systemic reform. August demonstrates what that looks like in practice.

Data Access and Systemic Oversight

Data access remained one of our most important priorities during August.

We continued discussions with City leadership regarding appropriate access to information, including conversations with Council President Meléndez and Corporation Counsel.

Importantly, I had a positive conversation with Chief Smith focused on strengthening the relationship between RPD and the PAB, information sharing, and identifying opportunities for collaboration within our current authority.

Our objective is straightforward: meaningful systemic oversight requires meaningful access to information.

We are meeting in mid-September to finalize practical solutions that allow the PAB to conduct evidence-based policy analysis, identify trends, monitor reforms, and provide meaningful public reporting.

Protecting and Restoring the PAB's Mandate

At the same time, we continue working toward restoration and clarification of the investigative authority originally envisioned for the PAB.

The Legislative Affairs Committee held its first meeting on August 4, establishing a formal structure for examining legislative and policy developments affecting civilian oversight.

Following our August discussion with appellate counsel, the importance of pursuing a State legislative strategy became increasingly clear.

The Committee met again on August 27 and continued developing the Save the Rochester Mandate strategy.

A.J. and Kevin will provide additional information regarding the Committee's work, so I will not duplicate their report tonight.

From the Executive Director's perspective, however, I believe we must remain committed to two things simultaneously:

We must operate effectively under our current authority while positioning the organization for the possibility that investigative authority is restored.

We cannot wait until that day to determine what staffing, systems, policies, technology, training, and resources would be necessary.

Community Trust and Presence

August was also a particularly strong month for community engagement.

Our team participated in 26 activities and reached 1,747 residents throughout Rochester.

But I want us to begin looking beyond the number of events we attend.

The larger question is:

What are we learning from the community, and how is what we hear influencing our oversight work?

That connection will become increasingly important.

One example is my August meeting with Willow Domestic Violence Center. The purpose of that conversation was primarily to listen and better understand survivor experiences where domestic violence intersects with law enforcement and other systems. We also began identifying potential opportunities for survivor-centered policy review, public education, and community-informed oversight.

Going forward, I want us to create a stronger cycle:

Community tells us → we examine it → data helps us understand it → policy work responds → we report back to the community.

That is what community-centered oversight should increasingly look like.

Emerging Issues in Policing

We also continued monitoring emerging issues that may shape policing and civilian oversight.

Following the Public Safety Committee's discussion regarding artificial intelligence and law enforcement, we began examining issues involving transparency, bias, accountability, privacy, procurement, data governance, and community awareness.

We also monitored developments involving emerging use-of-force technologies.

This reinforces something I have said before:

Oversight does not have to begin after something goes wrong.

Effective civilian oversight should also be capable of examining policies, technologies, systems, and practices before they become sources of concern.

Statewide Leadership

We continued advancing the New York State Civilian Oversight Consortium.

During August, we received and reviewed the draft NACOLE Affiliate Agreement and prepared proposed revisions.

We are now moving toward finalizing that agreement and transitioning from creating the Consortium to actually implementing it. The agreement will go before

This is significant for Rochester. It creates an opportunity for oversight practitioners throughout New York State to share expertise, professional learning, resources, and strategies—and it positions Rochester as an important contributor to that statewide conversation.

Building the PAB

Finally, August included important internal work around organizational direction.

We have spent significant time over the last several years responding to legal, organizational, staffing, and structural change.

The next phase needs to be about institutionalization.

Our goal is to move beyond simply reporting: What did we do?

We also need to answer: What did we learn? What changed? Are we achieving our goals? Where are the gaps? And what are we going to do next?

That same philosophy will shape our Monthly Reports, Quarterly Reports, Annual Report, and my reports to this Board and the community.

Looking Ahead

As we move into September and the remainder of 2026, our priorities are increasingly clear.

We will continue demonstrating the value of the PAB under our current authority; pursue appropriate data access; advance the legislative strategy to protect and restore the Rochester mandate; strengthen the connection between community engagement and systemic oversight; formalize and implement the New York State Civilian Oversight Consortium; strengthen our KPIs and performance-management systems; and continue building an organization capable of lasting beyond any one leader, Board, court decision, or moment in time.

Executive Director's Reflection

I want to close with something I have been thinking about throughout August.

From our inception, the PAB has been widely recognized for its ability to independently investigate complaints of police misconduct. With that authority currently eliminated, a narrative has emerged among some that there is now little for the agency to do.

Our work must demonstrate otherwise.

August provides part of that answer.

We received complaints. We reached nearly 1,750 residents. We strengthened community and institutional relationships. We advanced statewide collaboration. We continued working toward better access to information. We examined emerging issues in policing. And we continued developing a path toward restoration of the authority envisioned for this agency.

But our goal is not simply be to prove that we are busy.

Activity is not the same as impact.

The question I want us asking now is:

How does our work advance police accountability and transparency today?

Every division should be able to answer that question. Our KPIs should help us measure it. Our reports should communicate it. And our community should ultimately be able to see it.

We are moving from a period of stabilization toward a period of institutionalization, execution, and measurable impact.

The goal is not simply to run the PAB well. The goal is to build an agency that can last.

Thank you.