

Ashland Police Task Force Public Forum #4

Wednesday, October 13, 2021 6:30PM – Bretting Community Center

PRESENT: Kate Siegler, Sarah Jackson, Laura Negro, Mayor Deb Lewis, Daryle Tucker, Stacy Craig, and Esie Leoso-Corbine

Mayor Lewis called the meeting to order at 6:35pm and thanked committee members and attendees.

Esie Leoso-Corbine led the public forum in a traditional Native American blessing.

Mayor Lewis reviewed the mission statement, community agreements, agenda, and introduced Police Task Force members.

Stacy Craig shared an overview of the Ashland Policing Task Force and summarized the previous public forum. She asked if anyone had comments or questions regarding the prior forum. There were no comments.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

(Comments have been edited for clarity and length.)

Craig opened the floor for sharing. No public comments were provided.

Craig asked if anyone would like to share their thoughts about the prior forums.

Mayor Lewis reflected about community members getting to know each other better as one citizen suggested at a previous meeting.

No additional public comment was given.

Craig asked attendees what community policing means to them.

Craig then spoke about her time as a volunteer EMT and how first responders help those who are unable to help themselves. She shared that it is important when thinking about community policing that first responders are sometimes asked to do things that no one else wants to do.

Leoso-Corbine spoke about her idea of community policing and about how there are certain people in the community that you would call and they would always be willing to help. This practice isn't as common today because we do not know how to de-escalate a situation and we have lost the skill to communicate with one another. She stated that community plays an important role in helping one another.

Laura Nagro agreed that her idea of community policing is similar to Leoso-Corbine. Growing up in a small town she and the people in her community just spoke to one another instead of just calling the police. She suggested that we need to begin to talk to one another again.

Daryle Tucker stated that the residents of Ashland, especially students at Northland come from all over and have different perspective of the police. Many of his athletes and students see Ashland as a safe haven from the police with not as much racial profiling, and that as a community we need to be thankful

of what we have. Tucker stated that the policing situation in Ashland is a lot better than most places and many of these Northland students do not want to leave the area because the police are so much better here than in the places they grew up. He stated that we must respect what we already have, respect our property, and respect our peers.

Sarah Jackson stated she thinks about community policing as making the world better for children. It's important to ask and think about, how do you make children comfortable with the police?

No additional public comment given.

Craig asked attendees how to repair broken trust with the police.

Leoso-Corbine states it can start with reconciliation between the local police departments and citizens.

Jackson suggests getting a basketball hoop at the new Ashland Police Department building so children could play basketball with officers and begin building that trust from an early age.

No additional public comment given.

Craig explained restorative justice and its practices then asked attendees what restorative justice means to them.

Nagro stated that it is important to recognize that both the victim and the perpetrator in a situation have value. For restorative justice practices being able to give an apology and then also being able to accept the apology is crucial for this system to work. She stated that her biggest fear is that this forum circuit will be the end, when it needs to be constantly continued. The system needs changes if we want to continue to see improvements.

Craig closed the meeting at 8:05 pm thanking all the comments and stories told during the public forum. She also reminded those in attendance that the Police Department open house will be October 29th from 10-12pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Chelsea List

Deputy Clerk