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Re: Police Oversight Community Conversation
Date: March, 13, 2021

Dear Mayor Hall, Members of the City Council, City Manager Scott Chadwick, Chief Gallucci, and Assistant Chief Williams:

I participated in two public Zoom meetings on Police Community Conversation, on February 1 and again on February 8. I joined the February 8th meeting because I was not prepared to thoughtfully discuss my opinions February 1 on the topic in the short amount of time allowed for in the meeting. I have also reviewed the August 18th and October 20th Staff Reports on the topic

I provided the comments below at the February 8th meeting, a summary of which was documented in the record.

I felt the issue was important enough to provide this document for the record to capture my entire thoughts on the topic.

Coming from a business background, we make changes to programs and processes to improve them and make them more efficient....and to correct problems and inefficiencies we learn about.

Further, as a Planning Commissioner for the City of Carlsbad for 14 years, I learned not to offer opinions and make decisions until I have heard all sides of the issues. As you know, Commissioners have access to a significant amount of information to consider an issue.

As a member of the public, I have been asked to offer an opinion, as have others in the community, on what the appropriate options are for creating a police citizen oversight group. This process is much the same as what Planning Commissioners hear during public comment periods at hearings.

The public's comments are generally emotional due to the impact a project has on their property, sometimes anecdotal, and sometimes not fact-based, as the public has not reviewed all of the detailed material available to them and the Commissioners.....material used to make an informed decision. I am not saying public comment is not important; it is critically important in the decision-making process. What I am saying is not all comments are based on fact.

What I believe is lacking is an understanding of what the issue is relative to the Carlsbad Police Department's oversight and management of issues that a citizen's oversight group would better address.

True, many police departments throughout the country are experiencing issues....some significant ones. Size of departments....demographics and socio-economic issues in communities....training of police officers all account for many issues. But I have not seen nor heard of issues that are plaguing the Carlsbad Police Department today. So, unless I know that they currently exist, I cannot honestly recommend which option is best.

Here's what *I do know*.

My family and I moved from Los Angeles to Carlsbad 25 years ago for the quality of life that Carlsbad has....and that a major metropolis like LA severely lacks. I was not a bystander in trying to improve the quality of life in LA. I served as president of the Los Angeles Junior Chamber of Commerce and its major projects, the Nissan LA Open Golf Tournament, the Los Angeles-Watts Summer Games and the Los Angeles Area Special Olympics; as a Board Member of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce; as a member the Los Angeles Police Department's Reserve Executive Board (advising the Police Chief on issues related to the Reserve Program); and many other organizations that worked to improve the quality of life in LA.

Yet, my wife and I felt that LA was not the community to raise our children in. We focused on Carlsbad, as so many others...individuals and businesses...have done because of the proximity to the beach, the quality of schools, the low crime rates and the fast response of police and fire responders.

I do know that when I look at Carlsbad's Citizen Satisfaction Surveys over the years that ninety percent and higher satisfaction ratings for police and fire services are common. I can understand these high ratings for the fire department because every call for service impacts life, property and/or the environment. But most interactions with cops are during traffic stops and on rare occasions may involve an arrest. As such, I would expect a significantly lower rating for the police department. But in 2015, 98% said local police and law enforcement were extremely important to citizens. And 92% were satisfied with the police department. Again, in 2016, the last year the survey asked about citizen satisfaction, over 9 of 10 were satisfied with the services provided by the police department. In 2019, the most recent year the community was surveyed, I found no citizen comments about issues with the police department. All surveys are online and anyone can review them.

I do know that last year Carlsbad had several major BLM protest marches in the City, necessitating the closure of streets, including Carlsbad Blvd, by the police department, but the police kept the peace, allowed peaceful protests, and protected and accommodated protestors.

I do know Carlsbad believed so strongly in the training of first responders, that the City opened a state-of-the-art safety training center in 2013. During the economic downturn of the late

2000's, while every other City in North County were cutting city services, Carlsbad was investing in the planning of this training facility, the envy of agencies throughout the nation.

I do know that just because communities across the country are protesting because of police brutality and wanting to defund police that doesn't automatically mean our department has the same issues. One size does not fit all.

I do know that every citizen who wants to opine on police oversight should arrange to go on a police ride-along to get first-hand knowledge of the work, conditions and issues our law enforcement officers go through every day. I have done this numerous times. And I encourage members of our community to do the same. You cannot review the quality of food and service of a restaurant if you have never eaten there, and only rely on Yelp reviews. So how can you comment on police oversight issues if you only rely on news reports, anecdotal information and issues in other communities?

I do know that I have personally known every police chief since I moved to Carlsbad in 1995. I've known Jim Hawkes, Tom Zoll, Gary Morrison, current Chief Neil Gallucci and Assistant Chief Mickey Williams. I have worked with each professionally through my role as a member and Chairperson of the Board of the Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce and a co-founder of the Ready Carlsbad Business Alliance. I have personally heard each talk about one of the highest priorities of the Carlsbad Police Department and that is **providing a high level of customer service to their citizens**. This comes from life-long cops....talking about customer service! Where have you ever heard of such a thing? From business. But not government.

So, as an informed member of this community, I find it hard to fix or improve an issue that I don't know has a problem.

I commend the City of seeking community input, but I also hope decision makers take into account the issues I have commented on above.

Sincerely,

Jeff Segall