



APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 1, 2016.** Please include this application form with electronic entry.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Fairfax

Program Title: Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission

Program Category: 3

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Sharon Bulova

Title: Chairman

Department: Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Name: Sharon Bulova

Title: Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

Signature: Sharon Bulova

Fairfax County Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission

Overview

The Fairfax County Police Department has served and protected the Fairfax community for over 75 years, earning a name for itself as one of the top public safety departments in the region. As part of their commitment to excellence, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and Police Department have consistently looked for ways to better serve the community and maintain a public trust and confidence. Following a controversial officer-involved deadly shooting in 2013, the Board of Supervisors decided to take a hard look at the way Fairfax County handled use of force and the release of information to the public. On March 3, 2015, Chairman Bulova issued a Board matter to establish an Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission. This Commission boasted almost 40 members, including County staff, community leaders, private citizens, police and legal representatives, academics, and local media outlets. The goal of the Commission was to recommend changes, consistent with Virginia law, which would help Fairfax County achieve its goals for public safety: maintain a safe community, ensure a culture of public trust, and make sure County policies provide for the fair and timely resolution of Police-involved incidents. Specifically, the Commission was tasked with reviewing existing policies associated with police-community relations, police-involved incidents/use of force, and the public release of information.

The Commission began its work in late March, 2015. Commission meetings took place every month and the group divided into five subcommittees (Use of Force; Communications; Mental Health and CIT; Recruitment, Diversity and Vetting; and Independent Oversight and Investigations) which met independently multiple times throughout the year. On October 8, 2015, the Commission submitted its 200 page final report to the Board of Supervisors. The Fairfax County Police Department began reviewing and implementing changes in late 2015. The public can access and review the progress report for the Commission's recommendations on the County website.

The Challenge and Solution

Chairman Sharon Bulova established the Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission on March 3, 2015. Fairfax County is the safest jurisdiction of its size; however, a controversial officer-involved shooting and subsequent release of information to the public caused residents and elected officials to question current police practices related to use of force and transparency. The Police Department and the Board of Supervisors recognized the need to closely examine current policies and improve relationships and trust between residents and County Public Safety departments.

The Ad Hoc Commission brought together almost 40 community leaders, citizens, police and legal representatives, academics, media representatives, and County staff to review current police practices and offer recommendations to Fairfax County. Their exhaustive final report, issued in October 2015, consisted of over 200 recommendations related to its five subcommittees: Use of Force; Communications; Mental Health and CIT; Recruitment, Diversity and Vetting; and Independent Oversight and Investigations.

The Board of Supervisors requested that the Commission undertake the following tasks in its mission:

- Review existing policies, practices and programs regarding police-community relations;
- Review existing policies, practices and laws regarding police-involved incidents, including:
 - History of recent use-of-force (lethal and non-lethal) incidents involving FCPD and subsequent public release of information;
 - FCPD use-of-force training policies;
 - FCPD threat assessment policies;
 - FCPD Internal Affairs Division policies.
- Review the policies, practices and laws regarding the public release of information, including:

- relevant provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and statutory and case law;
- the roles of Police Public Information Officers and the Office of Public Affairs;
- the role and relationship between the FCPD, the Office of the County Attorney, and the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney.

After reviewing policies and practices, as well as conducting public outreach, the Commission recommended changes to the Board of Supervisors in its final report in October 2015. The Commission and its five subcommittees held around 40 meetings over six months to develop their final recommendations. During these meetings, Commissioners reviewed studies and reports, listened to many presentations from FCPD officials and outside experts, and conducted two widely-attended public hearings. The County website provided information on the Commission's upcoming meetings, meeting summaries and videos, press releases and progress reports.

Innovation and Intergovernmental Cooperation

The Fairfax County Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission was innovative in two ways. First, the Commission undertook a holistic, transparent, and community oriented approach in its efforts. The selection of the commissioners, public hearings, online updates on the Commission's activities, and the final recommendations regarding County policies all focused on engaging residents and creating transparency in between County government and the public.

The second innovative aspect of this project was the high level of cooperation between County agencies, outside organizations, and non-County government entities. Few County projects have involved this many individuals and organizations from different backgrounds. The Commissioners themselves came from multiple industries and organizations. County staff from multiple departments supported the Commission's work, including the Police Department, the Sheriff's Office, the Office of Public

Affairs, the Office of the County Executive, and the Office of Chairman Sharon Bulova. County employees gave large amounts of time to staffing the Commission and later implementing the recommendations.

Staffing and Financing

Fairfax County staff supported the efforts of the citizen-led Ad Hoc Commission. The Chairman of the Board of Supervisors selected the Commissioners, which included several members of County staff from the Police Department and Sheriff's Office. Several other agencies including the Chairman's Office, the Office of the County Executive and the Office of Public Affairs staffed the Commission meetings, oversaw public outreach, followed the Commission's progress, gave presentations, wrote reports, and conducted research.

The Board of Supervisors did not provide additional funding for the development of the Commission's report. Any costs associated with their work was clerical and already included in the County budget-printing costs for documents and extra working hours for County staff. The cost of implementing the Commission's 200+ recommendations has been higher. The Board of Supervisors approved an additional \$7.5 million to fund the recommendations in their FY2017 budget. This investment demonstrates the Board's high regard for the Commission and their serious commitment enhance public safety services in Fairfax County.

Press Release and Brochure Summary

Chairman Sharon Bulova established the Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission on March 3, 2015, following a controversial officer-involved deadly shooting. Fairfax County is the safest jurisdiction of its size; however, this incident and subsequent release of information to the public caused residents and elected officials to question current police practices related to use of force and transparency. The Police Department and the Board of Supervisors recognized the need to closely examine current policies and improve relationships and trust between residents and County Public Safety departments.

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Additional documents:

Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission Final Report