

Johns Hopkins University Police Accountability Board
Thursday, March 24, 2022

Accountability Board members:

Lorraine Dean	Absent
Cynthia Gross	Present
Edward Kangethe	Present
Sonja Merchant Jones	Present
Doris Minor Terrell	Present
Pritika Parmar	Present
Noah Patton	Present
Amancio Romero-Sackey	Present
P. Logan Weygandt	Present

Johns Hopkins staff present:

1. Branville G. Bard, Jr
2. Liam Haviv
3. Jarron Jackson
4. Rianna Matthews-Brown
5. Jeanne Hitchcock
6. Amber Hood

Guest(s) present:

1. Brian Corr, Former President of the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE)

Opening

A regular meeting of the Johns Hopkins University Police Accountability Board was called to order at 6:04 p.m. on Thursday, March 24th, 2022 via Zoom. The meeting was broadcast live via toll-free call-in and on the [Accountability Board meetings livestream webpage](#).

1. Welcome & Introductions

Branville Bard, Johns Hopkins' vice president for public safety, welcomed everyone to the meeting, provided an overview of the meeting agenda, and introduced special guest, Brian Corr, Former President of the National Association for Civilian Oversight and former field organizer for the ACLU of Massachusetts.

2. Approval of meeting minutes

The Board reviewed the draft meeting minutes from the special meeting, Open Meetings Act Training, on Thursday, March 10, 2022. Seven (7) Board Members voted to approve the minutes, one (1) Board member abstained (due to her absence at the March 10, 2022 meeting), and one (1) Board member was absent and did not vote.

3. Guest Speaker Presentation, Brian Corr

Mr. Corr thanked Dr. Bard and the Board for inviting him to the meeting. Mr. Corr presented information regarding the background of civilian oversight boards, the history of policing (including the connection to slavery and slave patrols), and the nature, structure, and best practices for civilian oversight boards. [The full presentation](#) can be found on the Accountability Board webpage.

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Guest Speaker Question & Answer

Dr. Bard invited members of the Board to ask Mr. Corr questions.

- How effective can a board be when they are reliant for administrative and legal support upon the institution they are charged with providing oversight for? (E. Kangethe)
 - Mr. Corr stated that it depends on two things: (1) established rules and processes between the oversight organization and the entity and the overall governance of the institution (i.e., JHU), and (2) strong relationships. One of the things that makes civilian oversight successful is having a shared understanding of how the two will work together. So if the oversight organization relies on the entity for institutional support, there should be rules and established processes for that collaborative relationship. The two entities need not agree but must have mutual respect and strong communication. Corr referred to his relationship with Dr. Bard during Dr. Bard's tenure as Cambridge Police Commissioner, noting that they had shared beliefs and philosophies, and in the rare moments when they disagreed, they relied on a good relationship to get through.
 - Mr. Corr also noted the importance of establishing a strong system with clear expectations. When the relationship is strong, those systems support the overall goal. If the parties want to work together, it will work; if they do not, then regardless of the structural powers, it will not.

- As a follow-up, Mr. Corr was asked about building an accountability board from scratch and how an accountability board ought to think about independence from the institution the accountability board is charged with providing oversight for. (E. Kangethe)
 - Mr. Corr began by addressing what independence *is*, and noting there are myriad ways to understand it. Mr. Corr said he understands *independence* as a situation in which the oversight organization is accountable not to the law enforcement agency but to the broader institution. That said, even though the oversight organization might be reliant on the law enforcement agency to do its job, it is still "independent" because of its ability to raise concerns and share feedback with the law enforcement agency. Mr. Corr explained, referring to his work in Cambridge, that the work of the oversight board is still *our* work.

- What is the difference between an accountability board vs. an oversight board? Where do they meet and where do they differ? (C. Gross)
 - Mr. Corr stated that he considers accountability boards within the broader family of civilian oversight. Mr. Corr noted that he comes from the lens of community organizing rather than that of a legal framework. He described accountability as enabling people to understand what is being done at an institution and being empowered to speak up when something is not just or when the actions of law enforcement don't "fit the standards of the community." Whether the issue is large or small, when something happens, and it is negative, accountability can be achieved through transparency and the ability to raise and address community concerns. Accountability can include the imposition of retraining or policy adjustments; it might be at the officer level or at the institutional level.
 - Mr. Corr said civilian oversight helps to achieve accountability, but civilian oversight is not the only form of accountability.
 - Mr. Corr stated accountability does not necessarily mean authority over.

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- How do you feel about transparency in the partnership as we build the police department? (S. Merchant-Jones)
 - Mr. Corr answered that transparency is very important in sharing of information and helping people understand what is happening. He stated that in order to achieve transparency, the Board must concentrate on three questions: (1) what can be shared?; (2) how can we share it?; and (3) how can we help people understand what is happening?
 - Citing his work as a field organizer at the ACLU of Massachusetts, Mr. Corr noted that people often say transparency *is* accountability or *is* oversight, but these are only pieces of the equation. The key to transparency is helping to effectively communicate to constituents and bring people into the work that is being done. The Board must help make sense of the data *for* the community, and in doing so, realize its goal is to serve as a two-way bridge, communicating and building trust between the broader community and the law enforcement entity or institution.
 - Transparency is also a value in and of itself, Mr. Corr said, as it helps everyone, including the officers. Building a mechanism for internal transparency is essential for building legitimacy and trust for constituents and the community as well as those working within the public safety sector.

- How much of the agenda-setting is done by the institution vs. the Board? How does that process work and how much input does the board have? This applies to broader and more specific agendas. (P. Parmar)
 - **On broader agendas:** Mr. Corr responded that it is necessary to begin by following state laws and institutional policy. He encouraged the Board to use this moment to have conversations with Dr. Bard and other institutional leaders about what they are hoping to accomplish as part of an effort to understand how the goals align and differ. Further, he advised using those conversations to build something together as this collaborative process helps to create a broader agenda and partnership with the institution. In setting the agenda, Mr. Corr emphasized the Board should want to hear from the university community, the broader Baltimore community, and the public safety community. Work should be done to develop a strong process – within the bounds of rules (or laws) that outline what can and can't be done, a strong process can help ensure that the Board's key principles, goals, and values are retained, and also that stakeholder concerns remain front and center. Working on this process and partnership does not mean there is always agreement, but, Mr. Corr stated, you really have to work hard to listen carefully to all of the voices out there: "if you're doing your work well, everyone will be a little mad."
 - **On specific agendas:** Usually, specific meeting agendas are developed by staff initially, but in time, as the Board develops its own governance structure, the Chair should be working with staff and Board members to create the agenda.

- What role can an accountability board play in creating policy when the Board is meant to, at the same time, be tasked with being critical of policy? Is it a conflict of interest to be the Accountability Board and the stakeholders charged with helping to create policy? (N. Patton)
 - Mr. Corr said it is actually quite amazing that the Board has been formed ahead of JHPD, as the Board has a special and unique opportunity to co-create policy.
 - Citing Professor Barry Friedman at New York University, Mr. Corr spoke about the interesting work being done to engage stakeholders in *creating* policy and taking advantage of the opportunity of front-end accountability.
 - Mr. Corr stated this Board has an opportunity to engage with the community and identify and create policies that work with the community as opposed to only serving in

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a role where the Board's only recourse is to review policies made by the department and react and critique. While policies will surely need to be adjusted, he noted, progressive police leaders, like Dr. Bard, are looking to create good policies on the front end, which require the perspective of people who exist outside of law enforcement agencies. It is preferable, he said, to get the policy right initially than to have a bad policy where the only recourse is to come back and say "why did you do this?" He concluded: this is a chance to learn and create policies as a community.

- The JHPD will have the ability to patrol beyond campus into neighboring communities that aren't affiliated with the university. How does the Board bring outside community voices in when it's not usually discussed? (C. Gross)
 - Mr. Corr stated that this is a challenge for many different agencies and can be especially challenging in a university setting. Often the issue occurs in reverse when a municipal police department is interacting with students. Mr. Corr noted that the complex nature of Baltimore's racial and socioeconomic history, the city's ties to slavery, the longstanding practice of redlining, and even the dynamic today within communities who at once feel underpoliced and overpoliced reinforce the idea that the Board's task is to find the most effective way to bring the range of stakeholders and diverse voices in from the community and ensure those people are being heard and feel heard. Mr. Corr recognized this is a difficult task in public service, and it's something we all have to work on and constantly get better at.
 - Dr. Bard pointed out that the enacting legislation, the Community Safety and Strengthening Act, is not silent on the matter of community, noting that the CSSA restricts the patrol area to the three campuses, and is specific and rigorous in its requirement that the neighboring communities are part of the Board and that the boundaries cannot be expanded without community and local government consent.
- There is a burden to educate, and people are looking to us to educate people on the process and the sharing of information. In trying to be transparent, we must have a deeply-rooted approach to bringing people to the table when sharing wisdom. (D. Minor-Terrell)
 - Mr. Corr said he agrees wholeheartedly. One of the fundamental tasks of the Board is not just doing *something* but informing people about the role, the power, and the limitations. Civilian oversight might *fail to meet expectations* because people don't understand the function and purpose, but that does not mean it has *failed*, and education is a key to this process.

Dr. Bard thanked Mr. Corr for his presentation and for taking the time to answer the Board's questions.

4. Benchmarking: Peer Oversight Bodies, Gov. Structure, and Bylaws, Liam Haviv

Liam Haviv, Researcher in the Office of President, presented a report on peer community oversight bodies. This [material can also be found on the Accountability Board meetings webpage](#).

Due to time constraints, Dr. Bard asked the Board how they would like to proceed, and they agreed to have Mr. Haviv present this information quickly. Dr. Bard stated that this topic can also be added to a later agenda if the Board desires.

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5. Open Discussion

Dr. Bard opened the meeting for discussion.

- Since the University is ending many COVID restrictions, when are the Board meetings going to be in person so the public can participate? (E. Kangethe)
 - Dr. Bard stated that we can target the next meeting, June 13, to offer an in-person option. He continued, noting we should always have the option to view remotely, and that things could change depending on the pandemic.
- A Board member noted that when they attempted to call in to the Opening Meetings Act Training meeting after it had begun, they were not able to enter because the meeting was locked. She contacted a fellow board member, but the Board member indicated that they weren't able to notify Dr. Bard. (C. Gross)
 - Dr. Bard said that he was not aware that people had difficulty entering the meeting after it had started; this was the first that he had heard of it, but he would look into it and ensure this was corrected moving forward.
 - Dr. Weygandt commented that the chat functions were probably locked due to the OMA discouraging chat functions and texting between board members; Ms. Matthews-Brown (JHU staff) noted that was correct.
 - Ms. Parmar had the same issue with entering the meeting late.
- How can the Board get access to emails that are sent to the Accountability Board email account that are received from the website and emails sent to the Accountability Board email address? (C. Gross)
 - Ms. Matthews-Brown said that a regular email report can be compiled and shared with the Board regularly. She also offered to look into setting up an account that the Board can access and reply to emails.
- Will the Board be involved in the discussion in hiring the JHPD management team, community relations, etc.? Follow-up question: Is there anything you can share with the Board tonight like an organizational chart? (E. Kangethe)
 - Dr. Bard said he will commit to having those discussions. Since we are in a pause, an organizational chart has not been developed.
- Ms. Gross commented that she wrote to the Attorney General to ask whether it was within the Board's power to provide suggestions and feedback on policies and processes. Ms. Gross did not feel as though this was included in the law as it was written. The Attorney General responded to Ms. Gross saying that there was no conflict, and the institution can ask for the Board's feedback, but the Board does not have to respond.
 - Dr. Bard commented that the Community Safety and Strengthening Act includes that the Board should provide guidance on community-focused public safety initiatives.

6. Closing

Dr. Bard thanked everyone for their time and engagement. He noted the Board's next quarterly meeting is June 13, 2022, at 6:00 pm. We will reach out to discuss agenda items prior to the next meeting. The web hosting and call-in information will remain the same, and the agenda and materials will be posted on the [Accountability Board website](#). For anyone needing other accommodations, contact AccountabilityBoard@jhu.edu. The meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

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Action Items/Next Steps

The next step is for the Board to develop a governance structure.

Items Being Tracked for Future Meetings/Discussions

Currently, no items are being tracked for future discussions.

Agenda Topics Proposed by Board Members for Future Meetings

- Maryland Legislative Landscape, incl. Law Enforcement Officer's Bill of Rights and relevant changes
- JHPD/Baltimore City MOU (timeline and process)
- JH's ongoing public safety interventions and efforts
- Organizational Chart and Structure
- Further discussion on benchmarking / peer efforts
- Crime Data Tracking
- Discussion and Follow-up Questions from JH Public Safety Town Halls
- Invite a CRB representative to discuss the CRB's relationship with the JHPDAB

Accountability Board Meeting Schedule (2022 calendar year)

- Quarterly Meeting: March 24, 2022 6:00 – 7:30pm*
- Quarterly Meeting: June 13, 2022 6:00 – 7:30pm
- Quarterly Meeting: September 12, 2022 6:00 – 7:30pm
- Quarterly Meeting: December 12, 2022 6:00 – 7:30pm

*rescheduled from March 14, 2022 upon request due to scheduling conflicts

Accountability Board Meeting Minutes Approval

Approved on May 18, 2022

Meeting: March 24, 2021*

Meeting Attendee	Affiliation	Yay	Nay	Abstain	No Response
Sonja Merchant Jones	Community Member	X			
Edward Kangethe	Community Member	X			
Noah Patton	Community Member				X
Cynthia Gross	Mayoral Appointee	X			
Doris Minor-Terrell	Council Pres. Appointee	X			
Lorraine T. Dean	Faculty			X	
Paul Logan Weygandt	Faculty	X			
Pritika Parmar	Student	X			
Kwame Amancio Romero-Sackey	Student	X			

* - board voted at the opening of the May 18, 2022 Board Meeting