

Johns Hopkins University Police Accountability Board Meeting

Wednesday, May 15, 2024

Accountability Board Members:

Doris Minor-Terrell	Absent
Douglas (Duke) Tremitiere	Present
Edward Kangethe	Present
Elizabeth Hazel	Present
Kamaria Hill	Absent
Katie O’Conor	Present
Kimyatta Ricks	Present
Madhu Subramanian	Present
Ovais Khalil	Absent
Ryan Alezz	Absent
Sam Crankshaw	Absent
Sam Johnson	Present
Sonja Merchant-Jones	Present

Johns Hopkins Staff Present:

1. Dr. Branville Bard
2. Calvin L. Smith Jr.
3. Amy Taylor
4. Kelly Allen (Livestream Technician)

Opening

Ed Kangethe, JH Accountability Board (JHAB) Chair, began the meeting at 6:05 p.m. with introductions by the Board members and JH staff. The meeting was broadcast live via toll-free call-in and on the [Accountability Board meetings live-stream webpage](#).

Board Business – January and March Minutes

Kangethe moved to approve the January and March 2024 JHAB annual public meeting minutes. The Board unanimously approved.

Committee Reports – Policy Review Committee

Kangethe, the Board’s Chair opened the floor for the Policy Review Committee to share any updates. Tremitiere, Chair of the Policy Review Committee, stated as discussed in previous Accountability Board meetings, the committee has completed its review of the draft directives for the new police force. These directives have been handed over to the policy and training section of Public Safety for further consideration. The full directives are currently undergoing review and are expected to be finalized soon. Additionally, Tremitiere provide an update on the future vision and work of the Policy Review Committee. They recently met with the President of the ‘Police Accountability Board’ and the vice chair of the committee, Dr. Madhu, to discuss next steps regarding policy. As a result of the discussions, they’ve outlined the upcoming tasks in a memo, which was shared with all members of the Policy Review Committee and uploaded to the shared drive. New members joining the Police Accountability Board can review this memo to gain insight into our anticipated work in the coming months.

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Considering our understanding of the Accountability Board's role and the directives, we foresee three specific areas where our work should continue. First, we will monitor new policies or potential policies as they emerge. While the initial directives we reviewed were a starting point, further policy development will be necessary as the police force becomes operational in the coming weeks, months, and years. Second, we'll need to focus on policy implementation in the field. While some directives provide clear guidelines for new officers, there are no instructions on how to implement certain aspects. For instance, the goal is for the draft policy on complaints involving the JHPD is to have officers issue complaint cards to the public, potentially in multiple languages English and Spanish. However, the content of these cards remains unspecified in the current directives. As implementation progresses, the Policy Review Committee will collaborate with Public Safety to define the card's content and provide input. Lastly, we may work with the Outreach Committee and other Accountability Board members to address public inquiries related to policy.

In the event that questions arise regarding policy implementation, potential breaches in the field, gaps in existing policies that require updates or further review will the Policy Review Committee play a role in addressing those concerns. It's important to discuss this with the Public Safety division moving forward. Additionally, Tremitiere emphasize that training issues are currently relevant due to ongoing recruitment for JHPD Officers. The Accountability Board has a role in Training Review, which will become more pronounced when Dr. Bard appoints a training advisory committee. One of the committee spots will be reserved for a member of the Accountability Board. While this appointment may occur in the coming months, relevant language from the draft directives has already been included in the memo to outline how the committee would function. **Tremitiere opened the floor for questions or comments.**

Q: Merchant-Jones: In your update there were mention of complaint cards: who would distribute them, and who would receive them?

A: Tremitiere: I think it's related to draft directive #305, although I'm not entirely certain. According to this directive, officers will carry complaint cards, and these cards will also be available at other locations. The purpose of the card is to provide instructions to recipients on how to file a formal complaint. However, specific procedures for distributing the card still need further clarification.

Q: Merchant-Jones: Does this process currently exist or will the Policy Committee propose it?

A: Tremitiere: The draft directives we reviewed mentioned the complaint card. However, specific details about the content of the card have not been specified.

Q: Kangethe: After the full rollout of the policies, what role do you anticipate your committee playing in terms of conducting refresher sessions or maintaining communication with the Director of Public Safety? Is there a plan to follow up approximately every six months, etc?

A: Tremitiere: This is a great question, thanks for raising it. Maintaining regular communication with Phil Kasten and the policy and training team in public safety is crucial. While there isn't a fixed schedule currently, it might be worthwhile to explore formalizing the relationship between the Policy Review Committee of the Accountability Board and the public safety team. Perhaps we can consider scheduling standing meetings every two or three months, which we can discuss further with Phil Kasten in the future to determine the best approach.

C: Kangethe: In my opinion, your committee's perspective is both unique and essential. Public safety aims to create a model police department that is community-centric. Your committee serves as the voice representing the community, and I believe it should be actively involved not only during policy rollout but also throughout

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implementation and ongoing maintenance. Your perspective can offer insights that career law enforcement personnel might not see.

A: Tremitiere: I wholeheartedly agree, and this alignment is actually outlined in the directives and our own mandate. According to the draft directives, if there's a need for a new policy, procedure, or directive, or if any issues arise, field commanders are responsible for notifying the policy team. The policy team will then draft the necessary updates or new directives, which should be shared with the Police Accountability Board for review. In practical terms, this would involve the Accountability Board, likely through the members of the Policy Review Committee. So, while the procedure exists, formalizing its implementation is crucial moving forward. **Chair Kangethe opened the floor for questions.**

Q: Hazel: What are your thoughts on collaborating with the data and metrics team to develop specific metrics related to policy implementation? Creating quantitative scores or other metrics could provide valuable insights. While I haven't fully explored this idea, it might be worth exploring further.

A: Tremitiere: Exploring available data could prove valuable for our review. It will be interesting to see how we can make a nexus between the data collected and the policies. While the feasibility may vary, it's worth investigating. I would like to connect at some point with those interested in working on this together.

Old Business – Planning of Engagement Community Event

Kangethe asked Merchant-Jones to provide an update on the engagement committee meeting that occurred on April 17, 2024. Merchant-Jones stated during the meeting, three questions were posed—one of them being 'Why did you join?' As everyone took turns sharing their thoughts, facilitator, Ganesha Martin (a consultant from 21CP), did an excellent job encouraging participants to express themselves openly. The responses varied greatly. Some expressed a desire to serve, while others committed to moving forward without dwelling on past issues or mistrust with Johns Hopkins. We are planning our first community meeting, the vision is not about filling a room with people; rather, it's about bringing together representatives from diverse community groups. The representatives can gather information from their respective communities and contribute to our collective progress. Some attendees advocate for informal discussions without podiums, while others propose various ideas. Addressing past pain and trauma is crucial, and we're committed to transparency by regularly publishing reports and updates. The goal is to move beyond mere checkboxes, states Merchant-Jones.

In research, Merchant-Jones finds it intriguing to invest in non-policing initiatives that address the root causes of crime. These initiatives include mental health support and community development programs, which operate independently from policing. By allowing communities to implement strategies they know will work best, we can make a positive impact. Perhaps Hopkins could establish a platform where people can submit ideas to address community issues effectively. Town hall meetings and public feedback are crucial components of collaboration. An inspiring example comes from the Salisbury Police Department, which emphasizes community partnerships, strategic agency approaches, and increased citizen satisfaction. Notably, they operate the 'Enablement Ice Cream Express,' run by police officers, which visits various neighborhoods. This fosters a sense of community beyond traditional policing. Merchant-Jones suggest exploring similar ideas that resonate with people in the communities, prioritizing collaboration over departmental preferences. At times, we find ourselves unsure of the right path to take. However, with Calvin Smith Jr., Deputy Chief of Staff for Public Safety on board, he will guide us in identifying the areas and

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priorities we should concentrate on. Together, we'll finalize our approach. **Chair Kangethe opened the floor for questions or comments.**

Q: Kangethe: Currently, we find ourselves in a phase where we must determine a tentative timeframe for initiating these meetings. When should we begin?

A: Merchant-Jones: This matter has yet to be addressed, so it's essential that we cover all aspects and reach a decision. During the May 17th meeting, participants candidly shared their feelings, which was positive. In previous meetings, people were more reserved and hesitant to express themselves. However, thanks to Miss Martin's encouragement and the three thought-provoking questions she posed—one of them being about favorite desserts—the atmosphere became more open and comfortable for everyone. While I initially considered having this conversation in January, February, November, or December, I recognize the importance of following due process. We'll continue working on it, and I'll seek input from committee members, bringing their suggestions back to the Accountability Board.

Q: Kangethe: Following up on my first question, how can the entire Board provide support to your committee?

A: Merchant-Jones: Your support involves facilitating discussions and encouraging people to share their suggestions, whether positive or critical. By openly discussing ideas and preferences—whether we like or dislike them—we can collectively move forward. I propose that members freely express their desires and intentions. Creating a conducive space is essential, and this marks the beginning.

C: Alezz: I appreciate all the efforts made so far. One crucial aspect to consider is establishing clear protocols. While our desire for these meetings is strong, logistics often pose challenges. I suggest closely examining this process and creating a standard operating procedure. For instance, we should determine available locations, suitable times, and the necessary steps for booking meetings. A concise manual would be helpful, not only for the current meeting but also for future community gatherings. Structuring our approach to avoid repetitive hurdles is my suggestion.

A: Merchant-Jones: I've had conversations with individuals who believe that the meetings shouldn't be held on any of the Hopkins campuses. Considering this feedback, we haven't reached a final decision yet, but I'm confident we will. Engaging the community is crucial, and we must find a way to facilitate respectful, robust conversations where everyone feels comfortable expressing their views. While some may oppose these meetings altogether, that's acceptable too. Our challenge lies in identifying a space for dialogue and compromise, especially since the Johns Hopkins police department will continue to exist. Addressing logistics—such as attendee eligibility, organization representation, and invitation distribution—is essential.

C: Alezz: I agree, it doesn't have to be just about logistics. Things like, who can attend? How many people in each organization who gets the invites to these communities? So, every time we make the engagement meeting, we don't have to figure out these details.

A: Merchant-Jones: In April, we experienced full participation for the first time. People openly shared their feelings and expressed their desire to continue—or not. It was a positive starting point. Alezz, as you've mentioned, we must address the logistical aspects. Calvin Smith is here to assist us with whatever we need. His willingness to help is greatly appreciated.

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Q: Madhu: I had a more general question? When you are engaging, do community members understand appreciate that we represent them? Or is there still a feeling that we are an extension of us. When we have that one public meeting many of the questions were directed as though we were not an extension of the community, but we were. I'm wondering if you've seen a change, or how do we approach the community to make sure that they understand?

A: Merchant-Jones: When engaging with the community, it's essential to recognize that we are also part of that community. Our perspectives matter just as much as anyone else's, regardless of their role. Let's keep it straightforward: we work in partnership, not isolation. Our goal is to be part of the community, not separate from it. That's my perspective on the matter.

Q: Kangethe: Do we have the capacity to have the first meeting over the summer? Perhaps, July as a tentative date?

A: Merchant-Jones: Yes, we can make that happen

C: Kangethe: As a suggestion to your committee, we should prioritize establishing clear logistics for future engagement meetings, including creating a playbook and implementing a streamlined process.

C: Alezz: It's important to understand our roles when entering into these meetings, especially considering the work we've accomplished. As representatives of the community, we need to reflect on what we want our positions to entail. Are we representatives or liaisons? Personally, I serve as a student representative at Hopkins, but I don't represent only my own biases and opinions. We should critically analyze our roles and consider whether we aim to connect community thoughts and opinions rather than merely represent them, and discuss this as a Board before our meetings, as it significantly impacts how we function.

A: Merchant-Jones: As we engage with the community, our role of the John's Hopkins Police Accountability Board is to maintain simplicity and accessibility. We aim for everyone, regardless of their social or economic background, to feel welcome. Keeping things straightforward is essential. Although our initial meetings may have seemed scattered, we've only recently reached a point where everyone feels comfortable expressing their thoughts. Moving forward, Miss Martin and Calvin will play a crucial role in implementing the ideas you've mentioned, ensuring clarity and effectiveness.

Q: Alezz: What is the underlying purpose of these meetings? We aim to take the information shared and translate it into actionable outcomes. Ultimately, what do we gain from these gatherings?

A: Kangethe: In my view, the purpose of these meetings primarily revolves around education. Many of the questions I encounter, especially those that arrive via email, stem from topics not covered in the voice previews. Consequently, it's crucial for community members to recognize that certain inquiries should be directed to public safety. While we can follow up on these questions, some decisions ultimately fall within public safety's domain. As board members, it remains our duty to address all matters sent to our mailbox, regardless of whether they directly fall under our purview. However, it's essential for community members to understand that there are limitations—we don't have insight into every issue. By clarifying this, we can better assist individuals making inquiries. Additionally, these meetings serve as an opportunity to consistently gather community feedback, which I believe we should always prioritize. Ultimately, our role extends beyond merely answering questions; we can also act as a conduit, channeling positive inquiries to public safety when appropriate.

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C: Tremitiere: Thank you for the insightful discussion. I'd like to highlight a few key points. First, it's essential to inform community members about our role before meetings. Perhaps we can collaborate with Sony to create a clear statement for meeting announcements. This statement would introduce the Police Accountability Board as an extension of the community, outlining what we can and cannot address. Encouraging attendees to review our website beforehand could also enhance their understanding.

Regarding perspectives, Ryan, a student at the Homewood campus, emphasizes avoiding venting sessions. In contrast, my experience as a community member at the Peabody campus leads me to anticipate technical questions. I've already encountered inquiries related to specific blocks, dates, and other details. While our perspectives differ, we haven't fully addressed how to inform meeting attendees about our purpose and offerings.

Additionally, I propose leveraging the active Mount Vernon neighborhood association near the Peabody campus. They hold regular meetings where representatives from various organizations present. Integrating our community outreach efforts into these existing gatherings could be logistically straightforward. Although this approach may not apply as easily to larger campuses, it's worth considering for Peabody. I'll leave these ideas for your thoughtful consideration.

C: Kangethe: I view this approach as a three-pronged strategy. The first prong involves the procedure, as I previously suggested. The second prong entails creating a tentative framework for the dates. Lastly, the third prong focuses on establishing a support structure, with Calvin identified as our point person. Given this, would it be possible for you, Calvin, and Ganesha to touch base and set up the framework for the July meeting?

A: Merchant-Jones: Ideally, we'd like to involve everyone who's available included in the planning. Member, Ricks volunteered her services.

C: Kangethe: I raised the topic of a July meeting because August is tentatively scheduled for our meeting with President Dan. Currently, we're working to finalize the exact date for August. Regarding the draft submitted by 21CP, it outlines various directions for the engagement committee and I believe it offers valuable insights on the logistics of planning the community meetings.

Old Business – Meeting with President Daniels Update

Kangethe thanked Amy for assisting in drafting the letter to meet with President Daniels. The request was received around the twentieth of April, and the President's office acknowledged its receipt. The list of discussion items submitted encountered no objections. An in-person format for the meeting has been recommended by the Boards Chair. That concludes the current update for now. **Chair Kangethe opened the floor for questions or comments.**

Administration Updates

Kangethe recognize Dr. Bard, to give administration updates.

Dr. Bard expressed gratitude to the Board for an incredibly productive term. The engagement around policy, community involvement, planning to meet with President Daniels and the dedication shown are evident in the results we see today. A special thanks to those cycling off the Board. Our policy manual is nearly complete, and the Board's contributions have been substantial. The disposition report provides details on how many of your comments or recommendations were adopted, and many of them reflects the value of your feedback. Members of the Accountability Board, oversee policies consistently, even when state laws change and require policy adjustments,

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their input remains crucial. While we may not implement changes promptly, the Board will remain part of the process.

Dr. Bard informed the Board that hiring is progressing, it's a rigorous process and we appreciate everyone involved who served on the interview panels. We extended conditional offers to a select few—individuals who haven't been officially hired yet but have progressed to the final stage. In terms of selectivity, there were 177 applicants for lateral police officers, ultimately, we extended conditional offers to approximately two individuals. The rigorous process ensures that only exceptionally qualified candidates progress even if it means a demanding process. As we finalize the hiring process, we'll provide the data requested by the Board. Additionally, annual reporting will continue to ensure transparency. When officers are hired, their information will be made public.

Dr. Bard provided insight to member Ryan Alezz question about the Board's charge. While this narrow focus may seem limited, it actually encompasses a wide breadth of responsibilities. Not only are we responsible for providing community feedback and leadership to the JHPD, but we also have complete oversight of metrics related to crime, all policies, training, and hiring. By law, the university is required to respond to any recommendation the Board makes within 120 days. So, even though it appears narrow in scope, it's actually quite comprehensive when it comes to the JHPD.

Dr. Bard welcomed Deputy Chief of Staff Calvin Smith Jr. to introduce himself to the group. Smith expressed pleasure in meeting both in-person attendees and those participating virtually. As the liaison for the Board, Smith went to work right away by meeting one-on-one with several Board members, weeks prior to the Board meeting. Smith is committed to providing timely answers and assistance whenever questions or obstacles arise. Smith encourages members to connect beyond online channels. Smith has nine years of experience at Hopkins, primarily working with students in student affairs and resides in East Baltimore, where his children attend school. Fully invested in this community, Smith aims to create a collaborative model for engaging with public safety moving forward. **Chair Kangethe opened the floor for questions or comments.**

C: Tremitiere: We've recently discussed the issue of training, particularly in relation to public safety. Given our advisory role on the Accountability Board, we need to consider how we'll engage with training. Some suggestions have been to involve members of the Accountability Board in the training process—either by participating directly or reviewing the content. Additionally, I propose that we evaluate our committee structure and potentially establish a dedicated training committee. This committee could consist of 2, 3, or 4 individuals who specialize in overseeing training initiatives.

C: Alezz: Follow up to Tremitier comment is to schedule a call to establish a subcommittee, somewhat of a training review committee.

C: Kangethe: My initial suggestion would be to create a subcommittee under the policy review committee. However, I recognize that your committee already has a significant workload, so I wouldn't want to overload it. Still, there seems to be potential synergy in establishing such a subcommittee. I'm also open to hear input from other board members.

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Q: Alezz: Dr. Bard, how often do you see or view trainings? And in what capacity would we interact with these trainings?

A: Dr. Bard: Training is an ongoing and essential aspect of our work—it requires continuous attention. Whether it takes the form of a standalone effort or a subcommittee, that’s something for your group to determine. I want to emphasize that it’s not only about reviewing curriculum; whenever feasible, attending and participating in the trainings firsthand is crucial. As members of the accountability team, we remain open to this.

C: Alezz: Considering the situation, it seems logical to establish two separate committees—one dedicated to training and the other to policy. While they share some common responsibilities, their actual tasks and focus differ.

C: Tremitiere: My initial thought aligns with Alezz. Training is the next logical step. While training policy falls under the umbrella of policy, the specifics—such as curriculum content, training methods, and field exercises—differ. We’ll need to consider whether our involvement is from a policy perspective or content review. As they proceed with training, it’s essential that we play a role in shaping the process. Let’s explore how we can best contribute.

At the conclusion of the meeting Chair Kangethe thanked Board members whose terms were ending, acknowledging their service, time, and dedication to the Accountability Board. There were no additional questions or comments from the Board online or in the room. **A motion to adjourn the meeting was moved and passed unanimously by the Board.**

Upcoming Meeting Updates

The next General Board meeting is Wednesday, July 17, 2024.

Closing

Kangethe closed the meeting at 7:20 p.m.