

Johns Hopkins University Police Accountability Board Committee Meeting

Wednesday, August 20, 2025

Committee Meeting Notes – August 20, 2025

Meeting Details

- **Chair:** Aprille Weron
- **Meeting called to order:** 6:04 PM
- **Attendees:**
 - Aprille Weron
 - Dr. Panagis Galiatsatos
 - Elizabeth Hazel
 - Jerrell Bratcher
 - Laura Rossi
 - Sonja Merchant-Jones
 - Sumara Kondel
- **Guest/Staff:** Calvin Smith, Deputy Chief of Staff for Public Safety

Key Discussion Points

- Purpose: to discuss committee updates, upcoming events and logistics.
 1. Committee Updates
 2. Meeting with President Daniels
 3. Fall Social Gathering Ideas
 4. Engagement Community Committee
 5. Data Committee Updates
 6. Governance Committee Updates
 7. Training Committee Updates
 8. Policy Committee Updates
 9. Next Meeting Dates
 10. Adjournment

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Wednesday, August 20, 2025

Action Item #1 – General Updates, President Meeting & Social Gathering

- **Aprille Weron (Chair)**
 - Meeting with **President Daniels** confirmed for **September 4 (5–6 PM)** at Hopkins Eastern Campus.
 - Location: Hopkins Eastern Campus (different room than usual; details to be shared).
 - Dinner to be served with no livestream.
- Aprille emphasized the importance of **board interaction and conversation** during the meeting.
- Social gathering should prioritize **relationship-building** over structured activities.
- **Board Members**
 - Prepare assigned questions for President Daniels.
 - Each member to ask one question and a related follow-up during the session to create dialogue (not an interrogation).
 - Members agree with collecting ideas for fall social gathering; Aprille to send poll for activity suggestions.
 - Ensure outing avoids axe throwing (per Sonja's request).

Action Item #2 – Engagement Committee

- **Sonja Merchant-Jones (Engagement Chair)**
 - Engagement decisions should be **shared by all committee members**, not just the chair.
 - Attendance is important: missing members can mean missed ideas; phone participation is accepted if needed.
 - Report back to board on scheduling and outcomes.
- **Board Members**
 - Volunteer for attendance (2–3 members per meeting).
 - Provide feedback from meetings to full board.

Proposal: Community Meetings

- **Idea from Public Safety (Calvin Smith):** Instead of hosting community members at board meetings, the board could **attend existing community association meetings**.

Johns Hopkins University Police Accountability Board Committee Meeting

Wednesday, August 20, 2025

- Benefits:
 - More direct engagement with neighborhoods.
 - Flexible scheduling by dividing attendance among board members.

Attendance & Compliance Considerations

- **Open Meetings Act thresholds:**
 - No more than **2 members from any one committee**.
 - No more than a **majority of the board** present at a community meeting.
 - If thresholds are exceeded, the meeting must be treated as an **official open meeting** (livestreamed, documented, etc.).
- Clarification:
 - If board members attend as **invited guests** to present accountability board information, compliance rules apply.
 - If members attend as **individual citizens**, no compliance requirement — but that's a different context.
- Goal: Avoid placing unnecessary burdens on community associations (e.g., livestream logistics).

Logistics & Next Steps

- **Format:** Similar to Mount Vernon visit — small group representation, informal engagement, no livestream unless thresholds are met.
- **Timing:**
 - Sonja suggested starting **as soon as possible**, ideally in **October**.
 - Target communities: Baltimore neighborhoods (e.g., Waverley, Mount Vernon, East Baltimore, Peabody).
- **Coordination:**
 - Need to schedule with community associations directly.
 - Ensure clarity on whether board is invited to present or simply attending.
- **Reporting:** Attendees should bring back notes to share with the board.

Wednesday, August 20, 2025

Action Item #3 – Data Committee

- Elizabeth Hazel (Co-Chair)

Dashboard Development

- Elizabeth reported that the **data dashboard** is in **prototype stage**.
- Contains **real data**, but not yet anonymized, so a public link cannot be shared.
- **Screenshots** were provided privately to the board for review.
- Goal: Gather **feedback on visualizations**, identify what's missing, and refine the dashboard for eventual public use.
- Purpose: Help the board and community better understand **police activities and accountability metrics**.

Next Steps for Dashboard

- Board members are asked to **review screenshots** and provide feedback.
- Feedback will be compiled and sent back to the data committee.
- The committee will continue developing the dashboard to ensure **relevance and transparency**.

Committee Collaboration

- Chairs and interested members should **connect with the data committee in the coming weeks**.
- Objective: Map out **priorities for the next year**, especially around dashboard rollout and community needs.
- Emphasis on understanding **what information the public wants to see**.

Ride-Along Proposal

- Elizabeth suggested organizing **ride-alongs with officers** for board members.
- Purpose: Provide firsthand insight into field operations.
- Timeline: Could take place in the **next couple of months**.
- Seen as complementary to dashboard work and transparency efforts.

Transparency & Community Engagement

- Ongoing focus on **optics and transparency**, ensuring community sees accountability efforts.

Johns Hopkins University Police Accountability Board Committee Meeting

Wednesday, August 20, 2025

- Data committee meetings may be scheduled **between regular board meetings** to keep momentum.

Action Item #4 – Governance Committee

- **Jerrell Bratcher & Sumana Kondel (Co-Leads)**
 - Plan for remaining committee assignments.
 - Reschedule governance committee meeting once quorum is available.

Action Item #5 – Training Committee

- **Laura Rossi (Training Lead)**

Training Updates

- Laura reached out to **Phil Gaskin**, who expressed appreciation for board members attending recent training sessions.
- Phil is currently **compiling feedback** from those sessions.
- No immediate opportunities for additional feedback or training, but **future live training sessions** are planned.
- Board will be notified when new opportunities become available.

Board Member Experience

- Laura shared her experience participating in training sessions throughout the week with Calvin and others.
- Training covered a wide range of topics (“A to Z”), including:
 - Arrests and seizures
 - Pat-downs and vehicle procedures
 - Diversity and inclusion, particularly around **LGBTQ+ community engagement**
 - Historical context sessions (“How We Got Here – Part 1 & 2”)
- Sessions were described as **honest, informative, and engaging**, offering valuable exposure to case studies and exercises.

Feedback & Improvements

Johns Hopkins University Police Accountability Board Committee Meeting

Wednesday, August 20, 2025

- Training materials are still being refined; **touch-ups and modifications** are ongoing.
- Incorporating **community members** into certain exercises made engagement more fruitful.
- A potential **Community Academy** framework is being considered for the future, allowing public participation in training.
- Board members are encouraged to continue providing feedback, either through official forms or by compiling observations directly to Phil.
- Suggestions include noting omissions, areas needing more focus, or additional questions that arise after reflection.

Action Item #6 – Policy Committee

- **Aprille Weron (Chair)**

Policy Committee Discussion

- Aprille noted that the **Policy Committee has not yet held an official meeting** to begin discussions.
- Suggestion that after synthesizing insights from recent **training sessions**, the committee may want to revisit policies and consider adjustments.
- Aprille shared reflections from a conversation with **Calvin Smith** (Deputy Chief of Staff for Public Safety) at a recent community event:
 - Calvin helped contextualize certain aspects of police training.
 - Aprille emphasized the value of seeing how the **Police Department responds to board feedback**.
 - If PD agrees with board feedback, this could inform **policy adjustments**.
- Next step: Aprille will ask Calvin for a **timeframe** on when feedback will be compiled and what follow-up actions are expected.
- Acknowledged PD is currently busy with onboarding and training, but ongoing communication is important.

Next Meetings & Adjournment

- **September 4:** Meeting with President Daniels.
- **September 17:** Regular board meeting.
- **October 15:** Annual meeting

Meeting adjourned at **7:01 PM** (motion by Laura Rossi, seconded by Sonja Merchant-Jones).