

Community Conversation #1

**Hosted by the Community Police Oversight Work Group**

**Monday, July 10, 2023, 6:00 – 8:00 PM**

**Carnegie Building, 200 W. 9th Street, Lawrence, KS 66044**

Link to questionnaire if unable to attend in-person: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2DGLCJK>

**Discussion Notes**

*(Facilitator notes appear in italics; Community members recorded their input on post-its and flip charts in small group discussions at the in-person event on July 10 and their comments appear as the Raw Notes below. Responses to the on-line questionnaire will be available as a separate document on the Work Group portal and will be updated as new responses are received until the questionnaire closes August 9.)*

**Attendees:** Approximately 30–35 community members, 11 Work Group members and a few City staff.

**Work Group Members:** Alex Kimball Williams, Jacqlene Nance-Mengler, Doris Ricks, Brenda Clary, Rich Lockhart, Harrison Baker, Skyler Richardson, Ian McCann, Tanya Ingram, Anthony Brixius, Amilee Turner

**Facilitator:** Jonathan Morris

**City Staff:** Casey Toomay, Hannah Ballard. Taylor Mah, additional staff

**Meeting Process:**

*Attendees were greeted as they arrived and invited to sit at any table. Participants were not asked to pre-register or sign-in. Each table seated approximately 5-8 attendees including 1-2 Work Group members. Additional tables were added as needed to avoid overcrowding and help ensure each attendee had similar access to share their input. (Tables were B, C, D, E, F, G and I.)*

*The Facilitator welcomed all attendees, thanked the hosts and staff, reviewed the agenda, and provided brief instructions and context for the work prior to beginning the small group discussions.*

*Discussion questions were posted on the agenda in advance of the Conversation and then were introduced by the Facilitator at a specific time to ensure each table discussed the same question at the same time. All attendees were asked to write their responses to the discussion questions in their own words on the post-it notes and flip chart paper at their table. For persons who preferred to not write for themselves, a volunteer scribe was available to assist and was instructed to write the responses using the exact wording as expressed by the attendee requesting assistance.*

*The Raw Notes below are the exact responses provided by the attendees. Comments are listed by Tables B, C, D, E, F, G or I unless they were submitted separately at the event. The Facilitator and Work Group members will group all responses by themes and topic areas for further analysis. This community input will be referenced to inform the deliberations and recommendations presented by the Work Group to the City Commission upon completion of their work as a task force.*

**Agenda Item #1: Welcome and Conversation Plans**

* Welcome neighbors and members to this in-person event
* Questionnaire if unable to attend: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2DGLCJK
* Here to listen and learn from the community
* Small table discussions
* Facilitators, scribes and notes
* Video archive and notes of event will be available end of the week
* Follow-up and Community Conversation #2

**Agenda Item #2: Learning from the Community – Discussion Questions**

**Raw Notes**

**Q1: Why is this event important to you?** Why did you come here today?

*(Responses as recorded on post-its and flip chart paper at small tables at the July 10 event.)*

Table C

It is important to me to see relations between LGBTQ+ & law enforcement improve.

Trans protection from SB 180.

Concerned about the queer community especially in this current anti-trans environment.

We need an alternative to arrest for mental health crises & drug addiction.

Table D

I want to have a better understanding of what’s going on w/Policing in Lawrence.

Because I’ve asked for police reform & criticized the CPRB in the past.

I want to observe & learn from others. Seeing & hearing from dif. Points of view.

To observe. To see if this room represents Lawrence. To listen.

It is important to communicate all views & viewpoints.

Everyone’s experience is different. We see things through different lens.

Table E

To be a part of the change. Transparency is important.

Equitable policing is very important to our community.

Become increasingly aware that all residents are not treated the same by the police & justice system.

The systems need to change I want to use privilege to enact change -can’t pass along the responsibility.

To hear all voices of the community and share all concerns.

Develop a better law enforcement program with open transparent accountability. Small things add up.

Establish a baseline – how to lead rather than react.

Be the example.

Want to see something come from this – here because I’m hopeful.

Table F

Our democracy only works through participation. I came here because I want all members of Lawrence to feel safe.

Safety in the community. Respect between Police and the Community can be a positive thing.

Law and Order important or we have kaos.

National attention on justice and traffic stops that led to violence.

Table G

I am a social worker in our community and talk regularly to people who interact with the police. I want to be involved in the process of codifying an ordinance for police oversight.

I think if I believe things need to change events like this are an important step, way to get involved in the change.

I am almost completely ignorant on what oversight exists – transparency of the process.

I came to learn more as an interested citizen. I read about policing but want to hear what people are concerned about regarding oversight.

I come today as a community member working in non-profit.

Table I

I want Lawrencians to not be afraid of the police.

To find out why it has been so difficult to establish an independent police review board.

Accountability is key to implementation of structural change.

Our LDPD is committed to criminalization of poverty. As a resident I find it important to eliminate this practice.

I worry about the militarization of the police in some places – don’t want it to happen here.

I want to be proud of our police dept & for its transparency & accountability to the public.

Table B

To see the community engage. Hoping to share ideas with the Work Group members.

Prior LPD & on the CPRB for 5 years now. CPRP has not seen (1) complaint nor completed (1) complaint investigation in the 5 yrs. the current Board has existed.

**Q2:** What is important to you about **community-police relations in Lawrence** that you want to make sure the Work Group understands?

Table D

Less policing & more community → mental health (&) → Reintegration after incarceration or rehabilitation

Interaction with the Community

I don’t want cops getting rid of their police chief with a secret deal with the city manager. I don’t trust the police union.

Getting rid of ordinances we don’t need.

↑ I agree w/ this statement.

More community as a whole = every neighborhood feels welcomed & protected.

Going back to a prior meeting with feedback about giving tickets & people of color being pulled over. Survey showed current relations. We need to improve on that.

Table E

Accessibility.

No retaliation.

Current process is difficult to use especially to submit electronically – not paraphrased by police answering the phone.

There is additional convo when police call back.

Can be uncomfortable.

Not everyone has the same experience w/the police.

Understand that not everyone feels the same way about police interactions.

That there is a better understanding of how bias works at the individual level as well as institutionally.

Make it a priority to be out & visible to the community – w/positive work not just for emergencies.

That it takes 2 to tango! Must have commitment from Police and community.

For change to happen it is important that it is a joint effort. Leadership needs to be on board.

Need to work together for a common goal.

Accept as valid varied experiences.

Table F

Safety for both the public and law enforcement.

People feel safe when they see a patrol car. This through communication with the public. Transparency builds trust. We have good officers and good citizens.

Communication

Transparency

Listening with Open ears not “your guilty” ears. Everything’s not what it seems. Seek to understand.

Knowing how to de-escalate conflict/emotions.

Understanding all perspectives.

Protection of free speech and public dissent. BLM protest in downtown Lawrence.

Table G

Everyone who is the victim of a crime should feel like the police are here to support and protect them. People in historically oppressed groups are often hesitant to engage the police.

It is important to me that there be open lanes of communication between police leadership & the community, that concerns can be vocalized effectively.

Seek experts – External training for vulnerable populations should be provided to officers - officers should not rely on internal training for victims of SA or those w/Disabilities.

I have minimal contact w/ the police outside of a traffic stop or event security – I’d like a more open line of communication.

Table I

That all people are treated respectfully and kindly by police and vice versa. I appreciate the LPD being vocal about protecting gay and lesbian human rights.

I’m most concerned about the perception that people of color feel that they are being treated less equally than white people.

The community needs varied responses according to the issue and the police force needs to continue to adapt policies & practices to meet those needs with the least amt force.

The context of whys? I’d like the etymology of why police officers exist in community. What justice means for minoritized individuals.

I’d like a non BIPOC individuals to understand what being criminalized for existing. Check the data dashboard for clarity.

Strong emphasis on handling mental health crises without force.

Table B

I would like to see the police department engaging more w/ the people of Lawrence. Doing more bike patrol, foot patrol, and getting out of the car to talk with citizens.

CPRB ordinance needs to be revised from racial or other biased-based terminology…. which limits their authority and accessibility greatly…to the ability to see “all” complaints to hold the LPD to being Transparent and Accountable.

The CPR be needs to be an Independent Review and Advisory Board absent of real or perceived influence from LPD/City Legal/LPOA and the City Commission.

Table C

Ability to make complaints if necessary w/o fear of retribution → anonymity or fair process in the processing of complaints.

In general, that the Queer community does not trust the police. Police presence at events is important, especially in this rather violent period.

No enforcement & denouncing of SB 180.

Prevention of violence from police/vigilantes to the trans community. Self-deputization.

**Q2.1** What is one thing the community and/or police department **does well** with community-police relations in Lawrence?

Table E

Speak at events.

Get out in community.

I do see Police Dept leadership engage with community.

Table F

Protect and Serve. ◊

Ride-Alongs are done well.

Respectful interactions during my traffic stops.

Table G

Does Well:

Communicating w/ community after large/noteworthy incidents.

Social media (Is it still active?).

I have had very personable & positive conversations w/ officers that have made me feel like a member of the community.

LPD appears to engage well with the community.

Table I

Not sure yet.

Focuses on the more violent acts not the minor stuff like traffic violations.

I feel this is centering the dominant in that ask. My feelings are this is an open forum to collect ideas for ideas for change not compliment agreeable politics.

Police seem more kind and public oriented than in the past. Noise ordinance (bullwinkles).

Police has welcoming presence at protest events.

Table B

Community is inclusive.

Conducts themselves in a professional manner.

Table C

Listens to members.

Trying to be better – having this event.

Table D

They do well on nothing.

They make witty tweets.

Response to calls of businesses.

**Q2.2** What is one thing the community and/or police department **needs to improve on** with community-police relations in Lawrence?

Table F

Need to improve on communication from all perspectives

* Body language
* Tone
* How your approaching

Communication with public could be improved.

Reasons for traffic stops – can we reduce them?

Table G

Needs Improvement:

Transparency in complaint process & follow-up.

Relationships w/ local journalists.

I’m not sure the information about the police & its relationship w/ the community is very transparent.

I’d like to see more data, statistics & reports about the police departments, stops, & complaints.

Table I

Transparency for the CPRB process.

Public transparency i.e. I was not aware there was a “snag” in the review board.

Police presence at homeless encampments to curb fights & increase safety for all there.

Table B

LPD needs to improve on their decision when to use force.

LPD needs to improve on their Transparency.

The officers are limited in doing their jobs in some areas due to the City of Lawrence bad policies.

Table C

Not sure.

Communication with community.

Decriminalize drug ~~enforcement~~.

Table D

They need to improve on everything.

Interactions with our youth.

Transparency.

Accountability.

Building relationships with community.

Table E

Police improve in transparency.

Listen!

Transparency & accountability.

Address the need for better policing.

Connect with the entire community.

**Q3:** If you needed to make a complaint about the police, what would give you greater confidence in the **complaint process** and how it is handled?

Table G

Not having to make the complaint only to the police - some outside accountability transparency of complaint process.

Knowing that an external body was reviewing the complaint. Knowing that the plaintiff was thoroughly considered. How are complaints filed?

Transparency - knowing how the complaint process works and who is involved in every step & knowing which steps coincide with my rights.

I would like transparency about how complaints are compiled for statistics - I want to make sure my complaint is accurate.

I think transparency should be accessible online and communicated in simple terms.

Clearly communicated steps for the complaint process, appeals, & escalation.

Oversight for complaint process that is outside of the police dept.

Clearly communicated data about complaints.

To know that all complaints are handled in a standard way.

Table I

To know and understand the complaint process and how others outside of the police dept. are involved, so it’s not just “in-house” investigations.

Follow-up - knowing they are on it & taking time to communicate.

I would have greater confidence if police were ex-officio members of the board & no board-requested information was withheld.

I feel our current system to complain contains barriers as those connected to the problem are also close to the issue for solutions.

I would want the police to have no representatives in the complaint process.

What would provide confidence for me would be helpful if there were to be no authoritative presence dominating the complaint process. For a ↑ in anonymity.

Table B

I would have greater confidence if the CPRB will actually get to see my complaint.

That the CPRB has the authority to see “all” complaints & completed investigations of community member complaints conducted by the LPD and… that my complaint is automatically sent to the CPR be for independent review.

In the meetings the Chief runs it because there was a weak chair – so this is not an independent board. Staff liaison needs to be a designee, not the Chief!!

Table C

Feedback on the issue and/or sharing of solutions.

Elected complaint review Board with reps from different areas of Lawrence.

B/c it is such a small community & police force, anonymity would help & a contact person. who is tasked with handling complaints.

Adequately communicating process the public.

(Conflation of complaining as trouble).

Table D

There needs to be generational conversation! Long story short: listening process!

A committee outside of the department to review complaint.

Complaints to be handled by third parties that have no affiliation with supporting the pol.

If someone other than the police were in charge of reviewing the complaint.

The complaint goes to a review board made up of a diverse group of people.

Not narrow guidelines for what cases can be reviewed.

All complaints should go through review board.

Table E

Ombudsman.

Non police contact. 1st person to receive a complaint.

Knowing the process and whether it’s independent.

One-on-one contact w/ police dept.

I don’t know the process but someone needs to listen actively.

Ombudsman. neutral party.

This needs to be a welcoming process – comm. aware & less threatening.

More accessible. reduce fear of retaliation. Knowledge of the complaint process.

Website is not accessible - font size is small. needs to be updated.

Need to explain the process for the person making the complaint.

Want to make sure is actually what I said & not through some one else’s words.

Wouldn’t make a complaint because I don’t [know] what it entails.

Lack of transparency/ public awareness.

The process needs to be.

Table F

I would have greater confidence in the process if my initial complaint with before a non-police based board. I don’t have an issue if the complaint was brought in front of police eventually.

A safe process to make a complaint, confidentially.

Knowing the process for entering engagement like Rules of the Road - everyone should know the process before engaging in the system.

Safe, confidential process within law enforcement about what works & what doesn’t work.

**Q4:** What is important to you about **accountability, public trust, and oversight of the police in Lawrence** that you want the Work Group to understand?

Table I

Police officers will be seen as the enemy by many people without accountability and oversight are critical to public trust.

That identify bad apples in the police department is a win-win for the police and the community.

That the greater the accountability & oversight that police are held to and transparency of policies including complaint process, the greater the public trust there will be for the police.

Accountability that police who misuse authority are reprimanded and that police who show compassion are publicly honored.

Public trust built by being trustworthy. All police need to be aboveboard. Even one who abuses his/her power can bring dishonor to the whole department. Hard to build and easy to lose - just like teaching.

Oversight done independently . In-house oversight is replete with problems… The optics are bad.

This review board must intentionally invite non-dominant demographics to participate. I believe DOCO should be actively searching for alternative restorative justice and practice them.

I’d like to see a collection of lived exp./survivors of LKPD interactions within the past 6,12, 18 months & that data the aggregated for emerging themes.

Table B.

That all complaint data be properly collected and made accessible to the CPRB be for independent review.

Privacy issue. incarceration rate. preserve due process of officer. data made available to the public and to the board.

Without these things, the police force cannot do their jobs well. Public trust stems from accountability & oversight.

Table C

If the police screw up – own it, admit it, solve it.

An online presence so that the public can be informed on what’s going on.

That public trust is directly related to the police being accountable for their actions and that there is a process in place to review/oversee problems & complaints.

\*(talking ≈ unfair overall treatment or verdicts for people in court system) - privilege dynamics.

Table D

if there isn’t accountability and oversight there won’t be trust.

Police need to be held accountable to the fullest extent of the law when they commit a crime.

Oversight from the community needs to be heavily increased and very diverse with age race gender etc.

Regulations. Mental competencies.

More oversight with intake process when being arrested as well as transition of release.

More strict regulations to requalify for position within the police.

Of course our community to have some trust in those who are supposed to protect us. Police weren’t designed/organized to protect all of us.

Way more oversight on training and qualifications for being an officer.

Accountability??? How we address other when contact is made. Respect at all times. Public trust is built on respect given. Supervision and training. ← Build public trust.

Accountability - how do we hold officers accountable for the training they attend. Example - how do you treat victims. Example when a victim of an assault is treated like they are in the wrong.

The trust needs to be built by showing respect.

Table E

An outside entity sets the standard, not the police setting its own.

They are all important to the success of police/community relations.

All three. Compliance the procedures.

Standards/measurements. - Explain to public that missteps are dealt with. - Be forthcoming it will then foster public trust.

The police should have defined objectives to ensure accountability, public trust, and oversight.

Table F

Accountability is a two-way street. We as community members must remember this as we seek to hold the police accountable.

These three concepts are interlinked and point to a need for consistent collaboration between community members and our police force. This collaboration must be continued beyond this work group.

Reward the right behavior.

Right seat on the bus. Hire the right people for law enforcement. Transition out those who are not fit for this work.

Measuring the right metrics of good law enforcement/Public Safety.

Table G

The police should be expected to be a Band-Aid for larger societal problems.

More substance less spin.

For there to be accountability there must be data and reporting. It must be from a somewhat external body or analyst.

Are police doing what they say they’re doing? We need data to know that.

There should be more transparency on the relationship with the City of Lawrence and resource allocation.

I think public trust should be earned including police is providing a public good.

I think there should be more transparency on training in response - what steps are officers trained on taking window responding to situations that may require force.

With the amount of power that the police and Police Department: internal accountability is not enough. There needs to be an external accountability process that the community can go to.

The complaint process needs to be clearly communicated with the public and accessible to the public.

Everyone needs to feel like they can make a complaint had responded to in a standard way.

Standardized and rigorous process of gathering and disseminating complaint process.

**Q5: What else did you want to share** today with the Work Group that you have not already mentioned?

Table B

We have a Police Review Board that has no teeth. They’ve not seen a complaint since its inception.

CPRB Current ordinance vs. their revised ordinance. Look at the defined “Purpose of the Board”.

Is there a way to transition to an independent CPRB Board that’s not under the thumb of the City & the Commission?

Table C

I am concerned increased violence in Lawrence and hope that does not derail these efforts. (Belief that is used to not be violent 18 years ago – influenced by social media and COVID)

Concern with enforcement tied to SB180 in the next session and that and how that will impact relations.

Table D

Creativity.

I’d like to get rid of drug dogs. I’d like for body cams to be on and not controlled by Cops.

Why are we being reactive versus proactive with policing. We need to create safe spaces for our youth to be able to express themselves in a safe environment.

We need some type of mental health response team for the community and police.

Community engagement be a part of it and not just an office of law and order.

It’s important to do this more often. Invite more people.

Table E

allow a space for citizens to voice concerns/questions. Instead of framed questions allow a listening session.

What is the end product for this exercise what we used to measure progress and success.

Will the work group have the ability to enact changes. Will this influence the process?

Develop police data that is understandable to the community.

Has this workgroup explored best practices successes and other like communities?

Develop an evaluation process of the CPRB that meets the needs of the community - police and community members.

Show data on the progress of the seat BRB group and the police responses.

What is the public expectation of going to the CPRB? Want to be heard on specific actions.

Table F

Let’s work together to make our community more oriented to solving their own problems before calling the police.

Community. Listening. Hearing. Law enforcement stories. Questions. comments.

Table G

The success of this process is measured by how community members from the most historically oppressed groups feel about community please relations and the complaint process.

Thank you for engaging in this process.

Make sure the CPRB has enough cases, wide enough purview, & enough authority to get things done.

I think some issues are wider issues at large & so police should be involved in conversations with other systems may not be benefiting community members (ex. Mental health, social services, community supports).

We appreciate the work you’re doing for this.

Table I

I am caregiver to five children/young adults. I’d like you to know I have a black son who I educate on how to stay alive when interacting with police/public authority. It does not include un-factual historical instances relative to police brutality in the BIPOC community.

how can more diversity be assured on the independent boards dealing with the police force? Sometimes volunteers are all similar to each other. Seeking out diversity - how can this be done?

The community should know what types of complaints are being made and how many resulted in an action. The board size should be such that if a person drops out or is absent the work can continue. This is important work everyone will benefit from it being done well.

There is a perception data that many terrible conflicts arise nationally ordinary traffic stops. Can technology be used for versus direct police interactions to decrease likelihood of escalation to violence?

Lawrence is a community capable of change. The drug court is a great example.

**Q6: What gives you hope** for this work going forward?

Table B

That people actually show up for a Work Group session like this and that city leaders took the time to host this and organize the heavy lifting.

CPOWG cares.

I have hope that the Work Group will learn much from the past 5 years. Good luck!

Table C

That people come and gave input and the police I have met want to do a good job.

It gives me hope that you are having the tough conversations.

Workgroup members appear to really be interested & invested in this work.

Table D

That we have community members willing to show up to events like this and are willing to push the city for accountability.

We are movers and shakers. our time is now. we are the change our ancestors fought for.

The belief the committee hearing this feedback will take it and move forward.

This room has a better representation of what our community looks like then any meeting I have attended over the past five years. There is hope.

Workgroup members appear to really be interested and invested in this work.

Table E

Hearing the responses and seeing other citizens engaged in the process.

That the conversation has started.

The willingness to sit down and discuss.

Opportunity to talk. And people willing to give their time.

Number of participants from community committed to the improvement of our police and justice system.

It gives me hope that you are having the tough conversations.

Look at who isn’t here and work towards reaching them to allow for input.

Table F

We are willing to talk and listen to each other’s experiences.

I have hope because I see community members from all walks of life present tonight alongside our local law enforcement. We are working together!

This is a great community with great people. We have to Respect each other and the Processes. Work to a better Day Being Respectful ☺

Table G

I think involvement in groups such as this gives me hope - showing up is incredibly important.

The attendance tonight seems high - hopefully an engaged community with members of LPD and the public means we can change for the better.

How responsive the city and Police Department has been to engaging in this process.

The city is meaningfully reaching out for feedback and guidance.

Table I

The new police chief and the new city manager and an environment of change.

The police chief is listening.

I hoped that I would learn something and be more involved in things that matter in Lawrence.

*(These raw notes will be reviewed by the Work Group members to:*

* *learn from the community input generated at each table*
* *look for common themes, unique insights and sense of what is most important to community members related to this work*
* *consider this input as they begin deliberations as a Work Group and draft recommendations for the City Commission to consider.*

*These discussion notes will be posted on the City’s website on the Community Police Oversight Work Group community engagement portal here:* [*Community Police Oversight Work Group - City of Lawrence, Kansas (lawrenceks.org)*](https://lawrenceks.org/community-engagement/cpowg/)

*Responses to the online questionnaire received as of July 22 will be posted separately on the portal on July 24. The Questionnaire will remain open through Community Conversation #2 and will close on August 9. Community members wanting to share feedback or additional input that might exceed 500 characters in length are also encouraged to use the Submit Feedback button at the top of the page on the portal.*

*Prior to drafting recommendations, Work Group members will also review discussion notes from Community Conversation #2, final feedback from the Questionnaire, and key documents located in the portal related to Complaint Processes and Community-Police oversight.)*

**Agenda Item #3: Next Steps and Future Meetings**

* Work Group Members review Community Conversation notes, themes and insights
* Community Conversation #2 on July 31 6:00 – 8:00 pm at Carnegie Building
* Work Group Work Sessions: July 17, August 14, August 21 & August 28 6:00 – 8:00 pm

at Fire Station #5

Thank you for your public service and engagement in this important work!

*(The Facilitator explained plans for compiling discussion notes and reviewing feedback for process improvements; encouraged the public to complete the online questionnaire so they can respond to the questions discussed this evening; and announced dates and locations for future Work Group meetings.)*

*During the Q&A community members asked questions (paraphrased here) about the following items:*

*Q: ‘Should participants plan to attend Community Conversation #2 on July 31 as well’ (A: yes, to hear what was learned so far and because new questions will be discussed; Work Group member encouraged community to come back because you have already started the work and the questions will be different. The member thanked everyone for coming.)*

*Q: ‘How will it work when the City Commission reviews and votes on the Work Group’s recommendations?’ (A: Commission will review recommendations and decide how they want to proceed. The Work Group will present recommendations with pros and cons of different options to consider.)*

*Q: ‘How are you reaching out to the public to get people engaged in this process?’ (A: City’s social media, ads in the LJWorld and LawrenceTimes, flyers in public spaces around town, not doing enough and need your help to get the word out, we also more time to promote prior to the next engagement.)*

*Q: ‘How is this work informing ongoing City Commission candidate discussions?’ (A: Community Conversations were announced at NAACP’s City Commission and School Board candidate forums this past Saturday.)*

*Q: ‘What is the projected timeline to go in front of the City Commission with the recommendations?” (A: The Work Group hopes to wrap its work up by the end of August. The Commission has not yet set a date when they plan to consider the recommendations.)*

*(The facilitator thanked everyone for attending, thanked the Work Group members, encouraged everyone to thank people at their table, and encouraged everyone to attend the Community Conversation on July 31.)*