

Video:

Reimagining Public Safety community meeting

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<https://youtu.be/DDTQyWOkSwA>

Dr. Terri Givens 00:11

Welcome, folks as you are joining we'll let the folks know give folks a few minutes to join and then we'll hear from our council members. Welcome, if you are just joining, we're here for the Reimagining Public Safety community forum. All right, I think we can go ahead and get started.

Cecilia Taylor 01:21

Thank you. Welcome to the Menlo Park, Menlo Park's Reimagining Public Safety. My name is Cecilia Taylor. I am the district one elected representative. And this evening, I would like to introduce our vice mayor Jen Wolosin. Our interim city manager Justin Murphy, our police chief Dave Norris, and also our consultant on this team, Dr. Terri Givens. Welcome to this process. We are excited to be here this evening for this town hall. We began this process and a few years ago to look at how we can actually address

Dr. Terri Givens 02:05

I'm sorry Cecilia, I mean city councilmember, I didn't mean to interrupt, but we need to do the Spanish interpretation announcement.

Spanish Interpreter 02:16

(Announcement in Spanish)

Cecilia Taylor 02:44

Thank you, Miss Larios. We started this process. The five of us cheap Norris Dr. Givens, Vice Mayor Wolosin and our interim city manager Justin Murphy and myself in fall of 2021. And we are excited to bring to you what we have learned from our community discussions, we developed an idea for a safe space meeting and Miss Larios take it away.

Spanish Interpreter 03:18

Sorry, I think I believe they're activating the interpretation function so that you won't have to pause for me, I'll just translate simultaneously. But it looks like it's not on sort of a second.

Dr. Terri Givens 03:33

I don't know that. gave me that functionality. Sorry. Let me double check.

Spanish Interpreter 03:40

We just tested it before the meeting. I can't remember who turned it on.

Dr. Terri Givens 03:45

Wasn't Nicole? No. Okay. I usually have that function, but I do not right now.

Dr. Nicole Acker 04:00

Hi, this is Nicole. I just hit start. So hopefully something happened.

Dr. Terri Givens 04:05

Yes, it did. Thank you. Okay. Sorry, everyone. We're having technical difficulties. Thank you. And please, Councilmember Taylor, please.

Cecilia Taylor 04:13

Thank you. And thank you all for your patience. So in fall of 2021, the subcommittee for reimagining public safety, developed the idea for a safe space meeting. Those meetings were conducted over a two month period. We also worked with a police chief to identify areas of concern. This evening, we would like to bring to you what we have learned. And also just as a reminder for myself, I went and looked at our Resolution 6563 which was adopted in June of 2020. And it says it is the responsibility of government to serve and protect residents and uphold civil rights, city officials must work to ensure that the rights of all people are upheld and respected. I believe that we have had a great opportunity together the five of us to start that process. And it has been a wonderful learning experience for me and also an opportunity to get to know our newest member of the team, which is Chief Norris. And I just want to thank everyone on the subcommittee for all the work that you've done, and for the Menlo Park City Council for supporting this process. And next, we will bring in Dr. Terri Givens.

Dr. Terri Givens 05:36

Thanks so much, and welcome, everyone. So I have been hosting these reimagining policing community forums in each district over the last few months, and you have access to the summary via the website. But just to give a quick idea about the process, we had a set of questions that we developed with the help of the committee. And for so for each district, we sent out invitations, we had people register to make sure that they were residents of the city of Menlo Park. And we also made sure that, you know, it was just us. So we didn't have a police presence at those meetings in order to, for people to feel that they could speak anonymously. So we did take notes at those meetings. And those notes were shared after the meeting anonymously. And those reports, were also summarized into the document that we have available on the website, some key topics that came up that were related to things like traffic enforcement, communications, how they access the website, and around complaints, as well as compliments, data and specific police practices. And I want to emphasize, you know, there was at each event, there was anywhere from seven to 25 participants. That's obviously not representative necessarily of the entire population. And of course, we're always welcoming for comments and commentary from anyone who wishes to do so. There's various ways you can do that. But we want to make sure that we understand that as a PhD researcher, I know that this isn't wasn't necessarily scientific process. But I do believe that, you know, the people who participated appreciated the opportunity to share their issues and concerns in a safe space. And so I want to say I'm very grateful to the council members and the chief and, and the city manager for making this opportunity available. Because I think it's a very important topic. And there's a lot of concerns that people have, that this was a way to share it that we often don't have. So I am very happy to have been participated in that process. If you ever have any questions about the process, or any of the work we're doing, from my perspective, you can always reach me, I'm very easy to find Terri at terrigivens.com. And I know a few of you have reached out. So thank you again, and I will pass it on to Chief Norris. Great.

Chief Dave Norris 08:11

Thank you, thank you Dr. Givens, and thank you to the rest of the Subcommittee, it really has been a great experience getting to know all of you a little bit better in that smaller group setting. And really getting to an understanding that this is this is something that we all want to be focused on. And this is something that we all want to see as as an evolving and improving relationship between the police department and the community. And so even more than then thanking our subcommittee members, it's really important that I thank the

community members who have come out and provided this feedback information to us, and also to our officers within this department. Because, you know, there, there requires a certain amount of patience to, to step back from something and say, you know, we want to trust the process. And we want to make sure that everyone feels safe and available to to make whatever kinds of, you know, comments that they that they have about policing that are important for us to know that they may not be comfortable sharing, if they had police officers standing right in front of them or sitting right in front of them on a Zoom meeting. And so, so we really appreciate the patience of our personnel as well in allowing this process to continue to evolve. So I am going to share my screen in a moment here. And I have a I have a presentation it goes over some of the information that we have gleaned through this process and also just walks you through a little bit of our next steps. So the the format for this for this process tonight for this for this program. You've seen some introductions by, introduction by Councilmember Taylor as well as by Dr. Givens and then you'll hear a little bit from uh Vice Mayor Wolosin and a little bit later on, we're going to review the format for this presentation tonight, there are a couple of important pieces to that we'll do an overview of the feedback that was generated. And then we'll talk about, you know, how we organize some of this information and what our next steps are going to be. So let's, let's start with the format for today's meeting. So this is a webinar style format. This is slightly different than you might experience in a council meeting. I know in council meetings, we asked you to raise your hand, if you have a comment. We'd really like you to use the Q&A feature. During this meeting, at any point during this presentation to put your questions in. I have management, my senior management analyst, Dr. Nicole Acker who will be keeping track of those questions. And we will answer what we can towards the end of this presentation. If we don't get to your question here, we will be answering your question that's going to be part of kind of our living document that we're going to get up onto the Reimagining Public Safety page, as well as a video of this presentation so that we can continue to mine to be mindful of this information as it comes in not only questions that were generated from these feedback sessions, but also from this meeting as well. So quick overview of some of the feedback. And I have a couple of different slides where we go over some of these things. First, I just wanted to give some, you know, broad topic areas that came up during these discussions, the Safe Space meetings, some questions about budget and staffing and how we do that business. Questions about Neighborhood Watch, which has been a long standing function and relationship between the police and the community. Lots of questions about open houses, ride alongs, how they how we can get more interaction and engagement with our public. Questions about stop data, and the the Racial Identity Profiling Act is going to really help us with the stock data that the community is curious about. We'll talk about that a little bit later on. The committee was curious about the police advisory group that we previously had and what the new iteration would be quite a lot of questions about parking enforcement. As we know, we suppressed that during COVID. And and there are some curiosity from the community about when that might be coming back. Emergency and disaster preparedness, there were a few questions about that, mutual aid, interoperation between police departments, how departments operate with each other between, across jurisdictions, as well as questions about, we've seen Menlo Park in other cities, and we've seen other cities in Menlo Park. And how does that work? A lot of questions surrounding that as well. Lots about body worn cameras. And then there were some questions where it was just describing cameras. So I added in this topic area, which I know that we want to address as well, which is police access other cameras, like closed circuit TV, as well as license plate readers, and how that works. Always a lot of questions about crisis intervention, mental health training for police, and then some questions about code enforcement as well, which we know is a pretty big topic in this city. This is a really kind of, it's a bit of an intimidating slide. There's a lot of information on here, but I wanted to do the best we could to bunch together some of the questions and feedback that we got through these five different sessions. There were some common questions that were coming out of that. And so I wanted to put some of those together here. And again, if I miss some of these in my summary, you know, we will have a video of this. And then this, this presentation will also be available as part of that video. But working together obviously, with with concerns about bias and trust building. These are things that have been themes very strongly over

the last couple of years, but also, you know, ongoing themes between the community and the police. We have a lot of our officers out on bicycle patrol now that seems to be really well received. We want to keep that momentum going with that. A lot of questions about how do we find out what's happening when we're in an incident? And what information maybe we should get back if we inquired about something or we called the police to have some type of action done? And do we, you know, what information are we entitled as the public to get back on that? We can do better on that. And we're going to talk about that a little bit. So and then specifically about complaints and concerns. And this is, you know, really one of the driving forces behind the safe space meetings. We want to make sure that people feel like they can put those complaints or concerns about policing forward to us without feeling like those, those concerns would be in any way dismissed or retaliated against. And, you know, obviously that's something that that we as the police department feel very strongly about. We don't want you to be able to come to us and talk to us about the action that we're taking so that we can explain or hold people accountable. And so so that's gonna be an important piece for us moving forward a lot of questions about traffic enforcement and what we're doing and what kind of information can we display about road safety, road hazards, primary collision factors for, for vehicle collisions and as well as with pedestrians and bicycles. How can we make our crime information and our data more readable and digestible for the public? Some questions about are the makeup of our department? How does the makeup of our department compared to the makeup of the community? Really important question and we should be talking about that and illustrating that to you. Some questions that, that come up about, you know, how officers do their job, sometimes, you know, the way we do their do our job as police. We don't think about what we're doing. But we also don't think about how it might look to the public. So have questions about, you know, how how police are parking their vehicles, going to a call for service? Or why do the police lock their car and leave it running? While they're out on a call? Or, you know, there's a question there were a couple of questions that had to do with police SUVs, which, which, you know, there might be a logical explanation as to why we went from patrol cars to patrol SUVs. But unless we have that interaction with the public, we don't know that that question exists. We, we also want to make sure that that again, the compliment and complaint process is easier to use and is more accountable. People are asking about how we are displaying our information on our webpages through social media. And then also some some deeper questions about you know, what drives and motivates our officers, how our calls for service prioritized? How do we how do we do what we do? What kind of training is available to us across all those different ranges of bias awareness and de escalation and response to mental health crisis, we could do a better job of sharing with you some of the really progressive things that we are already doing to handle some of those critical type calls for service. And we have, we have ways that we're going to be able to do that. So looking at all of that information, we tried to group that and organize that as best we can. We found three major kind of categories of information, that, that we can group these, these comments and feedback into. One being communication, how can we better connect with you and provide that information to you? Transparency. How can we be accountable to our community? How can we be accountable to ourselves? Then education. Sometimes you have questions that we need to answer for you. Sometimes we need to be proactive about providing you information that will keep you safer. So how do we do all of those things. Where those things meet up, how those things come together, is through collecting, sharing detailed and timely data that comes through data dashboards and information that we're providing on a regular basis. Professionalism through active engagement, customer service, how we handle our calls for service and how we interact with you all is very important. And then building trust by helping people see who we are. And I know that we did a little bit of work on that with the subcommittee and we brought in an officer to kind of answer some direct questions from the subcommittee, we know that that type of interaction is really important. And so we're looking to find ways that we can do that and bring that to you in a more meaningful way. So when we take these actionable items, and try to put them into some type of a real approach, the information that's coming right now through the Racial Identity Profiling Act, which requires that we provide specific information on all of our stops and detentions regarding the type of people that we are coming in contact with the reasons

that we are coming into contact with them, then the dispositions of those interactions. All of that is currently being collected, we are now just a few months into that process. So there's not a lot of data that we can really turn through and find some trends. But we by the time we get to the end of this year, we get to a point where we're where we have to provide our first year's worth of data, I think we're gonna have some things that we can look at really fine. Whether there's places where we can do better, whether there's places where we can really illustrate to our public that the professional conduct of our officers, which we do, we deeply believe in. But we're going to have we're going to have better information I think stop by stop within the interaction between ourselves as the police and our community in a much more robust fashion as we get through this. This this RIPA reporting this first year as we go into ongoing RIPA reporting in years to come. And then the annual report. Currently our annual report is really just data on calls for service complaints use of force we're looking to really found that in our annual reporting process and make that a much more robust document that that captures the level of engagement and the amount of of interaction that we have with our community, in addition to just kind of some of those hard numbers, because we know that the hard numbers have some significance. But what's really significant to our community is how we're making our community feel. And if they're feeling safe, if they're feeling engaged, if they're feeling like they can connect and communicate with us, then those those are metrics that we're also looking for, because we want to know if we need to improve in those areas. All right. So we have some existing tools that we know that we need to do better on and these are ongoing conversations we've had with members of the community, as well as the subcommittee, the daily activity log that we publish daily, so available to the public. It, it provides some basic information based on cases where we actually pull a report number and write a police report. But that doesn't tell the tale of most of the activity that we do, where we may not take a formal police report for it. So we're looking at ways that we can illustrate that better to our public. Annual crime statistics are evolving. We've changed reporting requirements from what used to be kind of the FBI uniform crime reporting process to what's now being called the National Incident based reporting system, or the California incident based reporting system, this is going to change how we illustrate our crime trends. And so we're looking forward to finding new ways to, to show that to our public. We have a next generation survey tool that we're going to be rolling out that will help us to immediately contact people that we serve for certain types of calls to say, Hey, how did we do? How did the dispatcher do on the call that you that you made to us? How did the officer do on the response, and to be able to build some, some better basis of information of how we're doing. Generally speaking, you know that the contacts are very positive. And so that also helps us to provide some feedback to our officers that they're doing a good job, which they don't hear as much now as they may be used to in previous years. So this will be a really helpful tool to us. And we'll also be able to illustrate some things to the community with it. Some of our longer term goals, real time or near real time, public facing dashboards that show you know what we're doing and certain types of activity, we're going to rely really on some some good community feedback to tell us the things that we should be illustrating on that revised and expanded mechanisms for complaints submission. I know that that has been an ongoing topic of discussion between the subcommittee and something that we're really looking forward to finding a way to capture all of the people who need to get information back to us about how we're doing. And then looking at our at our transparency portal, currently, our data transparency portal, and making that easier to read, more searchable, really important. Another piece that, that we've been talking about all along is doing this backstage pass, creating some transparency presentations, formal presentations that tell you a little bit about how we do business, right. So we imagined that there are kind of three primary presentations that we're going to do, we would we also see that that is probably going to generate some additional sessions and additional opportunities to help connect and educate our public on what we do. But broadly, a department overview that talks about the organizational structure, structure and the budget, we're going to we're going to do one on operational strategies, how we do what we do so that first one will say, you know, what kind of organization we have, what type of units we have within the police department. And then the second presentation will be how those units do what they do, to get the job done to make our community

feel safe, to fight crime, and to and to establish good relationships with our community. And then the third one would be kind of looking at that whole lifetime experience of a police officer from the time that they knock on the door and say, Hey, I'd like to be a police officer for the city of Menlo Park to the time that that they get through their recruiting and background process into the police academy. What kind of training is involved in that, and then once they're trained and on the street? What does that continuous professional training look like? How do we establish policy and ensure that our personnel operate within that policy? And then how does that complaint process work? What goes from a complaint to an internal affairs investigation? How does a does something like that get to a point of discipline? And when is that appropriate? We'll talk about that as well as, you know, what our officers do to really, you know, elevate themselves and put themselves in a position where, you know, we're operating at that level. Leadership at every level that we like to see out of all of our personnel through promotions and awards and awards and recognitions. The, the the other. The other piece to that is community police academies, which we used to call citizen police academies that we now call community academies, that, that we were able to do in, you know, in real life, as they say, prior to COVID. And we have, you know, set those back during the last couple of years while we've been working our way through this pandemic. So which we're excited about bringing that back, as well as the department Open House events, which were always well received, and giving us an opportunity to connect in person with our public. We will have expanded use of social media, one of the reasons that we're asking for additional personnel is to help us to expand that social media world that provides information out to the public, and then providing some additional clarity on on what we have and how we use it. You know, that came up a little bit as we, you know, got through this military equipment use policy that we that we talked about, about a month or so ago, that we know that, you know, we we use certain equipment that the community is really curious about. So being able to really provide information on that. Body worn cameras, it's important for our public to know there were a lot of questions about "Do the police use body worn cameras?" Menlo Park PD was actually an early adopter. In body worn cameras, we've been using body worn cameras since 2014, we look forward to providing some more information to our public about that. Creating opportunities for dialogue and just for engaging in meeting with our public. Coffee With A Cop is a really obvious easy one, as well as National Night Out a really easy way to illustrate opportunities to connect with the public. But we're looking for any and all opportunities. And as a matter of fact, there were two or three emails that we had come in today about opportunities for community engagement, can we send the bicycle team out to go, you know, scoop some ice cream for kids or do something else that's really fun and engaging, we're looking forward to that. And then, you know, speaking of our bicycle officers, obviously, there's been a ton of incredible positive feedback from the community about our bicycle cops. And our officers really love doing their patrols on the bicycle. So looking at ways that we can make that easier for our officers and really bring that into an operational part of how we do business, we're looking at ways to expand that. And we've added some some additional bicycles, as well as we have some local businesses that are helping us with electric-assisted bicycle bicycles as well. So really excited about where that program is going. Creating some, some additional legitimacy for the, between our community and our public. This procedural justice and legitimacy have been buzzwords that have been going around a lot in policing the last few years. But what's really important about those is how procedural justice kind of breaks down in practice. And that's, you know, providing these four distinct points of neutrality, respect, voice and trustworthiness. We try to do that on every contact that we have with the public. And I have also asked our officers, I said, look, you know, we have body worn cameras that record what we do, how can you make it obvious on this recording, that you're meeting all of these elements of a procedural justice kind of format for a contact, and, you know, challenge yourself to do do things that will really provide great examples to the public of how we illustrate that. The the, this is simply just, it's being fair, being fair to the people that we're come in contact with making sure that there's a, there's a human mutual respect involved, being an active listener, and that can really actually elevate an officer's safety level of contact, if they're really truly listening to what the other person is saying. And then that that trustworthiness, which is kind of, you know, that's what comes from

being honest and forthright on this on a contact with the person and really letting them know that we're not trying to hide anything, we're not trying to be sneaky about it. We're just trying to get a job done here, but establishing that trust between ourselves and the person we're in contact with. And then, finally, the police and community advisory roundtable. This is, you know, the kind of the next iteration or the next piece of this Reimagining Public Safety Initiative now that we have gathered this information and this feedback, and we're starting to strategize on how we're going to move this forward. We really need to create this roundtable group comprised of what used to be kind of our community advisory group. So you know, taking a cross section of the city population, people who have an interest in participating and providing us with good feedback and reflection, but we also have officers within our organization that said, we really want to be part of that roundtable. We want to be part of that discussion group. So creating a roundtable aspect out of that, where we have officers and members of the public talking together about questions that that are out there about policing about what the future looks like, about how we could do things in a way that informs our public and gets them ready for what's coming, as well as really looking at some of those future facing initiatives and how we might be able to engage that in a way that satisfies our officers as well as our public. That has to be an interactive process. And that's, that's really our next logical step. I know I went through that really fast. Because I'm now at my final slide, I did not expect to be through this as quickly as I as I did. But that gives us some good time now for for some Q&A. I know that I have a couple of our command staff members that are going to be available to help us with that, as well, as well as myself. But, but before we get to that, just again, that the Q&A feature is where we would love to see some of these questions. And, and Dr. Nicole Acker, our management analyst will be, you know, curating those questions and putting them together for us. We, we know that there may be folks that will have questions beyond just this meeting. And we want to make sure that if you are, you know, if you're looking at this afterwards, or if you think of questions later on, that we still have a place to send those questions. And so the easy place would be policechief@menlopark.org. That is kind of a generic mailbox that that's kept for my office. But I can send those questions on to folks that can answer probably better than I can, from a practical perspective of what we're doing. So if you have questions, please put them in the Q&A. If you if you have additional comments or questions that you that you think maybe we should take offline, please use that policechief@menlopark.org. And we will get through the questions that we can get through tonight. But we also know that if we you know, we get to that that seven o'clock point where we're, we're coming up against the end of our hour, we will get those questions answered. And we'll put them in a place where you all can get access to them. So with that, I'm going to stop sharing screen. And bring it back to Dr. Nicole Acker for questions. Good evening, Chief Norris. So we have a couple of questions. So we'll start off with the first one. And it's during the school year, especially the fall semester, there were several traffic close calls in which children on foot or on bicycles were almost hit. Will traffic enforcement be brought back as a dedicated team? So the short answer to that is yes. But I do have Commander Moffett on board here and I know that Commander Moffett overseeing our traffic team can give you a better, more affirmative answer to that. But I will say just kind of historically, over the last few months, you know, we suffered a few staffing issues where we had to pull that traffic unit back. We didn't like having to do that. When I came in last year in April, I said that I would try to dedicate us to getting a traffic unit stood back up by July, we were able to do that. But we weren't able to fully sustain it. But really grateful that the council is supportive to the idea of backing that now with some additional hire so that we can make sure that we have the staffing to to keep that going but I'll let I'll let Commander Moffett talk a little bit about our traffic team's approach and in what we're going to be doing.

Commander TJ Moffett 33:50

Good evening, Commander TJ Moffett. So currently, our traffic unit consists of a sergeant, a full time officer. And then additionally, another full time officer was just selected from our patrol team to be joining our traffic unit. So with our current allocations will be staffed with three sworn positions within our traffic unit. I think there's an eagerness for everyone to see that continue to grow, especially with some of the traffic issues that

can be impactful when the city is operating and its business is at full capacity. So with that said, as far as our deployment strategies for those resources, it's really about trying to leverage the resources that we have and putting them in areas where we anticipate the highest or most significant traffic issues and focusing on what we call our PCFs, our primary collision factors, those types of violations which are most likely to result in a collision that may cause injury to someone. So that's a strategy that we employ. We've been lucky to have traffic officers that have been extremely flexible, and have pivoted on a dime when we needed them to. And when we've had, unfortunately, tragedies like if recently happened in Texas, those officers in the traffic unit were refocused to provide a visible presence around the schools. So there are kind of our Swiss Army knife. And but that being said, we're looking to really continue to utilize them and expand on that unit to provide additional safety for both our motorist center pedestrians.

Chief Dave Norris 35:30

And I'll add one more thing to that. And this is something that is kind of an unanticipated benefit of the bicycle team that we've been that we've been putting out on the street, the bicycle unit has actually been very effective with bicycle safety stops finding areas where we have, you know, a large group of bicyclists going through in a particular time and place and really doing a ton of education. It is just a really different look. Right? So so to have a bicycle, stop a bicycle and and have a conversation about bicycle safety. I think it's got a really high level of appreciation from the community, expect to continue to do that as well.

Commander TJ Moffett 36:13

And one last thing, Sorry, Chief that actually sparked another thing that I wanted to share. We've recently acquired a number of bicycle helmets, something we've done in the past, and they're actually placed now in officer patrol vehicles. So that if we identify youth that are riding a bicycle, don't have access to a helmet, we're providing those to them free of charge, just try and create a safe environment as possible.

Chief Dave Norris 36:36

Great. All right. Thanks. Nicole?

Dr. Nicole Acker 36:39

Okay, we have a stop data question. Will the Menlo Park Police Department include RIPA stop data in the annual report? And how will the information in the annual report be disseminated on website, mailer to all residents, etc.

Chief Dave Norris 36:55

So I will give you a short view on this. And then I might ask Tracy Weber to help us as well with how we put that information together. But, you know, part of the part of the responsibility with collecting this data is being able to report this data back. So we absolutely will be collecting it and you know, putting it in some type of a format that will be easy for our public to hopefully, for be able to filter through and get the answers that they're looking for. But we also want to make sure that, you know, if there are individuals in our community that have specific curiosity about a specific type of data that come from these RIPA stop data, you know, information packets that we have the ability to help, you know, that member of the public kind of work through that and get to it. But I want to let Tracy talk a little bit about how that collected collection happens because there's, there's a lot happening behind the scenes to make sure that data gets in the right place.

Tracy Weber 37:57

So first, I'm going to preface it with is, back last year when most of the San Mateo county agencies were going to have to go live for the state mandate. They set out some guidelines of what they wanted to see quarterly in

their reports from each and every police department. And those, of course those reports will always be public. In addition to that, we are always open to feedback. What is what is the city looking for? What are our residents looking for? What do you want us to capture, we capture a lot of data from those RIPA reports. And I sit on the monthly or I'm sorry, quarterly board meetings, I listened to the suggestions they're giving the state legislators I'm listening to what they want to change what they want to enhance. And that's one thing I think people don't realize is it's constantly morphing into something new. And so we're trying to go along with those changes and provide the best physical and analytical data that we can. With that being said, they asked for quarterly data. We have been collecting RIPA data since January 1 of this year. We started a little bit before that just to get our officers used to what is required, how to fill it out, make sure that it's accurate and complete. And now we're trying to figure out how can we best disseminate this to the public, to the residents, to the council, to have a meaningful interpretation, rather than just a bunch of numbers that maybe don't make any sense to anyone. So I guess it's in my opinion, it's a little bit of a loaded question. And we're still trying to figure out what do you want? What do people want to see, what is the value to them, while still adhering to the rules, while still adhering to what the grand jury expects of us, in addition to everything we report to the state is actually on their website. And it is published, I think on a yearly basis, if I remember correctly. So there's will not be published probably until January, February of the following year. But their's is almost overwhelming when you look at it. And so what kind of meaningful, meaningful interpretation can we give you? And what are you looking for? And then there's something that the Chief and I talk about on a regular basis, and we're trying to best decide what is most beneficial for you. And through these conversations with the public through the conversations with the Chief, those are the type of things that we're trying to come up with, so that the public is informed to the extent that they have what they want to see as opposed to what we think they want to see.

Chief Dave Norris 40:41

Right. And actually, you know, when we talk about that, putting together that, that roundtable group of community stakeholders and police officers, you know, this is a perfect example of how we can utilize a forum like that to say, you know, help us, you know, if you're, if you're Joe or Jane citizen, and you are looking at this data, what are you looking for what is of most interest to you, and then use that information to really help us form that illustration. So that's, you know, that's a really good example of what that roundtable could be, could be helpful with.

Dr. Nicole Acker 41:20

So another question is regards to training, do Menlo Park Police officers get de-escalation training and racial bias training?

Chief Dave Norris 41:28

Short answer to that is an emphatic yes. I might, I might lean on you Nicole to talk a little bit more substantially about this, but but we we incorporate de-escalation training and bias awareness training as, as parts of a lot of our other training as well, we talked about bias awareness, I think almost on a daily basis in patrol, as part of our daily briefings. And, and we also in terms of the formal training, we look for people that we can get certified as trainers. So doing that going the route of what we call train-the-trainer, gives us the in house experts. So then if we encounter something that requires some additional training, or can facilitate, we have someone who can facilitate a discussion, if something comes up in the course of you know, of course of our work day, where we either recognize a really, you know, well done job or a way that we could have done something a little bit better. This gives us people as in house experts who can help us facilitate that. But but in terms of you know, there are some some state requirements and what, you know, what California does, as a state is really way ahead of the game, many other states and Nicole might be able to talk a little bit about that and what the requirements are.

Dr. Nicole Acker 42:47

So yes, with the new legislation, especially with the use of force legislation, there is a de-escalation component. So we do have our in-house trainers, instructors, who are what we call Peace Officers and Standards and Training certified, so it's through California state, we have our in house defensive tactics, and arrest and control instructors, and a part of their curriculum is de-escalation training. So as a matter of fact, we have our quarterly training that's happening, our first one tomorrow. And a part of that training is the use of force de-escalation training, there is a four hour now state mandated requirement that just was started January 1 of this year. So we do try and incorporate it in all of our training. And we do send our officers to multiple trainings, which also now the new training that they go to starting the this year, it incorporates a lot of strategic communication, and de-escalation tactics, incorporated throughout all of the varied trainings that they get, which includes, like crisis intervention training, etc.

Chief Dave Norris 43:56

And I'm gonna, I'm going to ask Commander Dixon, to jump into this just briefly as well. And this is really not specific to this question, but kind of an appendix to this question. So one of the things that that we do in this department is, when we get to that use of force, it's actually pretty rare that we get to that point of a reportable use of force. We have a pretty distinct process that we go through to ensure that we review those uses of forces and make sure that that they're done appropriately or identify training issues. And Commander Dixon, if you could talk about that a little bit because I can tell you as as a chief who came in from outside of this department, this is one thing that this department does incredibly well that that I didn't have to change any of that.

Commander Tony Dixon 44:44

Thanks, Tony Dixon, I supervise the Special Operations Division in the police department. We have a very robust review process. When it comes to uses of force, starting from the line level, initial supervisor who respond to the scene, takes an assessment and then subsequently writes a report to be submitted to the command staff for questions on going over what policy issues were based upon the circumstances. And then once that occurs, then it also goes to another sergeant and then the head of the training unit with regard to uses of force or defensive tactic to make sure there's no training issues. I'm all told there's probably about seven different steps of different layers of the police department that were each take time to review what's going on to determine that each use of force was appropriate.

Chief Dave Norris 45:35

Thanks, Tony.

Dr. Nicole Acker 45:39

Okay, there's next question, you have a long list of areas of feedback. How will you prioritize?

Chief Dave Norris 45:45

I think that's a that's a great question. And I have to give a little bit of credit to Commander Moffett, who's here on this panel, you know, we do have an incredibly long list, but the some of the things that we talked about, about trying to organize this into some categories that, that we can then turn into some action items, you know, that's really going to be where the rubber meets the road on this. There are there are kind of three different things that we're looking at. The first is there are a lot of questions about things that we are currently doing that whether it's, you know, to whether it's something that our department is not illustrated appropriately to the public, or the public hasn't found it on our website, or in the information that we're already providing, where

where we need to just make sure that it's clear that there are some things that the public has questions about that we already have some answers, and we're going to make sure that it's clear and we provide those answers in a way that's, that's meaningful. The second part would be questions that we know that, that we have some excellent answers to those questions. But we haven't shown that to the public. So we need to figure out the right forum. And you know, some of these transparency presentations being one part of that, maybe some additional interactive townhall-type meetings where we can talk about these things being another, where we can talk about the things that we are actively doing that maybe we're just not known to the community at all. And then the third part is, you know, where, where are the places where we need to have more dialogue with our public community to understand what it is exactly that the public would like to see, or thinks that they would like to see, that needs some dialogue with police to understand what the reality is of what we can apply to what the what they'd like to see. And so that's, that's really more of the conversational and interactive process, town halls, the the roundtable with the members of the public and police all sitting in one place. Those are areas where we can where we can really address those questions. So in terms of organizing it, there is a lot of information, but a lot of it is either it's either out there and we just need to show you where it is. Or it's something that we really need to do a better job of illustrating to you, or it's something we really want to talk with you about.

Dr. Nicole Acker 47:59

Okay, next question, surround some mental health calls and training. And a couple of questions, similar questions. Do, does Menlo Park police get mental health training? Is there a mobile mental health crisis unit set up? And is there a mental health crisis team who helps, for example, like in Eugene, Oregon, or Berkeley, California?

Chief Dave Norris 48:29

Right. So what I want to talk first about what we're doing with within this county, kind of in in the direction of innovative ways to address mental health crises, but then I'm also going to want to have, I think our two commanders maybe bring in a little bit on kind of what we practically bring to the table already. So so right now countywide. There is a pilot test program that's going on with the three largest three or four largest cities on the peninsula. So Daly City, South San Francisco, San Mateo, and Redwood City. They all have embedded mental health clinicians within their organization, who are certified mental health clinicians. It's actually a partnership with StarVista. For some of you out there will know that starvista is you know, behavioral health and recovery services as a nonprofit within this county very successful. Those mental health conditions have their their own radio, their own vehicle that can respond to calls where there is some type of mental health crisis. If there is there is no safety element that needs to be handled by police at the scene. Those clinicians can take those scenes over and provide a level of service that's very different than a contact with police. If there's a safety issue there, obviously the police will need to make sure that that situation is rendered safe and then that mental health clinician can step in. They've been very successful, but there but that job is half done because one of the things that we need to do is make sure that we're collecting good data and understanding what's going on with some of those situations. So the, the pilot program has partnered with the Gardner Center out of Stanford to collect data and understand how we're handling these incidents and how we might handle them better with these mental health clinicians on board. Part of the job of smaller cities like ours is to help contribute data, when we don't have that embedded mental health clinician so that the gardener center can see that as a control and understand, you know, from from an evidence based perspective, what's working and what's not, and where that where that work needs to go. For smaller jurisdictions like ours, I think we need to really look at that as a potential shared resource. And so we're looking at some possibilities on that. And I don't want to give too much away, because we're really in the very early like early discussion stages of that. But we're looking at ways that we can bring that type of element here into Menlo Park. What we do have already Is there is there is

already a psychological emergency response team that the county has stood up that's in partnership with our local ambulance resource and a resource we call smart. That is that is also a mental health crisis resource team. Those are available countywide. So they're not always available in the individual jurisdictions. But we make use of those when we can, in terms of you know, how our officers get that training coming in. Maybe I'd like to, Tony, if you're available, if you want to talk a little bit about CIT, and what we do with with crisis intervention training throughout the county, because I think our program in this county is really excellent.

Commander Tony Dixon 51:45

Here. So in the basic police academy, all police officers get a certain level of specific training with regard to dealing with a mental health crisis or people with mental health issues. Once they graduate from the Academy, we bring them back out to the police department and they start their field training process. But one of the first classes that we send them is called crisis intervention training and you'll be able to see with each of the authors, they usually have a CIT that's in gold, but their nametag that shows that they've watched the training. What that does is give them an increased awareness on how our county specifically deals with mental health crises. That also gives them an increased tool bag, if you will, which had to deal with certain specific incidences that allow them to de-escalate rather than utilize other strategies that were traditionally taught in the academy. But just because a situation is presented to you, that doesn't mean it always, you have to go to an enforcement model, you could go to be more crisis intervention model.

Chief Dave Norris 52:45

And, Tracy, if you don't mind, I'm going to pick on you for a second as well, too. So you know Tracy's in the dispatch call center when these calls for service come in. And we do some things to distinguish and make sure that our dispatchers are aware of who we have on the street, who's received this extra training tree. So you want to talk a little bit about that dynamic.

Tracy Weber 53:06

Sure. Thank you, Chief. So one thing to understand is crisis intervention training is not specific to sworn only. We offer it to non sworn personnel, whether it's dispatch, whether it's records, and those that may come in contact with the public at any point. And I would say at least three quarters of our dispatchers have gone through crisis intervention training. That also helps when we're taking phone calls from those individuals that are in that crisis mode. It teaches us how to be empathetic, sympathetic, certain questions that we need to ask, that we can relate to the officers. And that in turn changes maybe the way they approach things, obviously, actually, I should not say that, obviously to the law enforcement side, if a weapon is involved, we go in in a different point of view than if a weapon is not involved. That is for officer safety reasons. However, there are follow up questions that dispatchers can ask that give officers a sense of okay, is the weapons still in the person's hand? Is it not? If it's not, that's going to change the way that they react to the situation. So though, that crisis intervention, training is imperative for our dispatchers to have and so we try to make sure that they are also included in that 40 hour training, in addition to we call smarts like the chief referred to this is a system put in place that if somebody can walk unassisted if they're not volatile, if it's not something where they need to be placed in handcuffs, and they're willing to go on what we call a voluntary basis. It's not something that is forced upon them by the police department. Those are the avenues that we want to take. We want to make sure that those situations both on the telephone and when the officer arrives are positive interactions and we're providing the mental health clinicians the mental health, I guess mental health, sorry, I'm drawing a blank, but the, they're able to get the help that they need. And it's not forced upon them because they are willing and they're open to the idea because having been in this position or dispatching for 22 years, you know that if somebody is open to the idea, you are going to get so much for further than when it's forced upon them. And we want to make sure that we're embracing that. And we're allowing them to have a part in what their mental

health evaluation is. And so we make sure to encompass the dispatchers on that, even though they may be on the for phone, we're the first line of contact, and we want to make sure that we're relaying to our officers, accurate information, so that we're doing what is best for those that we are encountering. And whether it's them going on a voluntary, where it's unfortunately, us being forced, because maybe there's others in the household that are in danger because of them, we want to make sure that the the whole situation is handled in the best result for everybody. And honestly, it starts with a phone call. And that's where dispatch gets involved.

Chief Dave Norris 56:21

Thanks, Tracy. Nicole, I know we're running up against our hard stop here are pretty close to it. So I'm going to leave it to you to just give an overview of what we're going to do on the back end with the I know there are several questions remaining. And we will get to those questions. But we may not be able to do it right here during this time in space. But we will get those answers back to you all. And then I'll give it to Nicole to just give a quick summary of how we're going to do that and hand it over to Vice Mayor Wolosin to wrap us up.

Dr. Nicole Acker 56:54

Yes, so we have several questions that have gone unanswered, but we are going to answer them and we will have them posted on our webpage under the Reimagining Public Safety page. And they will be there'll be an opportunity to for you to submit as a chief provided the policechief@menlopark.org. If you have a question directly, you can submit it there and we can also include that on that website.

Chief Dave Norris 57:21

Great. All right, Vice Mayor Wolosin, can you take us out?

Jen Wolosin 57:26

Absolutely. And thank you, Chief Norris. Thank you to Tracy and Nicole and to Commanders Dixon and Moffett and especially the chief for walking us through these complex questions. Thank you for all of you who took an hour out of your busy lives to come learn more about what we're hearing in the community. And what we're going to go forward and work on from here. This is really a beginning. Our first job was to listen and to make sure that we provided opportunities to have different voices heard in the community. While you know there were many attendees at these meetings, they say space meetings, we know we didn't get every single person in the community. So please feel free to continue to provide your feedback to encourage others to provide their feedback. This is an ongoing process. There's really no beginning and no end. But I'm hoping that tonight showed a willingness on the police and on the council and on the community's part to be accessible to be open to these challenging conversations. To develop mutual understanding. I'm really hopeful with the Chief's leadership in where we're heading. I know there's high hopes when we title something Reimagining Public Safety. And we know there's both an urgency to get it done. And also we need to go about it very thoughtfully. So I think we're in good hands with the Chief. The subcommittee will be reporting out to council soon, with some recommendations. This will continue to be shared with the community. And I know there's questions about how do you get on the police advisory group? How do you get a ride along, how do you get coffee with the chief? All this is wonderful the level of engagement that's desired in the community. We definitely want to take advantage of that. So please stay with us. Stay informed. And thank you so much for being here this evening. Have a good night. Thank you. And thank you Terri Givens, Dr. Givens for facilitating all this.