

Statement from the President/Chair of the PFC

I am aware that two members of the newly-established Police Civilian Oversight Board have submitted a request to the Police and Fire Commission (PFC) to delay its process. The PFC, a diverse body of citizens from the Madison community who volunteer their time, will continue to proceed at its own pace. The PFC is continuing to receive community input in the police chief appointment process. The Police Civilian Oversight Board may provide input to the PFC like any other member of the public, group, committee, individual member of a group or committee, or alder. The PFC is an independent body created pursuant to state law, Wis. Stat. § 62.13. The Wisconsin Supreme Court has stated that “one of the primary purposes for the legislative act providing for the creation of the board was to remove the administration of fire and police departments from city politics and to place it in the hands of impartial and nonpolitical citizen boards.” Therefore, all input that the PFC receives is entitled to the same level of consideration.

The following is a statement recently released by the PFC with a summary of the extensive community input to date and a brief background on the members of the PFC:

Who are the PFC Commissioners?

Jacquelyn L. Bogges is a Lecturer on Diversity, Oppression and Social Justice at the UW Sandra Rosenbaum School of Social Work, and a Director of the Nina Collective Cooperative-supporting organizations and institutions and individuals committed to equity and inclusion. She spent 25 years of her professional career as a social welfare policy analyst focused on racial justice and equity for black parents and their children.

William Greer is a semi-retired mental health professional who has lived in Madison for 50 years. He is an African American youth mentor and an advocate for social justice.

Kevin Gundlach is a labor leader who works with unions, non-profit organizations, advocates, activists, and organizers in order to achieve economic and social justice for all workers and their families, particularly within marginalized communities.

Fabiola Hamdan is a bilingual, bi-cultural senior social worker with Dane County DHS. As an immigrant from Bolivia, she is a strong advocate for the immigrant community. She has engaged in numerous partnerships with Dane County service organizations, and has received numerous commendations for her work, including the YWCA, Women of Distinction. She continues to serve as a leader in the Madison community.

Mary A. Schauf is a retired City of Madison Police Officer. She retired after 29-years of service as the Captain of the Training Team. She also served as a District Commander in both the Central and East Districts and engaged the community with addressing shared concerns. As a member of Madison’s LGBT+ community she is committed to equity for all.

The Process

The current police chief hiring process has been underway since the beginning of the year. The arrival of COVID-related restrictions in March 2020 have impacted all aspects of this process, and posed unique challenges that cannot be understated.

The PFC contracted with the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) to conduct a rigorous, national recruitment for the position. PERF is an independent research organization that focuses on critical issues in policing. Since its founding in 1976, PERF has identified best practices on fundamental issues such as reducing police use of force; developing community policing and problem-oriented policing; using technologies to deliver police services to the community; and evaluating crime reduction strategies. One of the most significant appointments a city can make is

the appointment of a police chief. For 30 years, PERF has identified the most skilled professionals in the field and has assisted city leaders in recruiting and selecting well-qualified candidates. (<https://www.policeforum.org>)

During the planning and recruitment phase, the PFC engaged the public in numerous and unprecedented ways:

- The PFC heard extensive verbal input from numerous community groups and individuals over the course of multiple meetings.
- The PFC worked with Local Voices Network (LVN) for facilitated small group sessions.
- The PFC conducted two virtual Town Hall style meetings.
- PFC members participated in call-in radio programs with WORT and La Movida, a program conducted in Spanish.
- Commissioner Hamdan presented at a meeting organized by LASUP (Latino Support Network) and obtained feedback.
- There was a short community survey published on the City's website with 725 responses.
- An email and physical address were provided for written input.

Using this input, the PFC engaged in the evaluation and deliberation of the candidates who applied for the position. As a portion of the interview evaluation process, a segment was taped for public viewing. The questions for this segment were taken from the public input, specifically from LVN's efforts. LVN has been in Madison since 2019 and is "a unique physical-digital network designed to bring under-heard community voices, perspectives and stories to the center of a healthier public dialogue." LVN works to bring voices of persons who may feel marginalized by process into the discussion. (<https://lvn.org/wisconsin>) Another question was pulled from the Community Survey that was completed. A PFC member conducted this portion of the interviews for each candidate in the same manner. By taping the process, no one candidate was able to view the questions before their own interview in an effort to maintain equity in this portion of the process.

The PFC remains committed to receiving community input regarding the police chief appointment process. The next meeting of the PFC is scheduled for December 14, 2020, at 5:30pm, and will include a public comment period. If there is insufficient time available on December 14, 2020 to hear oral comments from those members of the public who have registered, the PFC will schedule additional time after December 14, 2020 so that any member of the public who wishes to offer public comment regarding this process can do so.

Members of the public who wish to offer comment during the public comment period must register in advance using the City of Madison's Registration Statement Form available on the PFC's webpage: www.cityofmadison.com/PFC. Once completed, the Form must be submitted to the following e-mail address: policechiefsearch@cityofmadison.com. The order of speakers will be based on the order of submission of the completed Registration Form. Based on the PFC's standard practice, each speaker will be limited to a maximum of three (3) minutes. The PFC is also receiving written feedback at policechiefsearch@cityofmadison.com.