

## **Initial Council Questions for the Appointment of the Executive Director of the Community Police Commission**

**Fé Lopez**

**1. How do you see the role of, and where do you see opportunities for added value by, the Executive Director of the Community Police Commission in the ongoing efforts related to implementing the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the City of Seattle agreement related to police reform?**

I see the role of the Executive Director of the Community Police Commission (“CPC”) as a full participant and co-leader of the Commission. The CPC has done tremendous work this past year thanks in part to the hardworking temporary directors. As the first permanent Executive Director, I can provide the CPC stability and structure. I can help provide guidance with an eye to the future of police reform and the community’s place within it. Structurally, I can help build a supportive staff structure that will further enhance the work of the CPC and deepen the engagement within the community.

**2. In relation to the Mayor, Council, and public, how do you see your role with respect to accessibility and collaboration?**

The Executive Director must create and maintain relationships with all key stakeholders. As I stated at the recent Public Safety, Civil Rights & Technology Committee public hearing on Wednesday, February 26, the CPC welcomes the mayor’s advisors in the critical accountability work of the CPC.

I have established regular meetings with representatives of the stakeholders including the mayor’s office and appreciate any opportunity to meet with or hear from other leaders in the community. I, along with the CPC co-chairs, will be briefing the Council in early March about the work of the CPC.

**3. Having served as the Acting Executive Director of the Community Police Commission for a short time, please tell us what you have learned from this experience?**

There are various perspectives as to what reform should look like, how it should be implemented, and how we will quantify success. The CPC is keenly aware of this and has endeavored to include representatives from all key stakeholder organizations, technical advisors, and community representatives to the table to create recommendations that are meaningful and practical.

**4. Please describe past departmental or organizational accomplishments.**

The CPC is charged with advising SPD and the Justice Department about proposed revisions to SPD policy, training and community outreach. While CPC members themselves have relevant expertise, in 2013 the CPC also partnered with more than 100 community organizations serving groups most adversely affected by existing policing practices and together held over 150 meetings and surveyed over 3000 individuals in 9 languages about their experience with SPD, including those often marginalized from such discussions due to youth, homelessness, mental illness or addiction. The survey was orally translated in 14 more languages. 72% of the respondents were people of color.

The CPC shared their preliminary recommendations with those community members and considered their responses in the 2013 recommendations for new policies on police stops, bias free policing and use of force, to SPD, DOJ and the Court Monitor. Many CPC recommendations were incorporated into SPD policies, including the new bias free policing policy that is path breaking nationally in addressing unintended disparities in addition to intentional bias.

**5. What are your goals for the next three years, if confirmed, and what do you see as the most significant challenges to achieving those goals?**

My goals are to enhance and strengthen the CPC's community engagement. While the CPC has done significant work within the community, it has not established a consistent communication method or structure to communicate, educate, and engage the community.

The first step to building this structure is hiring a full time communications/community engagement strategist. This addition to the CPC is integral to fully incorporating the community's voice in the reform efforts. While I have located funding to support this position this year, the CPC will need financial support to sustain this vital position in the future.

**6. Identify achievements that are good examples of your leadership approach.**

My leadership approach is collaborative yet decisive. I understand the necessity to bring various groups together to create lasting change. It is when our communities work together, not in silos, that we are able to create significant change. The following are a few examples of my collaborative leadership approach.

I co-chaired and co-founded the Judicial Institute. The Judicial Institute is a collaborative group consisting of representatives from the Initiative for Diversity, Washington State Bar Association, minority and specialty bars, local bar, judiciary and

local law schools. The Institute is committed to addressing the concerns that an extremely low number of minority lawyers pursue judicial careers through the appointment or election processes and the need for continued diversification of the representative court benches. The Judicial Institute's mission is to encourage qualified minority attorneys to seek judicial position through comprehensive education and mentorship.

As the past president of the Latina/o Bar Association of Washington ("LBAW"), I successfully worked collaboratively with several organizations on police reform, minority/majority redistricting campaign that effectively lobbied for the new minority/majority 9<sup>th</sup> congressional and 15<sup>th</sup> legislative districts, and I currently co-administer the free LBAW/SGB Legal Clinic at El Centro de la Raza where an average of 400 people receive free legal consultations every year.

**7. Given what you have observed, how do you see the opportunities for the CPC to continue to work closely with other agencies and departments to promote reform, develop policy recommendations, and ensure accountability?**

The CPC needs to maintain clear avenues of communication with the stakeholders and the community. I have begun meeting and working regularly with key representatives of several vital groups such as the Mayor's Office, Court Monitor's team, DOJ, and SPD.

The CPC also values the participation and contributions of the OPA Auditor and Director, representatives of the City Attorney's Office, both police unions, and numerous technical advisors. The CPC is committed to continuing these worthwhile collaborations in the future.

**8. The CPC's charge is to represent a broad range of community perspectives and to reach out and engage communities directly, to get critical feedback, and to recommend changes to the Seattle Police Department policies and practices. How will you promote public confidence in the Seattle Police Department? How will you help build trust with communities of color? Or underrepresented communities?**

Part of the CPC's charge is to engage with the community. In this context, community engagement should incorporate the following:

- educating the community about ongoing work in police reform on a regular basis,
- requesting feedback from the community regarding relevant recommendations,
- reporting back to the community about implemented changes, and
- requesting ongoing feedback regarding the impact of said changes.

The CPC and SPD must continually engage in this dialogue with the community as a first step to regaining confidence and trust. This conversation must continue beyond the timeline set in the consent decree.

This year, the CPC in collaboration with SPD are charged with assessing SPD's Outreach efforts. This will be an excellent opportunity to examine SPD's relationships with underrepresented communities and begin to develop ideas of how to repair, create and/or maintain trusting and lasting relationships.

***9. What is your general philosophy for how to most effectively work with the Mayor and City Council to ensure effective and timely communication regarding the CPC's responsibility under the Agreements?***

The CPC should regularly brief the Public Safety, Civil Rights & Technology Committee and the Mayor's office. In addition, the CPC should present its work to the City Council at least twice a year: a mid-year and end of year report. In the meantime, CPC representatives will strive to meet individually with each council member at least once or more a year to inform and/or answer any specific questions each council member may have during this time.

To begin this communication strategy in earnest, the CPC has scheduled a council briefing and a meeting with Mayor Murray in March. I have also established regular weekly meetings with representatives in the mayor's office.