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City Council

2023 Police Auditor Annual Report Briefing

Agenda Date: 5/14/2024
Agenda Item Number: 6.A
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Title

2023 Police Auditor Annual Report Briefing

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee

City Manager Recommendation:

Receive a briefing on the 2023 Police Auditor Annual Report.

Report

Issue:

Whether to receive a briefing on the 2023 Police Auditor Annual Report.

Staff Contact:

Debbie Sullivan, Assistant City Manager, Office of Strategic Initiatives 360.753.8499

Presenters:

Debbie Sullivan, Assistant City Manager

Rich Allen, Police Chief

Tara Parker, Police Auditor, Clarify Investigations & Consulting

Genevieve Chan, Social Justice and Equity Commission Co-Chair

Background and Analysis:

The City Council employs a Police Auditor (Auditor) to provide an independent review and audit of the Olympia Police Department's uses of force and its internal investigations regarding complaints against the Department and its employees. The Police Auditor's duties and responsibilities include examining uses of force, complaint investigations, and public demonstration responses to determine whether there is any evidence of unlawful bias or civil rights violations, and to ensure that they are aligned with best practices.

The City Council contracts with Tara Parker of Clarity Investigations & Consulting for police auditor services. Ms. Parker has completed the 2023 Annual Report to the City Council which covers incidents between January 1 and December 31, 2023.

The Report includes: the number and types of use of force reports that have been audited; the number and types of complaint investigations recorded by the Office of Professional Standards that have been audited; findings; observations; and recommendations for improvements to Department policies and practices.

On March 11, 2024, a Sub-Committee of the Social Justice and Equity Commission met with the Police Auditor to discuss the Draft 2023 Annual Report. The meeting was structured based on the draft Community Oversight of Law Enforcement (COLE) recommendations, whereby the Police Chief shared an overview of the Department's 2023 calls for service, activities, and accomplishments; the Police Auditor provided an overview of misconduct complaints, use of force incident reports audited, and recommendations for operational, training, or policy changes to OPD. The Commission shared their community perspective regarding the Auditor's findings and recommendations.

The Social Justice and Equity Commission, subsequently, met on April 22 to prepare a letter to the City Council regarding their community perspective on the report and to highlight areas where system improvements in policing could be focused. The letter also shares their insights on the COLE recommendation as it relates to the meeting between a future Community Board and Police Auditor.

At the Council briefing, the Police Chief will provide an overview of the activities that occurred in 2023. This will be followed by the Auditor who will brief Council on the Annual Report. A Co-Chair of the Social Justice and Equity Commission will also attend to share highlights of their community perspective and recommendations.

The Annual Report is posted on the City's website.

Climate Analysis:

This briefing is not expected to have an impact on greenhouse gas emissions.

Equity Analysis:

Community groups, especially those most impacted by policing, and underrepresented community groups have requested a community involvement and oversight in law enforcement. The Commission's input on the Auditor's report provides a vital community perspective and is an important step toward building trust and legitimacy in the City's public safety system.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

Response to the Neighborhood/Community Interests section is answered within the Equity Analysis statement.

Financial Impact:

The City Council appropriated \$150,000 for the Police Auditor in the 2024 operating budget.

Options:

1. Receive the briefing.
2. Do not receive the briefing.
3. Receive the briefing at another time.

Attachments:

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Police Auditor 2023 Annual Report