

The Procedural Justice Committee held a virtual meeting on July 13, 2021. Attending were Yvonne Flowers, Bishop Debra Gause, Stacey Bottoms, Isis Benitez, Satara Brown, Carmen McGill, Chris Libolt, Debra Long, Van Riley, Debra Long, L'Quette Taylor and John Penney.

Flowers asked the group for its thoughts on the Procedural Justice training most of the members have gone through recently. This training focuses on the way police interact with the public. It relies on the understanding that treating people with dignity and respect and giving citizens a voice during encounters promotes community trust.

McGill said the training seemed more focused on the police officers than the community. Penney agreed, saying the instructors mentioned that at the beginning and did try to tweak some of the perspective toward the community's view.

Flowers said she thought the training was beneficial and would like to see more of it. Riley agreed that more training would be beneficial, and the group noted that at some point in the future they would like to receive implicit-bias training, which addresses the automatic association people now make between groups of people and stereotypes about those groups. Flowers said Officers Sean McCarthy and John Zeltmann would be returning to the Procedural Justice Committee. They were serving as co-chairs until the Committee was handed the assignment by the Mayor to make recommendations for the governor's police reform efforts. Flowers and Gause have been serving as co-chairs since that time.

Gause wanted to know what the police officers know about hate crimes, and Libolt said hate crimes are written in the penal code and are taken on a case-by-case basis.

McGill said there will be an event commemorating Frederick Douglass' 1858 speech, and that event will be held at College Hill Park at 2 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 1.

Penney and Long noted SNUG will be sponsoring a Community Day at Earline Patrice Park at Mansion Square on Saturday, July 17. Penney said Dutchess County will be holding a pop-up vaccine clinic held in conjunction with the event. Members of the Dutchess County Vaccine Outreach Coalition will also be there to distribute information about the vaccines.

Libolt said the National Night Out event will be held on Tuesday, Aug. 3, outside City Hall.

The next Procedural Justice Committee meeting is set for Thursday, Sept. 2, at the Public Safety Building.