

The Procedural Justice Committee met on November 10, 2020 in the Common Council Chambers.

Co-Chair Yvonne Flowers introduced Common Council member Evan Menist and Brian Robison of Equitable Future Inc. for a conversation about the proposed Civilian Review Board legislation being considered by the Common Council. The review board would consist of members of the public and would be created to provide independent oversight and would investigate complaints made against the Police Department.

The new Civilian Review Board would be composed of seven members: four to be selected by the Common Council, two to be appointed by the mayor, and one with law enforcement experience, appointed by the chief of police.

The complaints could involve allege misconduct including but not limited to excessive use of force, abuse of authority, discourtesy, or use of offensive language, including but not limited to, slurs relating to race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation and disability.

Procedural Justice Committee members asked a variety of questions, including the potential cost of the committee and how it would specifically operate.

Menist and Robinson said the board would have to make key decisions on it operations but it could hire staff and would have subpoena power to summon witnesses. They said the committee is designed to function similar to the American justice system. Some committee members said that while they are in favor of more police oversight, there are many unanswered questions about this legislation. Menist said this was draft legislation, that he is continuing to seek public comment, and that he expects to have another draft ready toward the end of the year.

Menist and Robinson and members of the committee agreed their talk was productive but that further conservations would be imperative as this issue moves forward.

Captain Richard Wilson then addressed the committee, taking them through a list of evidence-based policing strategies that the committee could consider in regard to the governor's executive order. They include the city's use of force policies, procedural and implicit bias training, de-escalation training and practices, hot spots policing, focused deterrence and others. Wilson explained these and other terms to the committee in more detail. He said the city police has employed these strategies and tactics and noted that, as Dutchess County has undertaken the process of creating its own plan for municipalities to consider to answer the governor's

executive order, the city's police work has been cited as a good example for other departments to follow.

The Procedural Justice Committee is continuing its outreach efforts and hope to set up a meeting with youth representatives shortly.