



2017 Budget Statement to City Council Committee on Budget and Government Operations

October 25, 2016

Sharon Fairley, Chief Administrator

Thank you for the opportunity to address the members of the Committee on Budget and Government Operations and the other members of the council here with us today, in support of the 2017 Budget for the City's civilian police oversight agency. My name is Sharon Fairley and I serve as the Chief Administrator for the Independent Police Review Authority (IPRA) as well as the transitional Chief Administrator for the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA).

I want to express to each of you what an honor it is to lead the agency through this historic transition. Our leadership team has been hard at work developing a clear and compelling vision for COPA outlined in the ordinance you passed earlier this month and founded on the principles that are essential to building a successful future for COPA.

The budget before you represents our considered judgment on how to efficiently and responsibly manage the sundown of IPRA while establishing COPA as a new "best in class" police oversight agency – achieving this transition in a manner that will minimize any potential disruption to the police accountability system.

With my remarks this afternoon, I'd like to focus on two questions that I believe are likely to be of most interest to you:

- 1) What is the vision for COPA and how will the appropriations we are requesting here be used to support the new agency's mission?
- 2) How will the transition from one agency to another be accomplished to minimize costs to the taxpayers while maintaining service to the community and department members?

Let me address these questions each in turn.

First, the budget request for COPA includes a significant infusion of additional resources that we believe are essential for the agency to be able to fulfill its new, broader mandate.

More specifically, the budget presented today allows COPA to:

1. Increase the size of the investigative staff to accommodate COPA's increased jurisdictional scope and to improve the quality and timeliness of investigations.
2. Create a new dedicated position responsible for officer-involved death investigations to comply with state and municipal law.
3. Improve the quality of the investigative process by reducing the ratio of investigators to supervising investigators to five to one.
4. Create a new internal quality control section that will drive the agency toward quality and timeliness goals.
5. Bring critical technical expertise in-house to COPA to expedite forensic analysis.
6. Restructure the administrative staff to more effectively and efficiently support COPA's mission.
7. Develop and implement best-in-class training program for all employees.
8. Engage outside legal advice and subject matter expertise on complex cases and issues to improve quality of outcomes.
9. Fund a more robust and inclusive community outreach effort that facilitates the complaint intake process, communicates with all parties as the process advances and educates the public on ongoing operations.

We believe that each of these aspects of the budget is critical to getting COPA off on the right start.

But, while we are building COPA, IPRA must continue to take-in and investigate police misconduct complaints and the other incidents within IPRA's jurisdiction. We believe this budget proposal reflects and will maintain the essential IPRA operations until the transition of the investigative responsibilities from IPRA to COPA can be appropriately made. Although, as you know, the ordinance has established September 30, 2017 as the deadline for the transition, our goal is to achieve the transition as soon as it is responsibly possible to do so. Working in collaboration with the Department of Human Resources and Department of Law, we have developed a comprehensive hiring plan that we believe will enable us to populate the agency with qualified and experienced

investigators in an efficient manner. Working in collaboration with the Department of Procurement Services, we have also begun the RFP process for the development of a robust training program for new staff members. Working in collaboration with 2FM, development of office space plans is under way as well.

In conclusion, we want to express our appreciation for your support and look forward to working with you as we develop and implement these transition plans.