

## **Policy Subcommittee Minutes**

Monday, March 4, 2024

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Zoom

**Members Present:** Tanya Hughes, Mike Gailor, Werner Oyanadel, Chief Neil Dryfe, Cherly Sharpe, Tamara Lanier

**Staff:** Ken Barone, Erica Escobar

### **I. Welcome & Introductions**

Chair Hughes convened the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

### **II. Approval of the February 5, 2024, meeting minutes**

A motion was made and seconded to approve the February 5, 2024, meeting minutes. The minutes were approved unanimously.

### **III. Old Business**

#### **a. Bills for review- 2024 legislative session**

Ken Barone provided a brief summary on H.B. 5055: An Act Strengthening Police Data Reporting Requirements. He suggested the subcommittee vet whether the advisory board should endorse the language in the bill. The bill would make it a crime if there was intentional misreporting of police records, including racial profiling information. Werner Oyandel stressed the issue's significance for the current legislative session and urged the subcommittee to develop a written statement to be submitted to the Judiciary Committee in support of the bill. The subcommittee agreed to review draft language for consideration.

The subcommittee also reviewed H.B. 5324: An Act Establishing Secondary Traffic Violations. Chair Tanya Hughes invited members to share any comments, questions, or concerns regarding the bill.

Chief Neil Dryfe stated that it was his opinion that if the legislature doesn't want certain laws enforced, they should consider removing them altogether. He expressed concerns about officers' ability to interpret or distinguish between primary and secondary stops. While acknowledging some statutes are also secondary in nature, Chief Dryfe questioned the necessity of further categorizing other violations. Chief Dryfe suggested that the inclusion of

further secondary violations may serve more of a symbolic purpose than a practical one in terms of enforcement.

Ken Barone stated that approximately 10% of stops in Connecticut are due to lighting violations, with headlights accounting for about 30% of those stops. This equates to thousands of stops annually. He further noted that around 5,000 stops are made annually for a license plate obstruction, though not all would be eliminated under the proposed statute. Ken estimated that the bill would impact roughly 20,000 stops annually, including those related to window tint, lighting, license plate, and registration violations. He also mentioned that stops for obstructive windshields are rare, typically occurring only during weather events like snowstorms.

Mike Gailor expressed his reluctance to support the bill in its current form, citing concerns about its impact on officers and the complexity of distinguishing between primary and secondary violations. He suggested that the Division of Criminal Justice is unlikely to support the bill and recommended that the Advisory Board refrain from taking a position, allowing the matter to unfold. Mike Gailor acknowledged that while certain provisions of the bill might be feasible, he agreed with Chief Dryfe that violations inherently deemed secondary would likely remain so.

Chair Tanya Hughes emphasized the need for a comprehensive perspective on "substantial impact," going beyond numerical measures. She underscored the importance of considering individual experiences, especially regarding secondary stops. Additionally, she raised concerns about discretion, highlighting her apprehension as an African American woman about potential biases in its application.

Ken recalled the origins of the bill, noting that it initially targeted statutes contributing to disparities but expanded to include additional violations. He mentioned instances where seemingly insignificant violations were added to the bill without strong evidence of their enforcement. However, he emphasized that the focus was on a few significant violations intended to reduce disparities and redirect police attention toward more critical violations.

Ken suggested drafting two statements. These statements would be circulated to the group, allowing time for feedback. If consensus is reached that statement will be presented to the Advisory Board at the March meeting. However, if consensus isn't achieved or resolution cannot be found, the alternative statement would be presented instead.

#### IV. General Discussion

##### a. Other 2024 legislative priorities

Ken suggested tabling the discussion on mandated E-citation and E-warning. He mentioned that the Data Subcommittee is currently focused on this issue and is considering whether a mandate is necessary for the next session. Therefore, he believed that the Policy Subcommittee didn't need to weigh in on it at this time.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:03 a.m.

Next Meeting: April 1, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.