

For Immediate Release

Contact

Name: Councilwoman Carrie Wykoff

Email: councilwykoff@townofrosendale.com

Police Reform Committee in Rosendale

(*Rosendale, NY*) Pursuant to Gov. Cuomo's Executive Order 203, The New York State Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative, the Rosendale Town Board established the Rosendale Community Police Reform Committee at their regular August 2020 meeting.

This committee of community stakeholders includes Rosendale residents of a variety of backgrounds, representatives from the town board, the police department, and the Ulster County District Attorney's Office. Members are Josh Baron (Secretary), Jennifer Bliss (Chair), Marc Cassidy, Ulster County District Attorney David Clegg and the Assistant District Attorney assigned to Rosendale, Dana Blackmon, Ted Dixon (Vice Chair), Richard Wright, Rosendale Town Councilman Matt Igoe, Terry Johnson, Jessieca McNabb, Rosendale Chief of Police Scott Schaffrick and Rosendale Town Councilwoman Carrie Wykoff. Councilwoman Wykoff is serving as the Town Council liaison to the committee, and Councilman Igoe serves as the Police Commission liaison. Residents submitted applications to participate in this volunteer group, and members were chosen based on those applications and on guidance issued by the State which is public and can be viewed here: <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-new-guidance-police-reform-collaborative-reinvent-and-modernize>. This group was created for the purpose of reviewing current police department deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices and to address any racial bias and disproportionate policing of communities of color. By January 1, 2021, the committee will set forth a list of proposed reforms and policies, and after soliciting and incorporating public comments, will make a final proposal to be voted on by the Town Board in March.

The committee has been meeting weekly to begin organizing and gathering necessary information and will develop a plan that reflects the needs of the community, and is working to identify improvement opportunities. The committee will hold public sessions over the next three months to hear the public's concerns regarding trust, fairness and legitimacy as it relates to policing.

Chair Jennifer Bliss notes, "we are a highly motivated group from a variety of backgrounds, and each of us is deeply invested in identifying what has worked and is working for our community, and what can be improved upon. We are sensitive to the specific needs of our town, and strive to propose policies that both make the community feel safe and heard, and allow the police to effectively, safely, and without bias, carry out their duties."

The State requires that the committee solicit input from other Rosendale residents. As such, an online community survey for Rosendale residents has been created which can be found here:

<https://tinyurl.com/RosendalePoliceReform> along with a print and mail option. In addition, any Rosendale resident wishing to provide thoughts and insights, please send your comments to RosendalePoliceReformComments@gmail.com or call 845 658 - 0245 to leave a confidential message. The committee will not be responding to each individual email or voice message, but will be reviewing each one and incorporating public input throughout the process.

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