

Summary of Input Gathered from the City Manager's Coffee Talk with Police Department Workforce Members

On August 12, 2010, the City Manager announced the three part Police Chief Recruitment outreach strategy: (1) Citywide Community Meetings (2) Workforce; and (3) Targeted Stakeholder Outreach. The following is a summary of the comments from a coffee talk meeting with a group of randomly selected members of the Police Department Workforce held on September 9, 2010 in the City Manager's Conference Room at City Hall. Approximately 25 attendees participated. The summary is compiled from recorder's notes that were captured during the meeting. It is not a verbatim account of all discussions that occurred at the meeting.

City Manager Debra Figone opened the meeting to welcome attendees, provided an overview of the process and community outreach strategy and introduced the session facilitator Dr. Shawn Spano. Dr. Spano informed attendees about the purpose of the meeting, and facilitated the discussion using the five questions below. Ms. Figone observed the group's dialogue and answered questions throughout.

Question #1: What are the most important issues that you would like the new Police Chief to address?

- Staffing. Need to have more patrol officers and administrative staff.
- Have a clear vision for the department that aligns different priorities, interests, programs and initiatives.
- Deployment of resources. Listen to Commanders while taking direction from City Council
- Need to bridge gaps between political, administrative and Department needs
- Communication to Officers in Patrol: Visible and accessible.
- Communication about hot topics: Set good direction by responding effectively.
- Put distance between the Chief and City Budget Process: Budget process takes too much time and appears that Chief is solely in Administrative Role. Rely more on Deputy Staff. This will free up time for other priorities.
- Need to balance public safety and community concerns.
- Communicate Clearly.
- Need to manage media relations, including media leaks and balancing the media's need for information with what is appropriate on the investigation side.
- Sunshine Requirements: Know what is required and what is not, and be willing to take unpopular positions.

Question/Comment #2: What experience and track record should the new Police Chief have?

- Good Communication: Define SJPD, and articulate SJPD mission and goals to the Community in a way that they can understand and appreciate.
- Credibility with both the public and with the rank & file.
- Communicate to the "troops." Explain why certain decisions are being made. Includes:
 - Face time/show up to briefings
 - Explain reasoning behind actions
 - Follow up with conversations or promises
 - Unite Command Staff; this has a big effect on morale

- Approachable, listens, responds.
- Speaks “with” employees, not “at” employees.
- Is flexible; not locked into one way of doing things.
- Strong Leadership and open to ideas from staff.
- Record of strong leadership; “steering the ship” in one direction and making sure everyone is aligned.
- Someone who treats sworn and non-sworn staff equally.
- Curiosity. Ask lots of questions, wants to learn and understand.
- Ability to delegate to Deputies, good manager, listener.
- Not afraid of technology; can embrace and advance technology when appropriate.
- Firm and courageous.

Question/Comment #3: What are the most important skills and characteristics the new Police Chief should have?

- Experience working in a “big” city.
- Someone who has experience working with City Hall, PD and Community.
- Track record of managing adversity and conflict with Police departments and outside groups and individuals.
- Experience working with non-sworn personnel.
- Experience working with different bureaus within a Police department.
- Holds a holistic perspective and “big picture” view of the Department—how all the pieces intertwine each other.
- Involvement with national/professional organizations—best practices and benchmarking.
- Experience working effectively to promote positive race relations/record of success with diversity issues.
- Record of fair discipline.
- Experience with technology projects. Leveraging technology while maintaining upgrades, maintenance.
- Ability to prioritize budget, projects and competing goals to meet a common and constant vision.
- Strategic thinker—assures there is value tied to the vision and that it is grounded in reality.
- Experience with public-private partnerships—being creative.
- Comes from SJPD.
- A record of coming up through the ranks, with documented accomplishments at each position held.
- A track record of promoting and implementing programs and initiatives—accomplishing them.
- The ability to say no.

Question/Comment #4: Is there anything else you would like the City to consider when selecting the new Police Chief?

- City Manager and Police Chief must have a strong relationship.
- Police Chief should not be run by a higher authority. He/She should have clout and the ability to stand firm for the interests of the department.
- Stand by convictions/ high-ethical standards—does the right thing for the right reasons.
- Needs to be aware of current situation with the budget.
- Needs to develop a proactive media strategy.
- Needs to get up to speed quickly.
- Needs to be able to manage expectations.

- New Police Chief needs to be focused squarely on crime, anti-crime and crime prevention issues.
- The more people and groups involved in the process, and the more they have access to what has been said, the better the chance of success in selecting the new Chief.
- The Police Department workforce wants what's best for the community, and would like the community to know that's what they want.

Question/Comment #5: What are you willing to do or contribute to ensure the success of the new Police Chief?

- Able to help the Chief foster innovation.
- It depends on the message and vision when they arrive. Workforce is willing to step up and fulfill the direction set by the new police Chief.
- The workforce displays and models the characteristics we want in our Chief
- Not be "yes" people, and stand by our convictions as we want the new Chief to do.
- Good customer service and good staff work should take pressure off the new Chief.
- We will do our work effectively to help create time for the Chief to be strategic and innovative.