

POLICE BOARD
CITY OF CHICAGO

STATEMENT BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

October 17, 2022

Good afternoon, Madam Chair and members of the City Council. I am Ghian Foreman, President of the Police Board.

The unprecedented crises that arose in 2020, including the COVID-19 pandemic, protests and civil unrest in the wake of the murder of George Floyd, and higher levels of violent crime in many communities, continue to challenge the people of Chicago and the nation. Progress has been made on several fronts, but much work remains to be done. The members of the Police Board and I believe we can make the most difference by working to further effective police accountability, making our work visible to the public, and providing meaningful opportunities for community input on police-related issues.

The Police Board continues to be fully committed to the goals of the Consent Decree, which include ensuring lawful and constitutional policing and building trust between police officers and the communities they serve. Of the 13 Consent Decree paragraphs the Police Board is responsible for implementing, the Independent Monitor recently found the Board to be in full compliance with 9 and in preliminary compliance with 3 (one paragraph remains under assessment).

The Board strives to build public confidence in the accountability system by serving as an impartial decision maker in the most serious police disciplinary cases, performing this duty with independence and openness. These cases range from highly visible charges

of unjustified police-involved shootings to other less visible, yet still significant, allegations of misconduct. The role of the Board, like that of a court of law, is to undertake a thorough review of the evidence in each case and render a fair, unbiased decision. All disciplinary hearings are open to the public. All decisions are written to explain the Board's reasoning, announced at open meetings, and posted immediately on our website. All members of the public have an opportunity to read the decisions so that they may make an informed judgment of the Board's work.

The Board's monthly public meetings, which are carried live by CAN-TV, provide an important forum for discussion of police-related issues. The Superintendent of Police and the Chief Administrator of the Civilian Office of Police Accountability provide detailed reports each month, and the Board invites a variety of community-based policing experts give presentations. And the communication is not just one-way—significant time is set aside at every meeting for members of the public to raise questions and offer comments. A diverse array of community members speaks at these meetings; we typically have 10 – 15 community members make comments at each meeting, voicing concerns about police conduct and proposing initiatives to address crime. The Board documents and tracks community input, and CPD follows-up and reports back to the Police Board to ensure responsiveness to the community's issues of concern.

We have taken many steps to establish a supportive working relationship with the City's new Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability. I, along with the Police Board Vice President and Executive Director, met with the CCPSA Executive Director shortly after his appointment to introduce ourselves and discuss how the two agencies can work together. He also was invited to appear at one of our public meetings and provided

an overview of the Commission. The two Executive Directors have met several times to discuss administrative issues and share information on a variety of topics to help ensure a smooth beginning to the Commission's work. Commissioners Anthony Driver and Remel Terry gave a presentation at the September Police Board meeting, and we attended the Commission's first public meeting. I am confident that the leadership of the Board and the Commission will focus on how we can best work together toward the common goals of enhancing public safety and accountability.

In submitting the Police Board budget request for 2023, we are mindful of the need to be as efficient as possible. Except for cost-of-living salary increases for the Board's two staff, there are no requested increases for any other account. At this time, we anticipate being able to carry out our responsibilities with no additional resources.

Thank you very much for your consideration of the Board's budget, and I am happy to respond to any questions you have.