

Good morning, Chairman Ervin and members of the Committee. My name is Anthony Driver, Jr., and I am the President of the Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability. When we came before you this time last year, the Community Commission was less than two months old. The Commission's first public meeting was just over a week before our first budget hearing, and District Council members had not yet been elected. One year later, we're in a very different place.

Since the last time we came before you, the Commission led the search for a new police superintendent. We nominated people to fill five vacancies on the Police Board. We set annual goals for the Police Department, COPA, and the Police Board, and we're working now to assess the progress they made in reaching those goals. We reviewed and issued a report on CPD's proposed 2023 budget before the City Council voted on it. We have worked with CPD on important Police Department policies, including the Associations order, which will set clearer rules about the kinds of organizations police officers can associate with and what kinds of activities are prohibited. We also enacted a new CPD policy, which requires that CPD's handling of gang data be governed by General Orders, and says that those General Orders need to be approved by the Commission.

Since our first budget hearing, District Councils have been created in all 22 police districts. District Council members were sworn in in May. They are working to improve policing and public safety in their districts, and they are beginning a process to come together to identify shared interests and shared concerns, which could lead them to take on issues across districts or citywide.

The primary purposes of the Commission and District Councils are to increase public safety and strengthen accountability. The Commission's work on the Superintendent selection process helps show how that can work.

The process involved more public input and community engagement than any superintendent selection in the city's history. The Commission conducted seven community listening sessions in neighborhoods across the city. We held targeted listening sessions with a wide range of organizations. More than 175 business groups, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, labor groups, social services providers, and other organizations were invited to participate in listening sessions, and more than 65 different organizations joined at least one session. We met with the major police unions, including participating in an open forum at the FOP lodge. We also developed several online surveys and received more than 600 responses, including 270 from police officers. We interviewed 34 subject matter experts. Then we took the information we gathered and incorporated it in the selection process. Many of the questions that we asked in interviews with finalists came directly from community members and police officers who participated in the process. And when we evaluated the candidates, we placed a high value on the qualities and characteristics that people had emphasized repeatedly throughout the process.

That process led to the selection of a superintendent who I believe will be a great leader of the Chicago Police Department. That's not just because Superintendent Snelling brings great skills and knowledge to the job. Just as importantly, it's because of the process I just described, and the way that both accountability and collaboration are built into the selection process and built into the oversight system. Superintendent Snelling was nominated because of answers he gave to questions that we received from civilians and police officers

across the city, and criteria that they highlighted. The Commission also has additional tools to make sure that the policies and practices Superintendent Snelling advances are aligned with what he told the Commission throughout the process. The Superintendent is also in a stronger position to succeed because the Commission is required to collaborate with the Superintendent and the department and to incorporate broad community input in key areas like policy-making and goal-setting. Because of the selection process, the powers that the Commission and District Councils have, and the work they are required to do together and with residents across the city, Superintendent Snelling will be accountable to the people of Chicago unlike any police superintendent before him, and he will have more opportunities to collaborate and partner with community than any other police superintendent before him.

That level of engagement and those efforts to strengthen accountability all require a lot of work. The Commission and District Councils are required to hold 276 public meetings every year. With additional special meetings, in a typical year, the Commission and District Councils will probably hold more than 300 public meetings. There is also extensive work that goes into carrying out our other responsibilities—reviewing and drafting policy, reviewing the budget, setting goals and measuring progress on the goals. District Council members also take on many responsibilities outside of their monthly meetings. We rely on a small staff to support all that work. This time last year, we had two people on staff. Today, we have 19. In a few weeks, we will have 23.

The 2024 budget includes five new staff positions. Most of the new positions will focus primarily or entirely on supporting the District Councils. For example, an additional Community Outreach Coordinator and a staff person to support the community engagement and public affairs work will help to ensure broad participation in the work of the District Councils, so that many more Chicagoans are able to help shape public safety, increase accountability, and build more trusting, respectful working relationships between police officers and the people they serve.

The budget will support broad participation in other ways, too. For example, the budget includes money for language access at Commission and District Council meetings. Our goal is to provide translation services for anyone who needs them at any public meeting of the Commission and District Councils.

When the City Council voted to create the Commission and District Councils, you gave the Commission and District Councils an incredibly difficult job. The ordinance says that the purposes of the Commission and District Councils include increasing public safety, strengthening accountability, building trust and improving interactions between the Police Department and the people it serves, encouraging community-based, and evidence-based approaches to public safety, increasing efficiency in the use of public safety resources, and helping to bring the City into compliance with the Consent Decree. That's an ambitious agenda. This budget will help us to advance it.

Thank you. We look forward to your questions.