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City of Cleveland Begins Road to Reform

Mayor Jackson and Chief Williams Outline Initial Steps in Settlement Agreement Process

CLEVELAND – Mayor Frank G. Jackson and Police Chief Calvin D. Williams addressed members of the media today to provide a brief update on the initial steps taken by the City of Cleveland since the announcement of the settlement agreement with the Department of Justice on May 26, 2015. The press conference was the first in a series of updates designed to communicate, transparently, how the city is managing the settlement agreement process on the Road to Reform.

“Working with the community and Department of Justice, we have established a framework for real and sustainable police reform, and we are committed to getting it right,” said Mayor Frank G. Jackson. “The road to reform will take time and we know we won’t get to where we want to be overnight; however, some reforms can and will occur more quickly than others and there will be benchmarks that we are required to meet along the way.”

The first step in the process is to have the settlement agreement approved by United States Northern District of Ohio Court Chief Judge Solomon Oliver. Once the document has been approved, the city will have 90 days to select an independent monitor. That process began when a Request for Information (RFI) was solicited to appropriate parties earlier this March. The city is currently reviewing responses to that RFI.

In addition to the monitor, once the agreement has been approved by Judge Oliver, the city will have 30 days to appoint a selection panel that will then select members of the Cleveland community to serve on the Community Police Commission. This will be done in consultation with the Department of Justice and with participation from City Council as determined by the Council President. The Community Police Commission will be responsible for making policy recommendations to the Division of Police as it relates to community-oriented, bias-free and transparent policing. The Community Police Commission will consist of 13 members reflecting the diversity of the community as well as representation of the police unions.

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“What we are doing is about much more than just police reform,” said Mayor Jackson. “It’s about providing part of the foundation for fundamentally improving the quality of life in our community – just as we are working hard to reform public education in Cleveland, but we can’t do it alone. This is a city-wide effort and we need your support.”

Police Chief Williams then addressed specific reforms that the Division of Police has begun implementing. Those reforms include:

- Community and problem-oriented policing. Provided baseline community policing training to all front-line officers and supervisors.
- Foot patrols throughout summer in all Cleveland neighborhoods.
- Bias-free policing based on recommendations from the Community Police Commission.
- Changes to the use of force and searches and seizures policy.
- Crisis intervention training.
- Accountability. New system (IAPro) in place to track and record complaints against members of the Division of Police.

After listing some of the reforms the Division has begun implementing, Chief William’s spoke on the need to change the philosophy and mentality in the Cleveland Division of Police from that of a Warrior community to a Guardian community. ([Read the 2015 Harvard Kennedy School of Criminal Justice study: *From Warriors to Guardians: Recommitting American Police Culture to Democratic Ideals* here](#)).

“In the past, our training has been along the lines of a warrior mentality,” said Chief Williams. “Police have been trained to go out into neighborhoods and perform as if they are a member of the military. We have changed that philosophy in the Division of Police from a warrior community to a guardian community. To be a guardian, you have to focus on community policing – you have to know your community, you have to care about your community, you have to be engaged with your community. We started that process of shifting mentality and philosophy last year, our training staff now instills in all new cadets the idea that police are guardians and a part of this community.”

View the press conference from Wednesday, June 10, 2015 in its entirety here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SjocvcVWb88&feature=youtu.be>

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