

Suggested Interview Questions for Citizen Input on the Purpose Statement

Intent: The Town of Bennington has put together a Task Force to establish a permanent Community Police Oversight Committee. We believe that the police function more effectively with strong community relationships, trust, cooperation, and a shared sense of responsibility for public safety. This Community Oversight Committee is intended to be a bridge between the Town and its police force. It is also intended to provide accountability and put a clear process in place to be able to receive and follow-up on complaints, if needed. We feel it is critical to hear from the Community, especially folks who may have had interactions with police, before we begin putting pen to paper. All answers are confidential.

Questions:

1. The Police

- ∞ The police are civil servants. Their job is to enforce the law and keep our community safe. In what ways do you think the police do a great job in Bennington?
- ∞ What aspects of the police concern you?
- ∞ Do you feel there are groups of people that are treated differently by the police?

2. Complaints

- ∞ Tell me what you know about making a complaint against the police?
- ∞ What would be important to you when making a complaint (anonymity, follow through, no retaliation etc)?
- ∞ How would you feel your complaint was resolved?

3. Community Relations

- ∞ Would you like to see a more visible police force?
- ∞ If yes, where would you like to see police? (ex: schools, biking around, etc)
- ∞ What can the police and this oversight committee do to build trust with the public and allow police to be more effective in their jobs?

QUESTION/INQUIRY:

- ∞ To assure citizens are treated equally when lodging a complaint (and also for stops/arrests) , can demographic information be collected on a voluntary basis provided by the person, not recorded based on the officers' assumption?

∞ Is the agency able to monitor complaints so as to identify patterns that may reflect disproportionate racial impacts associated with particular strategies, tactics, organizational units, or neighborhoods?