

Draft V. 7.1 : the Composition of the Safety & Equity Board: New Input for Taskforce to discuss

Expected Attributes of Board Members

- a high level of objectivity - impartial decision making
- ability to think in balanced, unbiased ways
- able and willing to function independently of influences outside of the board itself.
- a strong commitment to strengthening police-community relationships
- a readiness to help community members be heard
- demonstrated experience maintaining confidentiality
- a willingness to learn
- communicates effectively (listening as well as speaking)

Qualifications:

- A resident in the town of Bennington or a strong, long time relationship with the Town of Bennington
 - Promotion of application will include an invitation like this. “If you would like to serve on the board and need an interpreter, translation services, reasonable accommodations or other supports, contact [a specific person at a specific phone number].”
 - Completion of initial training below before service on the board begins
 - Readiness to meet at least once a month, and carry out other needed work.
 - Active members of our police force and officers of the town government will not serve on the board until 4 years after their service is completed.
 - Person with current or active legal charges or presently serving time will not serve on the board.
 - **Appointees must** attend 75 % of the meetings of the board (in person or by zoom).
- Three unexcused absences in a year will be considered as resigning.

Seek a diversity in the group’s members by

Age	Gender - Sexual Identity
Ethnicity and Race	Socio-economic Status
Education (formal and informal)	

Seek Awareness, Experience, and/or Training-Practice in the following:

- Behavioral Health • Mental Health,
 - Substance Use Disorder • Domestic Violence
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- Skill to review reports and identify trends that will inform board recommendations to, and work with the BPD, and/or skills with data and statistical analysis
 - Mediation and conflict resolution experience
 - Experience with restorative justice
 - Knowledge of the law - judicial system
 - Experiences with policing both positive and negative
 - Experience with the criminal justice system
 - Experience with discrimination, unequal treatment, or preferential treatment

Promotion: Application for membership on the board will be widely promoted and the Select Board will make appointments.

Number of members: 7 members with a quorum of 4

Term Length and Limits: initial members will be appointed for 2 or 3 year terms to allow for rotating appointments. Future appointments will be for 3 years or to complete the term of a person they are replacing. No one may serve more than 6 years consecutively. After three years not serving, a person may be reappointed.

No more than three OR None of the members of the taskforce may be appointed to the initial board. (*Diverse thoughts in the sub-committee about whether to have any members of the taskforce on the board. Concern to not have some members more familiar with the system and having undue influence.*)

The Select Board will require references for applicants to verify attributes of applicants and their experience, training and practice in preferred areas.

Training of board members:

Initial Training

- how the board functions: reviewing completed internal and external complaints and reporting conclusions to the community through the Select Board, developing* and reviewing BPD policies, recommending police training, and community collaboration, supervising the gathering and analysis of data.

** (Members of the subcommittee have differing opinions about whether the board should be writing the policies. Taskforce needs to decide this. Or maybe the Select Board has already has determined this.)*

- open meeting laws
- the elements of a thorough investigation including a review of actual case files from a closed investigation
- all current BPD policies and procedures
- current resources available to the BPD. (*Sub committee is not sure what these are.*)
- review of confidentiality
- structure and operation of the local and regional police
- basic understanding of the collective bargaining agreement and its parameters

Ongoing training: Each member will participate in

-one four-hour ride-along experience per quarter to better understand the work of the BPD

-at least one training with members of the police force a year for the purpose of evaluating the training experience

-training in other areas recommended by the board, or the chief of police, or other regulatory or legislative agencies

Removal: a person may be removed from membership by a majority vote of the board if they no longer meet the expectations and qualifications of membership.

Vacancies before expiration of term. If a seat on the board becomes vacant, it shall be filled in accordance with the procedure outlined above in this ordinance. The appointee who fills the vacancy will serve the remainder of the term of the person whose seat they are filling,

Compensation: Members of the board shall be compensated at the same rate as Select Board members.

Resource people

Our sub-committee did not prefer to have non-members (from the police or agencies) as regular participants in deliberations on complaints.

The board may request outside help through a town staff member to address areas of concern or to understand issues and options for addressing them.

Sarabeth, Clark, Ben & Marsh Rev. 11.30.21 and on 12.7.21