



April 25, 2021

Fairfax City Council

RE: Questions for Police Chief Candidates

VIA EMAIL

Dear Fairfax City Council:

SURJ (Showing Up for Racial Justice) Marin mobilizes, organizes and educates white people and brings them into the broader multi-racial movement for racial justice. We are very encouraged by your request for input from the public for questions to ask candidates for the Fairfax Police Chief. Many other jurisdictions in Marin County have hired new Chiefs with opaque and therefore questionable processes which did not include meaningful input from communities of color. We are well aware that people of color are overpoliced in Marin and throughout the country, and we feel that it is essential that your new Chief is accountable to the concerns of the BIPOC community.

SURJ Marin has developed these ten questions for your candidates by referring to the platform of the Movement For Black Lives and after input from many BIPOC leaders in the county. We strongly encourage you to consider them to include the concerns of people of color in your process.

The Questions For Police Chief Candidates

1. What will you do to help people who you do not perceive as white who may feel unwelcome and unsafe as residents/visitors to feel assured/confident that they are equally treated and protected under the law in Fairfax as their white counterparts?
2. Do you have experience including community (including Black and non-white immigrants) in developing policy that impacts that community? Can you give us an example?
3. What is your position/view on the use of military equipment for policing in this town?
4. What is your definition of public safety?
5. Do you have experience investigating alleged hate crimes against people of protected classes (including Black and non-white immigrants)? If not, will you and your department

support training on how to investigate hate crimes if one has not been provided in the past? If you have experience with this, please share what you learned.

6. What's your position on qualified immunity and why?
7. Do you support the use of law enforcement funds to hire mental health or similar non-law enforcement professionals to assist and support in de-escalation strategies/tactics in lieu of standard arrests for minor infractions, disturbances and disputes? Why?
8. Are you open to have a series of training workshops focusing on diversity, engagement, accountability and reform, taught by professional people of color in the industry?
9. What can you do upon taking office (immediately) to engage youth in social issues from the very beginning of your term?
10. What programs (especially low-cost programs) have you started which connect with and empower youth in your community? Were they effective? Why?

Thank you for your consideration.

SURJ Marin Policy Committee
info@surjmarin.org

From: Katherine Fink [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:27 PM
To: Michele Gardner <mgardner@townoffairfax.org>
Subject: On the Subject of Hiring Police Chief in Fairfax

Town Council of Fairfax:

My name is Kaytee Fink. I lived in Fairfax for over 5 years previous to moving this fall, and still work and practice in Marin. Over the years I have been lucky to have spent a lot of quality time in the town of Fairfax and appreciate the small town community and camaraderie that I have experienced here. I have had very few interactions with the Fairfax PD. I feel it is important to say I am a white woman, have always been housed, employed, have never struggled with Chemical dependency, and have not struggled with long term mental/physical pain/trauma/instability. It's my opinion that these privileges inherently decrease my potentiality of interacting with police/interventionists in a community. It is also my opinion that these same components are essential to consider when thinking about and addressing Public Safety for any community.

That said, we are living in a time where there is an increased need to reimagine public safety at large. It is significant that the Council has opened up increased transparency for the process of hiring it's next Police Chief, and I wanted to take an opportunity to voice my opinion and concern that we are avoiding a larger conversation around Fiscal Responsibility, Racial Equity and Inclusion, Trauma informed Reconciliation/Non Violent interventions and Access to Mental and Social Services.

Firstly, we need to be vigorous and more efficient with funding. I understand that the Police Budget is the largest allotted amount in the town's budget. Are there ways for the Council/ the Police Chief to advocate the reallocation of some of the Police Budget to contribute to other Social Services or Mental Health support? Perhaps there is an opportunity for the Police Department in Fairfax to align with the Central Marin PD, and keep the Police Department office to serve as a Social Service/Mental Health Support Center. These are just two possible examples of the ways we can develop and reimagine how Public Safety could support everyone in the community and not just the white majority. I am hopeful that Fairfax will stand as a leader to the neighboring cities as to what the future of Policing could look like.

I am also impassioned to remove guns from all Police. I do not think there are any circumstances where deploying a gun is appropriate. Now more than ever it is essential to advocate basic Martial Art/ Self Defense Training/ De-escalation Strategies/ Active Conflict Resolution/ Restorative Justice Processes --- as a community we need to create a climate where conflict is resolvable without violence. How else do we expect the occurrence of violence to decrease without modelling behaviors that would support learning new strategies of resolving conflict without it. I beg the council to consider this. Some questions for the incoming Police Chief are: What is the Officers position on non violent Policing? How willing are they to send officers out in the town unarmed. We

need to get guns out of the hands of police and really consider the reasons Police would feel that being unarmed is a stripping of privilege, increasing vulnerability of the Officer or simply completely unsafe. This may be the exact set of somatic experiences that people pulled over by Police for a traffic violation have and may be the exact reason people would be inclined to have a gun on hand themselves This is trauma talking. This is PTSD talking. These are the very subjects we must lean into as a general public, and should ask to be a required part of the training of individuals entering into a Police Department in order to avoid unconscious triggers, address implicit bias, and prevent unjust harassment/ the unconscious perpetuating of trauma and as we saw in Minneapolis, death.

I welcome continual dialogue with the Town Council. I appreciate the dedication of the Council to increase community inclusion and racial equity initiatives. I support the ongoing work of any town Council to develop and maintain core values that align with the continually evolving needs presented by the community it serves. I see this as one of the paramount purposes of city/town government.

Thank you for your dedication and continued service.

Warm regards,
Kaytee Fink (she/her/hers)



www.LivingTreeMassageTherapy.com

From: Alison Hamburg
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 6:08 PM
To: Michele Gardner <mgardner@townoffairfax.org>
Subject: Fairfax Police Chief Priorities

Town Council of Fairfax:

My name is Alison Hamburg. I am currently a resident of Fairfax, having recently moved here from Oakland. I grew up with family members in Fairfax. I chose to move to Fairfax because of my desire to live in a smaller town with a reputation for progressive values.

I appreciate the dedication of the Town Council to increase community inclusion and racial equity initiatives. I support the ongoing work of any town Council to develop and maintain core values that align with the continually evolving needs presented by the community it serves. I see this as one of the paramount purposes of city/town government.

In light of the current context of police violence in our country as a whole, we are living in a time where there is an increased need to reimagine public safety at large. It is significant that the Council has opened up increased transparency for the process of hiring it's next Police Chief, and I wanted to take an opportunity to voice my opinion, concerns, and hopes for the future direction of Public Safety as we need to reimagine it includes and supports everyone and not just the white majority. I am hopeful that Fairfax will stand as a leader to the neighboring cities as to what the future of Policing could look like.

I am hopeful that the new Police Chief in the Town of Fairfax will hold a chief priority for racial justice and will advocate for limiting, not expanding, the role of police, and limiting, not expanding, the police budget. I would like to say I am proud to live in Fairfax because our town is at the forefront of reimagining police and public safety.

A few questions that I would like to pose for the oncoming Police Chief are:

- Are you willing to discuss alternatives to armed Policing?
- What are alternative police practices and/or alternative service models to support Public Safety in the Town of Fairfax?
- How will you grow Fairfax's capacity to respond to mental health crises with trained service workers without weapons or violence?

Thank you,

Alison Hamburg

From: Linda Higgins [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2021 2:49 PM
To: Michele Gardner <mgardner@townoffairfax.org>
Subject: New police chief

My name is Linda Higgins. I live in Tiburon, California.

Over the years I have been lucky to have spent some time in the town of Fairfax and appreciate the small town community and camaraderie that I experienced there.

RACIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION:

- What will you do to help Black and Brown people, and others that are not perceived as white, who may feel unwelcome and unsafe as residents/visitors to feel assured/confident that they are equally treated and protected under the law in Fairfax as their white counterparts?
- Do you have experience including community in developing policy that impacts that community? Can you give us an example?
- Do you have experience investigating alleged hate crimes against people of protected classes (including Black and non-white immigrants)? If not, will you and your department support training on how to investigate hate crimes if one has not been provided in the past?
- What's your position on qualified immunity?
- Do you support the use of law enforcement funds to hire mental health or similar non-law enforcement professionals to assist and support in de-escalation strategies/tactics in lieu of standard arrests for minor infractions, disturbances and disputes?
- Are you open to have a series of training workshops focusing on diversity, engagement, accountability and reform, taught by professional people of color in the industry?

NON VIOLENT POLICING:

- Are you willing to discuss alternatives to armed Policing?
- What is your stance on requiring Officers to train in and use deescalation practices?
- What are your strategies to address implicit bias in the Fairfax Police Department?
- How would you plan to make Fairfax a city with a police department without weapons?
- How will you grow Fairfax's capacity to respond to mental health crises with trained service workers without weapons or violence?

INCLUSION OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES:

- Do you see a path toward including greater mental health services as part of promoting Public Safety?
- What would the future of the Fairfax Police Department look like if there were non-police mental health service providers available to respond to Mental Health emergencies?
- How supportive are you of requiring mental health service training for officers?
- What other services can you envision that would support the community that are outside the formal training and development of Police Officers?

From: Mary Morgan [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, April 12, 2021 12:21 PM

To: Michele Gardner <mgardner@townoffairfax.org>; Bruce Ackerman <backerman@townoffairfax.org>; Chance Cutrano <ccutrano@townoffairfax.org>; Stephanie Hellman <shellman@townoffairfax.org>; Renee Goddard <rgoddard@townoffairfax.org>; Barbara Coler <bcoler@townoffairfax.org>

Subject: Selection of Fairfax Police Chief

Town Council of Fairfax:

My name is Mary Morgan. I am a resident of Point Reyes Station. I drive through and/or shop in Fairfax on a weekly basis.

I really appreciate the action of the Town Council to increase transparency in the process of hiring its next Police Chief. But transparency in the process is not enough. The Police Chief and law enforcement must be accountable to the citizens. There must be ways for citizens to participate in the reimagining of public safety and how the Fairfax budget is allocated between law enforcement and more holistic notions of public safety that include mental health and other services.

A few questions that I would like to pose for the oncoming Police Chief are:

- What will you do to help Black and Brown people, and others that are not perceived as white, who may feel unwelcome and unsafe as residents/visitors, to feel confident that they will be treated equally as their white counterparts?
- How will you grow Fairfax's capacity to respond to mental health crises with trained service workers without weapons or violence?
- What are alternative police practices and/or alternative service models to support Public Safety in the Town of Fairfax?

Thank you for your dedication and continued service.

Mary C. Morgan

From: Jonathan Knight [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2021 12:36 PM
To: Michele Gardner <mgardner@townoffairfax.org>
Subject: Fairfax's next Police Chief

Hello Ms. Gardner,

I am a Fairfax neighbor from San Anselmo, and I spend a lot of time in Fairfax. I'm writing because I am encouraged by the town opening up the process of hiring a new Police Chief. This is a crucial decision that will impact this whole community, but none more than our BIPOC neighbors.

I have been very impressed with how Fairfax has been approaching racial equity as a town and this is an opportunity to continue this work. Who ever the new chief is, they should be open to and enthusiastic about redefining public safety. I know that Fairfax prides itself on having 24 hour on duty police, but how amazing would it be to have 24 hour mental health crisis managers as well. How many late night calls could be best handled by people trained in providing aid to people experiencing mental distress, including substance abuse causes. I hope that as a wider community, in the Fairfax/San Anselmo area as well as the whole county, we can move away from using force and incarceration as the response to every situation.

Most of all, our BIPOC neighbors have many specific demands on how to make public safety be about safety and not policing. Please put these voices front and center in your work to find new leadership in Fairfax Police.

Thank You!

Jonathan Knight

From: Kristi Denham [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2021 12:08 PM
To: Michele Gardner <mgardner@townoffairfax.org>
Subject: At large community member in choosing police

Dear Michelle,

I lived in Fairfax while raising my two sons who are biracial. They experienced racism in the public schools and in the parks although, luckily, they never had any encounters with the police. We loved living there and missed it when we had to move away but now I am back in Marin and very interested in your upcoming decision on a new police chief.

I participated as a member-at-large in choosing a new police officer in the City of Belmont in San Mateo County while I lived there and very much appreciate that your town has chosen to open your process to the community.

Racial equity and justice issues are extremely important to me so I do hope that will be a high priority in your decision making process coming up. I have completed the survey.

In my many years in Marin I saw Mental Health issues rising especially among young people and my sons lost several friends over the years to self medicating overdoses. I am hoping that Fairfax will divert some of its funds not only to racial equity work but also to mental health services.

Police should be highly trained to know when a situation does not require the force of fear and a gun but the wisdom and experience of mental health and social workers.

Thank you in advance for adding these concerns to your evaluations in this process.

Warmly,
Rev. Kristi Denham
[REDACTED]
Novato, CA. 94945
[REDACTED]