

CPC
Recommended
Improvements
to the 2017
Police
Accountability
Ordinance

Joel C. Merkel, Jr.

Co-Chair

Seattle Community Police
Commission

Dr. Cali Ellis

Interim Executive Director

Seattle Community Police
Commission

June 13, 2023

Seattle City Council

Public Safety Human Services
Committee

Seattle
Community
Police Commission



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Seattle Community Police Commission



- Established by MOU in July 2012 pursuant to the USDOJ & City of Seattle Consent Decree
- Originally comprised of 15 members of the community
- Made permanent and independent by 2017 Police Accountability Ordinance
 - City Ordinance 125315, signed into law on June 1, 2017
- Increased size of the Commission from 15 to 21 members

Seattle Community Police Commission



Structure



21 Commissioners

Three appointing
authorities: Mayor,
City Council, CPC
Each appointee must
be confirmed by City
Council
Three year terms



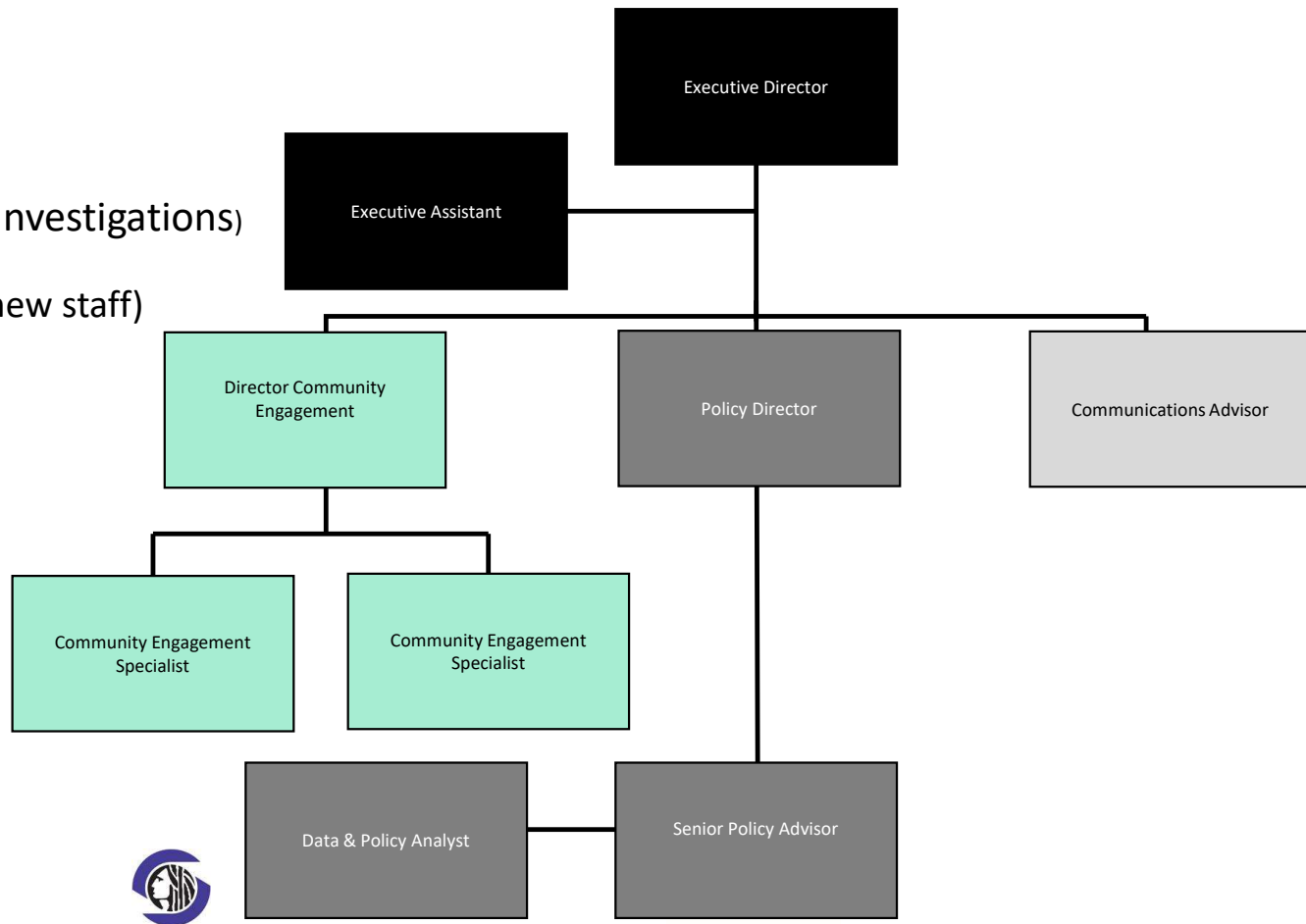
Staff



Executive Director
Policy
Community
Engagement
Communications

CPC is the Smallest of the Oversight Partners

- **CPC:** 9 FTE
- **OPA:** ~28 (14 in investigations)
- **OIG:** ~21 (hiring new staff)



Seattle Community Police Commission



Seattle Community Police Commission

Section
3.29.01

2017 Police
Accountability
Ordinance

CPC's Mission:

“to help ensure public confidence in the ... responsiveness of the police accountability system to public concerns by engaging the community to develop recommendations on the police accountability system and provide a community-based perspective on law enforcement related policies, practices, and services affecting public trust; all for the purpose of ensuring constitutional, accountable, effective, and respectful policing.”



Seattle Community Police Commission

New Co-Chairs elected June, 2022

- Joel C. Merkel, Jr.
- Rev. Patricia Hunter
- Rev. Harriet Walden



Seattle Community Police Commission

Engagement on Ordinance Revisions – beginning in August 2022

- Co-Charing the Commission
- Supervising the Executive Director
- Engaging with Community and Accountability Partners
- Prior Co-chairs
- Prior Commissioners
- Other City Commissions
- Mayor’s Office
- Monitor’s Office
- Public Commission Discussion and Unanimous vote – May 3, 2023



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Recommended Ordinance Improvements

Proposed Change

Establish a new FTE position of “Deputy Director” within the CPC staff

- Executive Director may delegate responsibilities to the Deputy Director
- Enable the Commission and Executive Director to better serve the Community
- Bring CPC into parity with OPA and OIG (both have Deputy Director Positions)



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Recommended Ordinance Improvements

Proposed Change

Establish qualifications for the CPC Executive Director

- Current Ordinance is silent on CPC Executive Director Qualifications
- Bring CPC into parity with OPA and OIG (both have Executive Director minimum qualifications)



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Recommended Ordinance Improvements

Proposed Change

Improve the Process for Removing an Executive Director

- Current process creates tension with Co-chairs responsibility as the E.D.'s supervisor and increases the likelihood that private HR matters are discussed in public
- Proposed process allows the E.D. to be heard before Commissioners, and a Commissioner objecting to removal may request a public vote



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Recommended Ordinance Improvements

Proposed Change

Return the size of the Commission from 21 to 15

- In 2012, Ordinance 124021 established CPC with 15 members
- In 2017, City Council expanded the CPC to 21 members



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Recommended Ordinance Improvements

Proposed Change

Clarify CPC authority to remove Commissioners “for cause”

- “For cause” is defined in CPC bylaws
- Improves CPC independence by clarifying that CPC may remove CPC appointed Commissioners without confirmation from City Council



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Recommended Ordinance Improvements

Proposed Change

Clarifying CPC's mission

- **Remove** from current law that CPC shall ensure "*public confidence in the effectiveness and professionalism of SPD.*"



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Recommended Ordinance Improvements

Proposed Change

Removing Council District Assignment for Commissioners

- This responsibility is beyond what volunteer commissioners can do
- Community engagement on policing should focus on communities impacted by policing, not geographic or political boundary lines



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Recommended Ordinance Improvements

Proposed Change

Commissioner Stipends

- City Ordinance 124543 (2014) authorized monthly stipends to be paid to CPC Commissioners
- Proposed change connects payment of stipends to participation in CPC work
- Proposed change creates a Co-Chair stipend



Community Police Commission

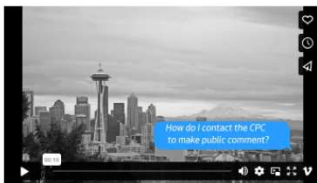
About Us Our Work Take Action News Meetings Community Engagement

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Community Police Commission website. The header includes navigation links: About Us, Our Work, Take Action, News, Meetings, and Community Engagement. The main content area features a large blue banner with a city skyline and the text "Community Engagement". Below this, there is a "Join the CPC" button and a "Recommendation Tracker" button. A sidebar on the right contains a calendar for June 21st, a "Contact Us" section with phone, email, and address information, and a "Follow Us" section with social media icons. A "Popular Pages" section lists: 1. CPC Updates, 2. Recommendations Tracker, 3. Police Accountability Tracker, 4. CPC Community Engagement, and 5. Join the CPC.

Learn More about the CPC

- <https://www.seattle.gov/community-police-commission>

Meet Our Community Engagement Team



Recent CPC Activity



The screenshot shows a Twitter thread from Seattle CPC (@SeaCPC). The top tweet, dated June 7, features a photo of CPC staffer Mergitu Argo and text: "CPC staffer Mergitu Argo joined thousands of Americans across the U.S. who showed up in orange June 2-4 to build community to end gun violence. #WearOrange". Below this is a tweet from June 7 about the African American Community Advisory Council, mentioning Rev. Harriet Walden and Bessie Scott. The bottom tweet, dated June 1, shows a photo of the African American Community Advisory Council members.