

ACPCR
Facilitated Meeting Report

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Submitted By: David Gold

Meeting Date/Time: April 29, 2015

Meeting Location: United Way – The Network

Facilitator: David Gold

Co-facilitator: Kathleen Oweegon

ADR/Support Staff: Tyson Hummell

Stakeholders and Participants:

Lynne, Jane, Connie, Red, Maya, Clement, Valerie, Christine, Lisa, Claudia, Eli, Chrystal, Maria, Alice, Maribel, Jen, Cecily

Meeting Summary: The meeting was a private meeting held by The Network. From their mission statement: The Network is an inclusive, multidisciplinary collaboration of providers and organizations dedicated to strengthening services and interagency response to reduce the incidence of sexual assault and domestic violence in local and tribal communities in New Mexico.

The meeting began with presentations by three APD sergeants who were supervisors of their specialized teams. *(See summary of their presentations in the Relevant Comments or Narrative section at the end of this report)*

The overall tone of the conversation was mutually respectful. The two APD sergeants in this group were sympathetic to the concerns of the other participants. At times they explained the reasons for APD policy to the other participants.

Strong feelings were expressed about:

- The great need for mutual respect and trust. These themes were repeated throughout the dialogue. In addition:
 - Participants were especially concerned about immigrants, and other members of marginalized communities.
 - The need for better training was stressed.
- The need for demilitarization of APD.
- Greater collaboration between APD and the community.
- Education, on both sides. APD needs to understand the sensitivities of the community. The community needs to understand the reasons for APD policies.
- Officers need to show up for hearings, otherwise perpetrators may go free.

5 Core Topics:

- I. “What are your goals and expectations for Police / Community relations in Albuquerque?” and**
- a. Why are these goals and expectations important to you (what experiences, values, beliefs, feelings influence your goals)?**
- 1) **Collaboration**
 - a. Collaborative – this is a step in that direction – especially in mental illness, police need more training
 - b. More collaboration between agencies to improve response, respect & professionalism
 - c. Collaboration & respect in regard to education of officers – training enactment & attendance of officers when trainings are set up
 - 2) **Trust**
 - a. Clients have trust that officers that are investigating will be there with them in court and can be relied on to be with them throughout
 - b. More transparency – databases, get the bad cops out
 - 3) **Communication**
 - a. A participant who works with homeless individuals stated that dialogue between social services field & law enforcement is so important & can change perspectives.
 - i. Community & police should see both sides of the situation.
 - ii. Recognize that law enforcement is trying to do their jobs as best they can, as do those who work with homeless.
 - iii. Really listen to each other.
 - b. Each officer should be trained in people skills and recognize that not everyone is a criminal. Not condescending – change language & interaction
 - c. Respect & communication – language access – e.g. trained to access translation programs etc., cultural sensitivity – clients won’t work with law enforcement because of their negative experiences in their counties of origin.
 - d. Police are community members too.
 - i. There needs to be mutual trust.
 - ii. Casual interactions in community have changed from friendly to hostile (ex: in restaurants).
 - iii. Officers need to greet people in a friendly way, even if that person is unfriendly. Citizens need to practice that too.
 - 4) **Respect**
 - a. Trust, professionalism, respect
 - b. When officers arrest students, it is done disrespectfully – need retraining on how to work with criminal youth at schools
 - c. Respectful treatment of victims, so they don’t feel treated as criminals – need retraining and change of mentality – APD as a whole
 - d. Really respect clients [homeless individuals], but officers in the “war zone” (International District) don’t.

- e. Collaborative in the sense of respect - not so military, more friendly.
 - i. Participant understands that the officers have to assure their own safety along with everyone else's.

5) **Training**

- a. Multi-lingual education
- b. Police need to understand that many in the immigrant community already have fear of police because of the countries they come from.
 - i. Often, that and their domestic violence (DV) situation inhibit them from interaction with police.
 - ii. Officers need to be trained on DV and why a victim stays and may even protect their perpetrator.
- c. Better communication & training, especially of younger officers, to treat people with respect & non-judgment

6) **Demilitarization**

- a. Demilitarize APD in such a way that they don't see people as threats and treat them that way. – Enforce law
- b. Move from militarized model to community model, better training in working with mental illness

II. “What are your goals and expectations for Police / Community interactions in Albuquerque?” and

- a. **Why are these goals and expectations important to you (what experiences, values, beliefs, feelings influence your goals)?**

1) **Communication & Attitude**

- a. More respectful interactions, helpful attitudes, “police are your friend” attitude.
- b. Kids are afraid of police – needs to be turned around
- c. Open interactions (ex: officers providing their cell #) really help victims feel supported.
 - i. Open fluid interactions.
- d. When participant observes interactions with police & community, she feels the need to stop & watch to make sure things are being done properly.
 - i. Doesn't like the feeling of policing the police.
- e. Police were once called peace officers; should have latitude to do more than just enforce the law – move beyond that mandate.
- f. Concerned about officers approaching car with hand on gun. Fear they will be shot if they move the wrong way. End fear & violent based interactions. Have their fear, even though Caucasians, imagine what people of color feel.
- g. Kids get arrested in school for situations that are more about misbehavior than actual crime.
 - i. Kids get arrested without being asked what happened.
 - ii. They should be treated with respect & belief in what they say.

- iii. Training should be improved in this area.
- h. Interactions need to be more informed – citizens should know more about what their rights are.
 - i. Officers need to acknowledge what citizens rights are without using intimidation tactics
- i. More open communication, understanding what service providers do.
 - i. Law enforcement deals with perpetrators; services providers with victims – perspectives are different, yet interaction can be improved so perspectives expand along with collaboration
- j. Police need to follow-up after giving victims the DV packet.
- k. Officers should have mandatory lapel cameras – we all act better in front of a camera.
 - i. Filmed interactions should also be part of officers’ review process. Random interactions could be the used.
- l. Officers need to be more empathetic & more accountable, including for not turning on their cameras.
 - i. Ex: Participant’s brother-in-law in CA was with State Police. Participant feared him because of his role. Participant works with DV, homeless, mentally ill. Had brother-in-law come with her on her job. It was a huge eye-opener for him. Both learned from that. – Fear & judgment were eliminated by that experience.
- m. Respectful approach & de-escalation tactics, rather than escalation tactics.
 - i. Participant understands officers go into high-stress situations where they are treated disrespectfully; they should be even more calm & respectful in those situations to deescalate.
 - ii. Recognize high stress levels and burnout.
 - It would be great if professional peers would let them know when they observe that in each other.
- n. Immigrant population has a different perspective, background, etc. Participant was raised to fear police.
 - i. As adult, sees things differently.
- o. Respect goes a long way.
 - i. Participant was raised to have fear of police because of her skin color.
 - ii. Officers should be more respectful, less demanding, when trying to get the story.
 - iii. Participant was told by an officer that the lapel camera film will be erased.
- p. Sergeant would love it if people would come up to her and talk to her like a person, even if to complain.

2) Education

- a. Regarding education – we all need to know our rights.
- b. Make people aware of their rights before they get in trouble.

- c. Communication as to why officers do some of the things they do. (Ex: methods of approaching vehicle, formations, responses, etc.)
 - i. Tactics officers are trained to use does not excuse unprofessionalism
- d. Detective clarified that she would explain to people why they're doing what they do, and it helped.
 - i. Empathy and communication are vital.
 - ii. As a supervisor, she holds people accountable for their actions.
 - iii. Inexcusable to not turn on lapel cameras or to erase it.
 - iv. People need to understand that lapel technology is imperfect, but that's not an excuse to not use the cameras.
- e. DV victims are often the ones arrested. Both as a training issue and as a protocol, this needs to be addressed.
 - i. There are unintended consequences such as child custody issues.
- f. Sergeant: We do need training. DOJ report was great because it got us more training.

3) **Accountability**

- a. Accountability from community & from police officers – do what you're supposed to do to support safety, communication, respect etc. – both sides.
 - i. Drop the defensive attitude; be accountable.
 - ii. What can a person say or do to inspire an officer to behave in an accountable way, or report if they aren't?
 - iii. How do we let someone know when we feel we have been treated wrong?

4) **Other**

- a. Supplement B certified signer in APD for I-918 new U-visa approval for DV victims or sexual assault.
- b. Officers should not wear guns in trainings & other non-policing situations, such as community meetings, & when off duty.
 - i. Officers' response: We're always on duty. We try to be subtle when carrying, but you never know what will happen. Sworn to protect 24/7.
- c. Do police have to run a warrant check on every person they come in contact with?
 - i. Is there a way that they could not do that in DV situations each & every time?
- d. Citizen feels this [ACPCR] is just a PR effort for Chief & Mayor.
 - i. People want acknowledgement of harm.
 - ii. It would go along way for the Mayor & Chief to acknowledge mistakes and ramifications.

III. **“How do you think your goals can best be achieved?”**

1) **Communication**

- a. Sergeant: Supervisors do what they can as supervisors to bring community information back to teams & encourage them to hear the community
 - i. As a department, we must be willing to change. I work toward change with the people that work for me.
 - ii. Sergeants have the hardest & best jobs.
 - iii. Will take back to team what she heard today.
 - The request for empathy is especially important in the sex crimes division.
 - Treat people with respect regardless of their profession.
 - iv. It starts with the supervisors, lead by example, attend community meetings, and above all listen to what the community is saying.
- b. Open & keep open lines of communications between APD & the community.
 - i. Community needs clarification about where to go for what kind of law enforcement.
 - ii. Regular, ongoing dialogues
- c. The Mayor and Rob Perry are unapproachable.
 - i. Approachability is vital to end the “them vs us” mentality.
 - ii. Positive changes must come from top down.
 - iii. Administration should be approachable, should provide support training
- d. Hearing from our officers is so critical to understanding.
- e. Face-to-face interactions, even small gestures from both sides to reach out and connect as people & increase understanding
- f. Transparency – including tactics, mistakes, brutality, etc.
- g. Citizens engage officers in conversation.
- h. Face-to-face communication & training are so important.
- i. Only 10% of the time will an officer return a phone call.

2) **Accountability**

- a. Officers should understand that it starts with them.
- b. CABQ administration has failed us in many ways – e.g. not helping the community, officer moral, CABQ administration taking responsibility.
- c. Law enforcement officers should model policy

3) **Other Needs**

- a. Increase coordination & collaboration between all agencies – especially, but not exclusively law enforcement agencies.
- b. Movement toward positive change without necessitating outside influence such as DOJ.
 - i. We need to deal with our deeply rooted issues.
 - ii. These discussions are vital.

- c. If we keep equipping our officers like soldiers, they will act like soldiers. This must change.
- d. End the philosophy of retribution – police toward tough-acting citizens
- e. Increased staffing.
- f. APD should have a culture shift of connecting pay & promotion with longevity, training, etc.
- g. Create a culture of de-isolation between officers & community
- h. Does APD have a watch-list for officers who may be violators?
 - i. Sergeant says yes – it is highly scrutinized by many different eyes within APD – they are held accountable.
 - ii. The person who investigates will be someone 1 rank above the officer of concern.
- i. Lawyers & judges need on be educated on DV too.

IV. “What are your specific suggestions or ideas?”

1) Education

- a. Officers should train the community through agencies, events & documents, PR – Enqueentro, Encantor (rights of community).
 - i. Example: Why officers walk through people’s homes when they first arrive. Initial interactions affect everything from that point on.
 - ii. Explain to the immigrant community why they do what they do in the way they do it, along with training on how to respond to police.
 - Would build trust. The “What to do When You’re Pulled Over” pamphlet is a great example of this.
 - These kinds of docs need to be in Spanish too.
- b. Training for residents as well as officers.
- c. Cross-training: When you do “hands-on” work how you do it is critical.
- d. Training for law enforcement on:
 - i. Self-care – preventing burnout
 - ii. Cultural sensitivity training,
 - iii. Empathy training
 - iv. Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) – Law enforcement training – no APD have ever attended
- e. Professional development for officers, a culture of welcoming training
- f. There needs to be a culture shift within APD leadership regarding training from others outside law enforcement.
- g. Find national funders to provide police training.
 - i. ABQ is in a great position to model this, by writing a proposal for training – including cross-cultural.
 - ii. Congressional office does national funding & might be a resource

2) **Officers Need to Show Up For Hearings**

- a. 90% of the time, officers don't show up for hearings.
 - i. Advocates have to prepare for 2 different scenarios – one for if officer shows, one for officer doesn't.
 - ii. Ex: 7 hearings, officer never appeared. Motion to dismiss order of protection because of no law enforcement to testify. Judge agreed.
 - iii. Lapel cameras are only good for evidence if the officer shows up for the hearings.

3) **Safe Reporting Zones**

- a. Safe-reporting systems/zones – a way for victims who distrust the police to have a safe way to report.
 - i. This will also help disenfranchised community members.
 - ii. Victims give their full or real name to the sponsoring group, who then turn it over to police once trust has been established.
 - iii. Officers would be plain-clothes.

4) **Coordinated Response Council**

- a. ABQ needs a Coordinated Community Response Council, such as the one in Santa Fe.

V. ****Please Also Include****

- **Next Steps:** *(if applicable)*
- **Action Items and Deliverables:** *(if applicable)*

Relevant Comments or Narrative:

Presentations by 3 APD Sergeants:

I. Sergeant Cecily Barker – Family Abuse Stalking and Training Team

1) Overview

- a. Investigates repeat domestic violence offenders
 - i. Focus especially if there is a threat against life
 - ii. Deals with stalking
 - iii. 2 detectives have over 10 years of experience
 - iv. Assist victim advocates
- b. Works out of the sFamily Advocacy Center
 - i. Has legal aid services there also
 - ii. “1-stop shop” for victims
 - iii. Help people find their way through the system

2) Caseload

- a. Victim liaison & sergeant review 200 reports per month
- b. Do threat assessment and outreach to victims

3) Challenges Faced

- a. Sensitive subject matter.
- b. Victims must have a safety plan for escape. Unit helps with that
- c. Victims are reluctant to report & follow through
- d. Social media stalking
- e. Police have to be available when victims are ready to report
- f. Court proceedings are long & tedious
 - i. Victims can be there all day long just to get a restraining order in place

II. Sergeant Jen Perez – Sex Crimes Unit

1) Overview

- a. Unit has 4 detectives – investigate criminal sexual penetration cases (rape, sexual assault) of 13 year-old & older but not incest
- b. Stranger & acquaintance rape, statutory, drug-induced, serial rapists
- c. In-City only, not UNM & not Air force base
- d. Felony range from 1st-4th degree – based on age of victim, degree of physical & mental harm, # of offenders
- e. Work closely with Rape Crisis & SANE nurses

2) Typical Victims

- a. Most common types of case involve teenage girls – commonly 14 years old,
- b. Also get same sex rapes and male victims
- c. In middle school and high school cases, 85% involve drugs (date-rape drugs & painkillers) or alcohol
- d. College age to middle age - 45% involve alcohol.
- e. Stranger rapes rarely occur, but when they do, they're very serious

3) Processing Reports

- a. “Calls for service” occur right after, or sometimes days after event
- b. Uniformed office responds & conducts very basic interview & reports on it
- c. Then detective from team contacted, details are covered in that interview.
- d. Try to get physical evidence. Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) are trained to detect any sort of Physical evidence from the victim’s body – a 3-4 hour process.
- e. Detective reviews that SANE report and includes in investigation, then forwarded to DA who has final say on what does and doesn't get prosecuted

4) Statistics

- a. 2014 – over 400 reported rapes in ABQ, 10-15 per week.

- b. Detectives have 20-35 cases at any one time.
- c. The unit needs more detectives
- d. In addition to call for service, unit gets referrals from CPS & Adult PS

5) Dealing with Victims

- a. Unit relies heavily on rape crisis advocates who put a helpful face to the investigation with victims from beginning to end. It facilitates interaction with APD
- b. Time is of the essence to report – the longer they wait, the less evidence is available.
- c. The unit always starts by believing victim.
- d. Many are reluctant to talk to law enforcement (ex: prostitutes) for any number of reasons
- e. Unit wears plain clothes to help victims feel comfortable
- f. Mid-school girls have trouble talking about it. Parents want to get involved, which makes it even harder for victims to talk about it, so detectives speak to them alone to get full revelation of circumstances.

6) Other

- a. Sexual assault cases take a long time to get to the judicial system. The DA may take months or years to get to court. Advocates help victims stay apprised and supported.
- b. Sometimes police have to ask tough questions, such as defense attorneys will ask about surrounding circumstances. This is another deterrent to victims wanting to testify.
- c. Sexual Assault cases are often very hard to prove. Is often he-said/she-said.
- d. Detectives are very dedicated and track the cases from beginning to end.

III. Sergeant Rich Evans – Child Victims of Sex Abuse

1) Overview

- a. Works with children who are victims of sex abuse, and other abuse, including deaths.
- b. 8 detectives, 3 civilians.
- c. Work closely with child abuse task force that gave them recommendations to better to their jobs.
 - i. They hired a civilian social worker as a result, who follows up.

2) The Process

- a. They receive many reports each month and read each one carefully to determine if it fits.
- b. Sometimes caseload is 50 cases per detective.
- c. Cases are unique, because you can't just close them out.
- d. Work just as hard to disprove as to prove – there are many forensic tests.

- e. Multi-disciplinary team – works with other agencies to get the job done – UNMH, SANE, Para los Niños, etc.
- f. Constantly reevaluating process to assure they do the best they can for the victims

3) Reporting Issues

- a. When kids are victimized, the parents may not believe them.
- b. One parent may not report the other for various reasons, including the perpetrator being the primary breadwinner.
- c. Parents may influence the child to not report.
- d. In the forensic interview, they ask for more surrounding details than in a regular interview.
- e. If detectives feel something did occur, but victim won't report, will keep it somewhat open, in case the child later comes forward. Can't prosecute without a victim statement.
- f. Takes great courage to report, cops greatly respect that.

4) Closing Remarks

- a. Traumatizing work, so thank yous from victims mean a great deal.
- b. Goal of brining APD & CYFD together to work more collaboratively is happening.
- c. Officers can get so many cases, it can get overwhelming & desensitizing.
- d. Resources, including counseling are available. During forensic interview, parents get resource information, and again through almost every phase.
 - i. Recommend counseling for children immediately.
 - ii. Counseling can sometimes help with disclosure.
- e. Field officers initially respond to cases, and then refer to this department. On call 24/7.
- f. Community support & reporting is of vital assistance.
- g. When the Chief asked how they could do job better, they formed a CARE - Child Abuse Response.
 - i. This is a specially trained group of officers.
 - ii. They have dramatically improved response so it is consistent and thorough and properly investigated with the proper questions asked.