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March 3, 2015

Amendment to Ad Hoc Commission

Madame Chairman:

During a time of community unease, let's not just meet the expectation of transparency. It is vital that law enforcement officials be equipped with the proper tools and tactics to respond to crises in the safest manner for all those involved.

Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training promotes safety for the person in crisis, the law enforcement officer, and the community. The purpose of CIT is to educate law enforcement officers to properly assess a person with a serious mental illness, emotional distress, or an intellectual or developmental disability, and to provide them with critical information regarding crisis intervention. People facing such crises often react badly to police direction and force, while reacting more positively to tension-reduction techniques. CIT-training has existed for over 25 years and has successfully been established in many areas around the country. In fact, nationally, scholarly journals are reporting CIT-trained officers are significantly more likely to report verbal engagement or negotiation as the highest level of force used, and they are more likely to refer people in crisis to mental health services rather than arrest them.

Therefore, Madame Chairman, I would move that a review of the level of Crisis Intervention Training within the Police Department and how the quality and curriculum of that training compares with national models be added to the ad-hoc commission's scope of work.