
PROMOTING POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY IN MILWAUKEE: STRENGTHENING THE FIRE AND POLICE COMMISSION

POLICE ASSESSMENT RESOURCE CENTER
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INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF FIRE AND POLICE COMMISSION

- Goals of the project:
 - Promote police accountability
 - Create effective oversight of the Milwaukee Police Department and inspire confidence in the oversight process
 - Improve the relations between the Milwaukee Police Department and the community it serves.
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STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS WITH THE FPC

- Citizen complaint process is broken
 - Too little use of policy review power
 - Too much time recruiting, testing, hiring and promoting officers detracts from focus on police accountability
 - FPC needs more input from the community
 - Discipline appeals take too long
 - Staff and resources have been cut
 - Fired officers continue to draw pay
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REASONS FOR PRESERVING THE FPC

- Strong statutory powers for effective oversight
 - Straightforward way to make FPC realize its potential
 - Unlikely that State legislature would approve a new oversight body with as much power and authority as the FPC
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SOLUTIONS

- Appoint a Monitor to review citizen complaints and internal MPD investigations
 - Expand Commission from five to seven members
 - Provide training for Commissioners
 - Adopt public comment period at Commission meetings, and hold them around the city
 - Streamline disciplinary appeals process
 - Hire a community relations manager
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ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Incorporate FPC conciliation process into the complaint system
 - Make FPC reports more substantive, timely and user-friendly
 - Remove the FPC from the Department of Employee Resources
 - Transfer most personnel-related functions to another department
 - Evaluate reforms and their implementation in three years
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ROLE OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITOR

- Monitor and audit civilian complaints
 - Monitor internal MPD investigations, including officer-involved shootings and other use of force investigations
 - Assist the Commission in its review of MPD policies and practices
 - Analyze patterns and trends in complaints and investigations
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MONITOR'S ROLE IN MPD INVESTIGATIONS

- Investigations would be reviewed from start to finish
 - Monitor staff would have full access to MPD files and records
 - Monitor would work with MPD to correct any problems
 - Investigations could be reopened if necessary
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COMMON COUNCIL ACTIONS RECOMMENDED

- Pass an ordinance on powers, responsibilities, selection process, and term of the Independent Monitor
 - Include in the ordinance a provision for an evaluation in three years
 - Approve necessary increase in the Fire and Police Commission Budget
 - Conduct the confirmation process for the Independent Monitor
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STATE LEGISLATION NEEDED

(Amendments to Wisconsin Statutes 62.50 and 62.51)

- Placing the FPC's personnel-related functions in one or more of the City's executive departments
 - Expanding the Commission to seven members
 - Providing that complaints may be made to the FPC or the Police Department, and that all complaints will be investigated by the Police Department
 - Modifying the 5-15 day deadline for disciplinary appeals
 - Eliminating the automatic adjournment in disciplinary appeal cases
 - Eliminating pay for officers after they have been terminated by the Chief of Police
 - Remove the FPC Executive Secretary from the Mayor's cabinet
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