



# COMMON COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Date: 03-10-2021

Time: 6:00 PM

Location: [City of Ithaca Public Meetings YouTube Channel](#)

## AGENDA ITEMS

Item	Voting Item	Presenter(s)	Time Allotted
<b>Call to Order</b>	No	Mayor Myrick	5 Mins
<b>Special Order of Business:</b> Discussion on the Draft Reimagining Public Safety Report	No		90 Mins
<b>Adjournment</b>			

Questions about the meeting protocol can be forwarded to City Clerk Julie Conley Holcomb at (607) 274-6570 or [jholcomb@cityofithaca.org](mailto:jholcomb@cityofithaca.org) in advance of the meeting.

A Resolution Adopting and Authorizing Mayor to Submit the Reimagining Public Safety Plan  
Pursuant to New York State Executive Order 203

WHEREAS, The New York State Governor issued Executive Order 203 in order to call upon local governments that operate police agencies to study their current operations and develop a plan to address “the particular needs of the communities served by such police agency and promote community engagement to foster trust, fairness, and legitimacy, and to address any racial bias and disproportionate policing of communities of color” with a directive to respond to the Governor by April 1, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the City of Ithaca and Tompkins County conferred and saw a favorable moment for significant positive changes in policing practices, and determined that a joint investigation of this issue would provide the greatest opportunity to apply resources to the project and to reach consistent recommendations in a joint plan that would apply to the two largest policing agencies in the County, being the Tompkins County Sheriff’s Department and the Ithaca Police Department; and

WHEREAS, beginning in September 2020, the City and County appointed nearly forty individuals, based upon their content expertise, role within the system, and the ability to address and implement solutions, to participate on five Working Groups (Leadership/Administration/Budget, Communications/Community, Law Enforcement/Public Safety, Data Analysis, and Academic/Research), with each Working Group charged to gather information and examine specific functional areas within local law enforcement in a project that came to be called Reimagining Public Safety; and

WHEREAS, the City of Ithaca and Tompkins County engaged the services of a consultant, Center for Policing Equity, to assist with the administration and organization of the study of these policing issues, including examination of police force deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, and to provide informational resources to the Working Groups; and

WHEREAS, in conjunction with the formation of the Working Groups, the City and County consulted with the Tompkins County Sheriff and the City Police Chief, and members of law enforcement, together with an extensive effort to receive public comment from as broad a range of community members as possible, using various tools, including issuing calls for comments, question and answer sessions with community leaders, surveys, interviews, and the use of focus groups to target specific segments of the populations such as the houseless, people of color, and those who have been involved within the criminal justice system, with the goal of obtaining as clear a view as possible of the current state of policing and the community perceptions of policing; and

WHEREAS, beyond complying with the requirements of the Governor’s Executive Order 203, the intention of this project has been to make a good faith effort on a local level towards long term substantive improvement in our criminal justice system, recognizing that formulating the present recommendations in the joint plan would set the community on a pathway that will require consistent and persistent dedication to effect positive change; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the benefit to be achieved by developing a joint plan that reflected a consistent and coherent set of recommendations across the City and County, staff from the City and County worked collaboratively to prepare a Draft Report entitled “Public Safety Reimagined. Recommendations report following a collaborative effort between the City of Ithaca & Tompkins County, N.Y.”, which Draft Report contains a description of the process followed and a draft list of proposed City, County, and joint recommendations made in response to the Governor’s Executive Order 203; and

WHEREAS, the City of Ithaca and Tompkins County having received the Draft Report, and having conducted town halls, public forums, and public hearings after publication of the Draft Report, and the City of Ithaca Common Council and the Tompkins County Legislature determining that an opportunity for meaningful action is possible through development of a joint plan; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Draft Report entitled “Public Safety Reimagined. Recommendations report following a collaborative effort between the City of Ithaca & Tompkins County, N.Y.” be accepted, with the gratitude of Common Council for the effort of the consultants at Center for Policing Equity, all those individuals who participated on the Working Groups, members of law enforcement, including the Ithaca Police Chief, Dennis Naylor and Tompkins County Sheriff, Derek Osborne, the Tompkins County District Attorney, the Director of Assigned Counsel, the City and County staff who provided support in the preparation of the Draft Report, and those community members who offered their opinions, viewpoints, ideas, and hope for positive change including equity and safety for all residents, specifically people of color; and be it further

RESOLVED, the City of Ithaca Common Council adopts the following joint recommendations:

- Evaluate existing models and implement an alternative to law enforcement response system for crisis intervention and wraparound health and human services delivery.
- Collect and evaluate the results of officer-initiated traffic stop enforcement
- Identify new curriculum, redesign and implement a culturally-responsive training program that incorporates de-escalation and mental health components into a comprehensive response for law enforcement
- Develop a comprehensive community healing plan to address trauma in the relationship between residents and law enforcement
- Standardize data entry and review existing data sets for more actionable insights and allocation of public safety resources
- Develop a real-time public safety community dashboard.
- Develop a comprehensive, inclusive, and innovative recruitment strategy for law enforcement and corrections officers.
- Develop a County-wide program to promote and support holistic officer wellness.
- Seek ongoing and responsive collaboration from New York State Troopers operating in Tompkins County.
- Repurpose SWAT Mobile Command Vehicle to Tompkins County Department of Emergency Response and develop policies for use of the mobile command center.

- Conduct a review of SWAT callouts to determine appropriate use of service and equipment.
- Revise the Civil Service exam process to diversify law enforcement personnel
- Advocate for New York State to grant local civil service authorities the authority to enact “continuous recruitment” of eligible candidates for law enforcement personnel
- Urge Governor Cuomo and/or the New York State Legislature to reform disciplinary procedures for law enforcement personnel under Civil Service Law Section 75;

and be it further

RESOLVED, Common Council adopts the following City-specific recommendations:

- Create a Department of Community Solutions and Public Safety (DCSPS), led by a Director who may be a civilian employee, to oversee various public safety functions in the City.
  - Include within the new Department (DCSPS) a unit of unarmed first responders to respond to certain non-violent call types. The precise identification of such call-types shall be subject to further study to minimize the risk to unarmed first responders that would arise if tasked to a call-type that produced violence.
  - Retain within the new Department (DCSPS) a unit of armed, uniformed first responders who may be referred to in City-, departmental-, and public-facing communications by a new descriptive title yet to be determined, but who shall qualify in all respects under New York State law as police officers, with said unit therefore led by a unit-head who shall qualify in all respects under New York State law as a Chief of Police.
- Grant City of Ithaca Community Police Board more oversight authority;

With the above listed sixteen recommendations constituting its plan; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Common Council recognize the rights, under applicable labor law, of the non-managerial members of the unit of armed officers, to organize and collectively-bargain with the City under such legally-available labor organization and format as the applicable membership shall select, including continuation of the current bargaining unit representing sworn police officers of the City, excluding the Chief and Deputy Chiefs; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Common Council intend to implement any organizational transition in such a manner that, to the full extent of armed positions funded in said transition, current officers and supervisors of the Ithaca Police Department would not be required to apply in order to maintain their current positions, and they would retain their civil service status, authority, and benefits of the title of police officer (or higher ranks); and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Mayor is authorized to deliver the above stated plan to the New York State Budget Director, Robert Mujica, on behalf of Common Council in accordance with the requirements of Executive Order 203, and to certify to the State Budget Director that the City of Ithaca has complied with the required process; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Common Council and the Mayor shall determine next steps to develop the programmatic expression of its plan, determine budget priorities, and work with City staff and the community to implement these recommendations, and to do so where applicable in cooperation and collaboration with Tompkins County; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution shall also be sent to Governor Andrew Coumo, Senator Thomas O'Mara, and Assemblywoman Anna Kelles.