From:	Alex Saloutos
To:	Maia Pearson
Cc:	All Alders; Police Civilian Oversight Board; Hope Vang; Vanessa Statam; Brandice Hatcher; Katey Nelson; Helyn Luisi; Devon Snyder; Michelle Miller; Stephanie Rearick; Rodney Saunders Jr.; Carlotta Calmese
Subject:	Public comment for tonight"s meeting, Legistar 92386 and 94126
Date:	Thursday, July 23, 2026 4:19:39 PM
Attachments:	260723_MEMORANDUM_PCOB_LEGISTAR92386-94126.pdf

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Chair Pearson and members of the Police Civilian Oversight Board:

Attached is my public comment memorandum for tonight's meeting on the proposed changes to MGO 5.19 and 5.20, agenda items 2 and 3 (Legistar 92386 and Legistar 94126). Please distribute it to the members and enter it into the meeting record.

Thank you.

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Alex Saloutos

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Email: asaloutos@tds.net

M E M O R A N D U M

Date: July 23, 2026

To: Police Civilian Oversight Board

CC: Common Council

From: Alex Saloutos

RE: **Public comment for the July 23, 2026 meeting on proposed changes to MGO 5.19 and 5.20 (Legistar 92386 and Legistar 94126)**

I submit these comments for consideration at tonight's meeting regarding the changes to MGO 5.19 and 5.20 (Legistar 92386 and Legistar 94126), which are agenda items 2 and 3.

The mission and goals of the Office of the Independent Monitor remain necessary, and true independence is critically important. The tragic shooting of Corey Ruiz by a Madison police officer yesterday is graphic evidence: when police use deadly force, the public needs independent oversight it can trust.[1]

The record since the Council's April 21 referral speaks for itself. The Council voted 16 to 4 to send Legistar 92386 back to the PCOB with a return date of August 4, a 15-week window. Between April 21 and July 22, the PCOB and its subcommittees met five times, and the item appeared on no agenda; four other meetings were canceled.[2] Tonight's meeting, the first on the referral, was announced at 3:17 p.m. yesterday with no agenda attached, 93 days after the Council's vote and 12 days before the Council acts.[3] An agenda was posted online later in the evening. My April 22 email to the chair asking for the board's plan to address this legislation, and its arrangements for legal counsel, has received no response.[4] Meanwhile, three versions of the legislation are set for the Council's August 4 agenda, and each affects the independence of the OIM and the PCOB: each places the office within the city's administrative structure and its Administrative Procedure Memoranda, each reshapes the office's use of legal counsel, and two condition the mechanics of records access on a negotiated Memorandum of Understanding.[5]

There are two ways to read those 93 days, and neither is good. Either the PCOB did nothing on the Council's referral until now, or work occurred outside noticed public meetings, contrary to Wisconsin's open meetings law, which requires the business of a governmental body, and of its subcommittees, to be conducted in meetings that are publicly noticed and open to the public.[6] I have

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1 "Who Is Corey Ruiz? Man Reportedly Shot by Officer in Madison, Wisconsin," Newsweek, July 23, 2026, https://www.newsweek.com/who-is-corey-ruiz-man-reportedly-shot-by-officer-in-madison-wisconsin-12232222; "Madison police kill man in broad daylight in front of witnesses," Yahoo News, July 23, 2026, https://www.yahoo.com/news/us/articles/madison-police-kill-man-broad-021313724.html.

2 City of Madison Common Council, Meeting Minutes, April 21, 2026, https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=M&ID=1316267&GUID=6DA62006-C06C-4FBF-921C-B6805291FE2D.

3 Police Civilian Oversight Board meeting list and posted agendas, https://madison.legistar.com/DepartmentDetail.aspx?ID=44401&GUID=8271D471-D479-412E-8ED3-58F160EEA63C; City of Madison, Police Civilian Oversight Board meeting page, July 23, 2026, https://www.cityofmadison.com/city-hall/committees/police-civilian-oversight-board/2026-07-23.

4 Email from Alex Saloutos to PCOB Chair Maia Pearson, April 22, 2026, https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/fco066vjvllg0ho7cohz9/260422_EMAIL_SALOUTOS-PEARSON-Question-regarding-PCOB-s-plan-following-last-night-s-Council-referral-on-Proposed-Amendments-to-MGO-5.19-and-5.20-Legistar-ID-No.-92386.pdf?rlkey=gso021uzrk92k3dum74way21c&dl=0.

5 Legistar File 92386, Versions 1, 2, and 3, texts and drafter's analyses, https://madison.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=7988410&GUID=6D618C28-9FCF-4259-8402-00773301AA85.

6 Wis. Stat. §§ 19.81 to 19.84.

no evidence that a quorum deliberated in private. What the record shows is the absence of agenda items, minutes, a public plan, and an answer to a direct written question about the plan.

Given that record, I will make two recommendations to the Common Council:

1. The Council should appoint a workgroup to update MGO 5.19 and 5.20, modeled on the 2020 Alder Workgroup that created these ordinances, with public meetings, public comment at every meeting, and diverse perspectives at the table. The PCOB has demonstrated it is not up to the task.

2. The Council should retain a consultant to assist that workgroup: a subject-matter expert in police oversight, a mediator, or both.

I also urge the PCOB to take two actions of its own:

1. Consider changes to your leadership to improve the PCOB's effectiveness, transparency, and accountability.

2. Promptly retain independent legal counsel experienced in municipal law to advise the PCOB in areas where the Office of the City Attorney has a conflict of interest, including the revisions to MGO 5.19 and 5.20. The City Attorney's office wrote and has defended these amendments; the PCOB should not rely on their counsel to evaluate them.

Doing this well cannot be done in the two remaining weeks. Addressing the Council's concerns and closing the gaps in MGO 5.19 and 5.20, as revealed by a comparison with other municipalities, is substantial work. Some municipalities, for example, give the monitor the right to participate in interviews of witnesses in officer-involved deaths and in internal police department investigations. That is the kind of improvement a properly supported workgroup can evaluate, and a rushed rewrite cannot.

Whatever the PCOB decides tonight, do this work in noticed public meetings: hear the public, deliberate in open session, and send the Council a recommendation it can weigh on August 4. The ordinance you operate under was built in the open in 2020.[7] Its revision should be too.

[7] Alder Workgroup to Develop Logistics & Operational Details for MPD Independent Civilian Oversight, Meeting Minutes, June 25 to August 3, 2020; MGO 5.19 and 5.20 adopted September 1, 2020, Legistar File No. 61593.