

From: [Lisa Hansen](#)
To: [Police Chief Search](#)
Date: Tuesday, December 8, 2020 1:39:39 PM

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

Dear Police and Fire Commissioners:

The PFC should not make a decision on a Police Chief on Wednesday, December 9. Give the community an opportunity to engage with the candidates and give informed feedback before deliberating. The OIR report and the MPD Policy and Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee report recommended that the PFC should involve the Madison community in the selection process through community panels and interviews. Such community engagement with police chief finalists is a normal part of the hiring process in many cities across the U.S. This was also recommended by former MPD Chief David Couper, who had one of the most successful tenures of Madison Police Chiefs. Some Madison alders are taken aback that this apparently isn't happening. Police Civilian Oversight Board member Shadayra Kilfoy-Flores was interviewed about the issue by Channel3000, stating "Candidates providing a video is not going to be sufficient. There needs to be actual community exchange. The community needs to be given an opportunity to interact with these candidates so we can get an idea of who they are as people."

<https://www.channel3000.com/there-needs-to-be-actual-community-exchange-some-say-final-interview-process-for-madison-police-chief-lacks-transparency/>

As OIR pointed out, this is all the more important in Wisconsin cities since, unlike cities in most states, police chiefs here basically can have lifetime tenure, rather than serving fixed terms.

It's also shocking that you have selected Portland Deputy Police Chief Chris Davis as a finalist and believe him suitable to be Madison's Chief of Police. You should examine what a candidate has done, not just their pretty words to you. In 2002, Davis participated in a controversial officer-involved fatality, precipitating major protests by Portland's Latinx community and mental health and civil rights advocates. Later, when Davis headed the Portland Police Bureau Internal Affairs Department, it had a deserved reputation of covering up misconduct. Then in 2014, Portland Police Lieutenant Rachel Andrew filed a \$300,000 civil rights lawsuit against Davis, Chief Reese, and the Portland Police Bureau for retaliation after she investigated Davis for misconduct. More recently, under Deputy Chief Davis' leadership, the Portland Police Bureau became a poster child for brutal mishandling of protests, and was found to be in direct violation of a federal restraining order regarding use of force against protestors. Davis has advocated practices like police in riot gear charging at crowds of protester to scare and disperse them, use of a wide variety of nonlethal munitions against protesters, slashing the tires of protester's cars, etc. His approach and mentality would never be accepted by Madison community members, and would exacerbate unrest here. That you chose Davis as a finalist seems to show a fatally flawed process. The most charitable explanation is that you're not doing adequate independent investigations into candidates but just relying on the materials submitted (i.e., how the candidates present themselves). This is what happens when a commission operates in the dark as you currently appear to be seeking to do. Please allow the community to properly engage, vet, and provide input on these finalists.

Sincerely,
Lisa Hansen

1302 Dewberry Dr, Madison, WI 53719

From: [Sarah Beach](#)
To: [Police Chief Search](#)
Subject: Concern on Hiring Process of New Police Chief
Date: Tuesday, December 8, 2020 1:41:06 PM

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

Hello,

My name is Sarah Beach and I am a resident of Madison. I am concerned that the PFC is not allowing public comment on the hiring of a new police chief.

Sir Peel wrote the 9 Policing Principles, the third of which states:

1. To recognize always that to secure and maintain the respect and approval of the public means also the securing of the willing cooperation of the public in the task of securing observance of laws.

<https://lawenforcementactionpartnership.org/peel-policing-principles/>

This move lacks public cooperation and leads to only further distrust. This is bolstered by the fact one of the potential chiefs, Christopher Davis, spent his time in Portland violently suppressing protestors. Portland Police does not have a history of working well with the community, and is not what Madison needs: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_v._City_of_Portland

Thank you for your time and service to Madison,

Sarah Beach

From: [Amanda W](#)
To: [Police Chief Search](#)
Cc: jrousseau@strangpatteson.com
Subject: Give community time to engage with Police Chief candidates
Date: Tuesday, December 8, 2020 2:19:14 PM

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Dear Police and Fire Commissioners:

The PFC should not make a decision on a Police Chief on Wednesday, December 9. Give the community an opportunity to engage with the candidates and give informed feedback before deliberating. The OIR report and the MPD Policy and Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee report recommended that the PFC should involve the Madison community in the selection process through community panels and interviews.

~ Amanda Werhane
404 Algoma St Apt 23
Madison, WI 53704

From: [Amy Owen](#)
To: [Police Chief Search](#)
Cc: jrousseau@strangpatteson.com
Subject: opportunities to participate in police chief selection
Date: Tuesday, December 8, 2020 5:16:00 PM
Attachments: [RegistrationFormPFC.docx](#)

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Hello,

I am seeking opportunities to provide public comment on the finalists recently announced for MPD police chief. Specific information about this has been challenging to locate. Can you advise me on what opportunities will be available for public comment or especially the opportunity for questions to the candidates? Madison is at a sensitive time in relations between the police department and many communities, and the leadership of MPD will be critical to the ability of local law enforcement efforts to be credible and respected agents of community safety, and efforts to repair fractured relationships and trust. It is very important that we have a transparent process that is not rushed. I am also deeply concerned that a candidate with a record of having killed someone in a psychiatric facility who sparked community wide protests would be considered as a finalist! This is exactly the opposite type of record needed to accomplish the goals we face as a community in this moment. Please let me

know what the process of public comment and selection will look like and please do not rush it.

Thank you,

Amy Owen
3129 Buena Vista Street
Madison, WI 53704

From: [Deborah Elsas](#)
To: [Police Chief Search](#)
Subject: Selection
Date: Tuesday, December 8, 2020 6:36:48 PM

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Hello,

I am a long time resident of Madison's west side. My initial concern was that you should not hire a new police chief until sometime in the future when the police union has come under some control and the police department's militarization had been dismantled. A civilian board would have been my preference temporarily. However, you've gone ahead with candidates. The only one who is completely unacceptable is Davis from Portland. He is weak on the first amendment and is weak on getting the union under control. My choice which I recommend to you is Ramon Batista. He is a person of color first of all. He is strong in terms of handling a difficult union. And he will be sensitive to Madison's culture of protest. Please.

Thank you
Deborah Elsas

From: [Carol Hermann](#)
To: [Police Chief Search](#)
Cc: JRousseau@strangpatteson.com
Subject: Police Chief Search
Date: Tuesday, December 8, 2020 9:23:58 PM

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Dear Members of the PFC,

Why are the finalists for this position being interviewed without community involvement? Given what has happened in the past 5 years in Madison and across the country, it seems that you would want to work on strengthening the MPD-community connection and the way this process is being conducted is antithetical to that goal.

Carol Hermann

From: [Gregory Gelembiuk](#)
To: [Police Chief Search](#)
Cc: [Jenna Rousseau](#)
Subject: Deficiencies in Chief search process
Date: Tuesday, December 8, 2020 10:30:30 PM

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

Dear PFC Commissioners,

In case you might find it of interest, I thought I would forward you an e-mail I received from the Deputy Director of the ACLU of Wisconsin, regarding the Madison Chief search (see below). She happened to write me today, asking about the Madison search, and I brought her up to speed.

Regards,

Dr. Gregory Gelembiuk

Thanks for bringing me up to speed with the process - I completely missed the lack of public input and participation in the finalist process (in comparison, I've watched all six + hours of police chief finalist interviews in Milwaukee and was even able to ask a question during them). I just thought I had missed something when the finalist names came out on Friday.

Your letter is super comprehensive, and I hope it gets the results you're looking for!

Meanwhile, I'm kind of flabbergasted that the PFC attorney said that it isn't clear they have to abide by Madison ordinances. If the Madison Alder who is thinking about suing doesn't, I wonder if bringing that statement to the attention of the Wisconsin Freedom of Information Council could put some pressure on them to come to a different conclusion. (If you aren't already connected with them, I'd be happy to connect you.)

Molly

From: [Steve Verburg](#)
To: [Police Chief Search](#); jrousseau@strangpatteson.com
Subject: Request the PFC help our next chief by conducting a fully public process
Date: Tuesday, December 8, 2020 11:06:43 PM

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

Members of the Madison Police and Fire Commission,

I am writing to support postponing the hiring of a police chief until a public process including public interviewing of the finalists can take place.

However, if you are determined to hire a chief today, I can see no other choice than Mr. Batista, based on the limited information the public has been provided.

It is strange indeed that the commission has decided to announce police chief finalists on Friday, interview the finalists in secret on Tuesday, and pick a police chief in secret on Wednesday.

It doesn't need to be this way. In many places, the hiring authority treats both the finalists and the people of the community as adults; treats them as though they were citizens in a democracy; and makes them partners who might bring valuable perspectives and – perhaps more importantly – might get to know the candidates and even become invested in the success of the next police chief.

If you were to ask, you would find out that a year ago one of your four finalists was a finalist in my hometown of Grand Rapids, Michigan. All of the Grand Rapids finalists met with the public and answered their questions. You could still do that here.

Failing to do so will put our next police chief at a great disadvantage. These times are challenging enough without making them more difficult.

As it is, I don't know enough about these finalists to confidently tell you who I think would be the best chief for Madison. The information you've provided the public has been incredibly scant. Why not at least release each finalist's resume and letter of application? And why limit public comment to sixty minutes?

In the huge information vacuum created by the commission, Madison residents are being forced to do their own research from scratch. A community that already has a sharp

divergence of opinion about the nature of its crime problem and the appropriate path forward now has no common set of facts as the basis for discussion. By Sunday you could find widely divergent characterizations of candidates. My own reading of the public record on Mr. Davis, the Portland deputy chief, left me wondering if the commission had been provided with an adequate background check on each applicant, and if so, what purpose was perceived in choosing Mr. Davis as a finalist.

In 2002, Mr. Davis was involved the police killing a man. The case was so controversial that it sparked major protests by Latinx residents and representatives of civil rights and mental health organizations. (This was in 2002, a decade before the killing of Trayvon Martin began the wave of protests against police killings that continues today.) The Portland police Internal Affairs office Mr. Davis directed was widely reputed to be an operation that covered up misconduct. A police lieutenant in Portland filed a \$300,000 civil rights lawsuit against Davis, his chief and others in 2014 because she was retaliated against after investigating misconduct allegations against Davis. His role in highly questionable aspects of the police response to recent protests is also troubling. And, as a finalist for the Milwaukee police chief post, he received zero support from PFC members.

Mr. Barnes appears to have very recently accepted a position with the Chicago Police Department and he is already seeking to leave CPD employment. How is the Madison community supposed to understand this in the vacuum of information we've been provided?

Mr. Sciroto ended his policing career, and now in retirement is applying for various chief jobs. Again, this is a little bit of a strange circumstance. Without hearing from Mr. Sciroto about his motivation, one could legitimately wonder if in fact he wishes to be retired, and if he was to be hired as Madison police chief how invested he would be in taking on such a challenging job.

Mr. Batista seems by far the best candidate. (Clearly, I'm telling you that I'm basing this on incomplete knowledge.) But in my view, the embarrassing and worsening racial disparities in arrests by the Madison Police Department are the most serious issue facing the police department. Mr. Batista's strength of character in demanding at least a small degree of restraint in the brutality Mesa police meted out to people (please watch the videos of the attacks if you haven't already) makes me think he might be willing to look critically at use of force policies in Madison, and that he might be willing to consider ways of reining in the department's outrageous overpolicing of Black men, women and children.

Of course it's difficult to know based on the information we've been provided and the total lack of access to the candidates.

In the 1990s I was a newspaper reporter in Saginaw, Michigan, when the city council hired a new police chief. The chief was hired after weeks of public vetting. Each candidate met with the public for question and answer sessions. All the City Council interviews with the finalists were conducted in public and telecast on the government cable channel. My newspaper wrote

extensive profiles of each finalist. I had never before covered the hiring of the police chief, and I was accustomed to covering local governments that frequently sought to operate in secret. But in the case, the Saginaw City Council chose a public process.

They reasoned that a good police chief would need to be able to engage meaningfully with the public, so why not see how each candidate could do that during the interview process. The council also reasoned that the police chief would need to show the ability to win the trust of the public in order to be successful. Again, why not give each candidate a chance to show how it could be done?

Don't hire a police chief without an extensive public vetting process.

If you must hire someone without allowing the public to be engaged, hire Mr. Batista.

Sincerely,

Steve Verburg

Madison, Wisconsin

Aldermanic District 16

From: [Gregory Gelembiuk](#)
To: [Police Chief Search](#)
Cc: [Jenna Rousseau](#)
Subject: Feedback on two finalists
Date: Tuesday, December 8, 2020 11:43:37 PM
Attachments: [Feedback on Two Finalists.docx](#)

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

Dear Police & Fire Commissioners,

Please see attached letter with feedback on two of the finalists.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gregory Gelembiuk

Dear Police @ Fire Commissioners,

I am writing with feedback regarding two of the finalists for Madison Chief.

1. I have strong concerns about Portland Deputy Police Chief Christopher A. Davis. He seems highly unsuitable for Madison and multiple aspects of his history appear troubling. I believe he would never be accepted by much of the Madison community. Madison has experienced considerable civil unrest this year, and I believe that could be greatly exacerbated if Davis became Chief.

I'll start with Davis' involvement in a controversial officer-involved shooting. In 2002, Portland Officers Christopher Davis and Jeffry Bell fatally shot an epileptic Mexican immigrant, Jose Santos Victor Mejia Poot, in a Southeast Portland psychiatric facility. Mejia Poot was suffering from uncontrolled epileptic seizures, and was arrested, misdiagnosed as schizophrenic, and placed in the psych facility. After threatening staff with pencils, he was placed in a seclusion room. When he broke out of the seclusion room and allegedly knocked a staff member down, police were called. He pulled a metal bar off a hospital door. When officers arrived they peppersprayed him, then Davis shot him with three beanbag rounds, then Bell shot him with his handgun, killing him. Then Davis and Bell were cleared by a grand jury (the customary outcome of such incidents), then they were awarded medals by the Portland Police Bureau. Police handling of Mejia Poot was heavily criticized in local media. There were major protests led by Latinx and civil rights community leaders, regarding Davis and Bell. There was further community criticism regarding this death when Davis was promoted to Deputy Chief in 2017.

Here are some articles about all of this:

["Hispanics Angry About Officers' Awards"](#)

["Police Chief Mark Kroeker Has Got To Go"](#)

["Witnesses fault arrest tactics in Mejia Poot case"](#)

["More groups want action over medals incident"](#)

["On My Soapbox. Watchdog Broken"](#)

["AMA Continues Call for More Diversity in PPB"](#)

Subsequently, Davis ended up heading the Portland Police Bureau Internal Affairs Division. Excerpt from a [news article](#) providing an example of a case Davis oversaw:



In 2014, a Multnomah County jury awarded \$562,000 to Jason Cox after Portland police knocked him face-down to the ground and repeatedly pummeled and zapped him with a Taser on June 28, 2011. Bruders struck Cox in the face multiple times with a closed fist once Cox was already down, a surveillance video showed....

Cox, who was 37 at the time, testified that he thought he was going to be beaten to death when police took him into custody in a Southeast Portland parking lot on suspicion of drunken driving....

Before the case went to trial, Cox had filed a complaint against the officers with the Independent Police Review, the city intake office for complaints against Portland police. The matter was referred to the bureau's Internal Affairs Division, which did a preliminary inquiry, reviewed the video and determined that Bruders' punches were within policy and the law.

Chris Davis, internal affairs lieutenant at the time and now the bureau's deputy chief, wrote that Bruders and other officers present noted that Cox looked as if he was going to resist arrest by "furlrowing his brow " and "assuming a fighting stance." Officers didn't know if he had a weapon once he was taken to the ground because his right hand was under his body and they hadn't searched him, Davis wrote.

Bruders explained that a fellow officer's Taser didn't succeed in getting Cox to comply and using pepper spray would impact the other officers present so he found that striking Cox in the face with a closed fist was the "most appropriate" alternative. Davis found Bruder's decision "reasonable," considering all the circumstances and declined to call for a more in-depth inquiry, Davis wrote [in a memo to the district attorney](#) in October 2011.

From a [press release](#) of an attorney handling this and a related case:

"For Internal Affairs, covering up police misconduct is like breathing in and breathing out. Bruders and the other officers were captured on video inflicting a savage beating on a helpless man. A jury awarded all that was asked for. In a letter signed by Chris Davis, IA declined to even conduct a formal investigation. Davis was then head of IA. He is now Portland's Deputy Police Chief," said attorney Jason Kafoury.

In 2014, Portland Police Lieutenant Rachel Andrew filed a \$300,000 civil rights lawsuit against Davis, Chief Reese, and the Portland Police Bureau for retaliation after she investigated Davis for misconduct.

Excerpt from [news article](#):

Last Wednesday, April 23, a lieutenant with 20 years at the bureau filed a scathing federal lawsuit accusing Chief Mike Reese and North Precinct Captain Chris Davis of unjustly punishing her over a misconduct investigation she led against Davis several years ago.

The lieutenant, Rachel Andrew, is seeking \$300,000 in damages for lost pay and emotional distress—citing claims she was unfairly suspended by Reese at Davis' behest and then denied a promotion. She says Reese has been angry with her at least since 2008—after she first investigated Davis over his use of an informant and recommended he face discipline.

Her lawsuit follows a separate Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) complaint that included those same claims

Here's a [Portland Mercury news article](#), a copy of the [federal lawsuit filing](#), and a copy of the [Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries complaint](#).

Ultimately, Davis was promoted to Deputy Chief, and was actually Acting Chief of the Portland Police Bureau for a time.

Under the leadership of Deputy Chief Davis, Portland became a poster child for brutal handling of protesters and was found to be in direct violation of a federal restraining order regarding the use of force against protestors.

Some articles:

Portland Mercury news article: "[Judge Finds Portland Police's Use of Munitions Against Protesters Defied Court Order](#)". Excerpt:

A federal judge ruled Monday that the City of Portland had violated a court order barring Portland police from shooting impact munitions at nonviolent protesters.

In his evening ruling, US District Judge Marco Hernandez wrote that the city—by way of the Portland Police Bureau (PPB)—defied the June 26 temporary restraining order at least three times during a June 30 demonstration. This violation places the city in contempt of court—a finding with undetermined consequences. Hernandez wrote that the penalty for violating the restraining order will be determined at a later date.

The ruling validates arguments raised by Don't Shoot Portland, a racial justice group whose June 5 class action lawsuit against the city spurred Hernandez's restraining order.

"[Portland police fail to document, review officers' use of force at protests or maintain crowd-control training, report finds](#)". Excerpt:

Portland police have failed to identify, document, review or manage officer use of force during protests that have gripped the city since late May, an outside consultant has found....

Because of the significant gaps in use of force reporting and training, the Police Bureau is no longer in "substantial compliance" with mandated reforms under the city's settlement agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice, Rosenbaum concluded.

"[Portland Police Under Scrutiny For Dangerous Crowd Control Munitions](#)"

"[Police Declare Portland Protests A Riot But This Definition Could Be Rooted In Racism](#)"

The Intercept: "[Portland Reckons with Police Attacks on Protesters after Months of Unrest. Witness testimony and a video reconstruction detail deliberate violence by police against peaceful protesters.](#)"

Excerpt:

Days into the nationwide protest movement sparked by the police killing of George Floyd, the Black-led, police accountability group Don't Shoot Portland sued the city of Portland, Oregon, over use of tear gas against protesters. The lawsuit led to a temporary restraining order prohibiting the Portland Police Bureau from using tear gas, except in narrow circumstances. But officers quickly switched gears, and in response to growing protests, they ramped up the deployment of OC spray, rubber bullets, pepper balls, flash bangs, and other impact munitions known as "nonlethal" or "less-lethal" weapons. Don't Shoot Portland again sought and obtained a court order to limit police's use of those weapons.

Then on June 30, just four days after a federal judge had sided with protesters and issued a restraining order on the use by police of less-lethal weapons, Portland officers meeting protesters outside the local police union building again fired smoke grenades, rubber bullets, and other impact munitions into the crowd, injuring several people. They then declared the protest a riot and deployed tear gas despite the court order restricting its use.

"They blatantly ignored the order," Tai Carpenter, Don't Shoot Portland's board president, told The Intercept. "What happened on June 30 was just an all-out attack on civilians. That night just really stands out for the vast amount of violence that was being inflicted on the street."

Physicians for Human Right report. October 8, 2020. ["Now they seem to just want to hurt us": Dangerous Use of Crowd-control Weapons against Protestors and Medics in Portland, Oregon"](#)

Excerpt providing some background:

Before the 2020 protests, the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) had been found to engage in a pattern of excessive use of force. In the 2012 case U.S. v. City of Portland, the U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon found that the Portland police had deployed unconstitutional and improper use of force against people experiencing a mental health crisis. This case resulted in a 2014 Settlement Agreement on necessary police reforms, including, but not limited to, use of force, training, crisis intervention, officer accountability, and communication and transparency. In 2015 and 2016, the U.S. Department of Justice found that the PPB was only partially compliant with nearly every provision of the agreement.

The Physicians for Human Rights report provides a detailed account of grossly excessive use of force by the Portland Police and injuries sustained by civilians, including many medics.

While Davis was under consideration as a candidate in the Madison Chief search, he was also under consideration by the Milwaukee Fire & Police Commission for their Chief search. He was one of three finalists there, but ultimately ended up with zero votes from commissioners. In Milwaukee, it appears that he said that some mistakes were made in Portland with protesters. However, in all the online materials I was able to find from Portland, he appeared to defend Portland police practices with protesters to the hilt.

Davis has advocated practices like police in riot gear charging at crowds of protester to scare and disperse them, use of a wide variety of nonlethal munitions against protesters, puncturing the tires of protester's cars, etc.

Here's a video posted by the Portland Police. ["Deputy Chief talks about crowd management"](#)

A video: "[Deputy Chief Chris Davis on vandalism to Portland police headquarters](#)"

[Here's video](#) in which Davis justifies police slashing the tires of protesters' cars, asserting that it's a safety measure.

Here's a news article quoting Davis: "[Portland police deputy chief appeals to community to decry violence by what he called 'well-organized agitator core'](#)". His general perspective and mantra is that bad people are using protests as "cover for criminal activity".

All of this is the direct opposite of the mentality that former MPD Chief Couper had, and the approach he took, when he was hired and arrived in Madison. Violent Vietnam War protests were ongoing, with ample property destruction, police using lots of tear gas, etc. Couper instead reached out, attended protests, talked directly with protesters, brought in police critics for his "kitchen cabinet" of advisors, and was dramatically successful in calming the waters. A mentality and approach like that of Davis just precipitates increased unrest and rioting, and loss of legitimacy of police.

2. In sharp contrast, Ramon Batista might be an excellent Police Chief for Madison. It appears that of all the finalists, he might be most likely to re-establish trust and legitimacy for Madison police, especially among alienated communities. Without trust and legitimacy, policing becomes very difficult.

As I've previously written, former MPD Chief David Couper noted to me *"My question [to the candidates] would be what is their specific plan to renew trust between the MPD and community. It's the #1 problem PERF members identified that is facing police leaders today!"* He also indicated he would ask when each candidate *"led a major controversial change in your agency"*.

A police executive I know and trust, City of Columbia SC Deputy Chief Melron Kelly, informed us that he highly recommends Ramon Batista.... that Batista would be excellent as Chief and that he's a really good person. Melron understands the current situation in Madison and what many community members and community groups here are looking for. He knows about the Independent Monitor and Police Civilian Oversight Board and that many in Madison are looking for someone who would welcome this work and cooperate. He knows that we want someone who isn't afraid to make important reforms, who will prioritize officer mental-wellness and who also will hold officers accountable. So I give much weight to Melron's recommendation.

I appreciate Batista's philosophy of "Do No Harm" (articulated in his book and an accompanying [pledge](#)). I think his view, that a shift in culture and emphasis on shared values with the community are key to long-term change in law enforcement, is entirely correct. This reminds me a great deal of David Couper's philosophy.

I appreciate that Batista introduced ICAT (Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics) training to Mesa. ICAT is an innovative training program, developed by PERF, that provides first responding police officers with the tools, skills, and options they need to successfully and safely defuse a range of incidents, to avoid officer-involved fatalities and other adverse outcomes. Implementation of ICAT

training in Madison is one of the recommendations of the MPD Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee.

I appreciate Batista's willingness to implement necessary changes to use-of-force practices and oversight of use-of-force. This is congruent with the recommendations of OIR and the Ad Hoc Committee.

I appreciate Batista's willingness to seek truly independent investigation of controversial incidents. In Mesa, this led to a review by PERF that generated 66 recommendations that are being implemented.

I appreciate Batista's commitment to community policing. A revival of core aspects of community policing constitute additional key recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee.

I appreciate his commitment to officer wellness. The Community Response Team has been advocating for additional supports for officer wellness for years, and this gave rise to some of the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendations.

Community leaders in Mesa talk about how Batista opened a door of transparency that was needed – and this is something that I also appreciate. MPD has an unfortunate history of concealing information that citizens have a right to know (e.g., see the article "[Shielded](#)" in the Isthmus – *"Isthmus sought records on the incident in an open records request on Dec. 7, 2016. The department delayed producing the requested documents for more than a year. Only after the paper filed a lawsuit did the department turn over 729 pages of documents."*).

I also appreciate that Batista has sought to address homelessness and drug addiction in a more effective and life changing manner, including use of community courts to help break homeless residents out of the criminal justice cycle.

I appreciate that both in Tucson and Mesa, Batista has a history of community outreach and establishing strong relationships with the community. And that includes strong relationships with marginalized segments of the community. He has held Latino Town Halls and is a Spanish speaker himself. He is sensitive to the fear of deportation among undocumented community residents. Looking online, I see particular praise of Batista from Black community leaders. It appears clear that community leaders and city officials in Tucson and Mesa loved him.

Batista's perspective and approach remind me very much of David Couper. Though there was strong resistance to Couper's reforms from the Madison police union early-on, he ended up beloved in Madison, and transforming the department in very beneficial ways. And given the groundwork laid by Chief Couper in Madison, and the aspirations of the Madison Police Department toward progressive values, I believe the Madison Police Department would be suitably receptive to Batista's style and reforms.

A constant refrain in the OIR Report, concerning MPD, was the question "Are we who we say we are?" I believe Ramon Batista is a transformative leader who could ensure that the answer to that question ends up being in the affirmative.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gregory Gelembiuk

From: [Jack Ringhand](#)
To: [Police Chief Search](#)
Cc: JRousseau@strangpatteson.com
Subject: Demand for Community Voice in Police Chief Hiring
Date: Wednesday, December 9, 2020 1:49:55 AM

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Dear Police and Fire Commissioners:

The PFC should not make a decision on a Police Chief on Wednesday, December 9. Give the community an opportunity to engage with the candidates and give informed feedback before deliberating. The OIR report and the MPD Policy and Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee report recommended that the PFC should involve the Madison community in the selection process through community panels and interviews. Such community engagement with police chief finalists is a normal part of the hiring process in many cities across the U.S. This was also recommended by former MPD Chief David Couper, who had one of the most successful tenures of Madison Police Chiefs. Some Madison alders are taken aback that this apparently isn't happening. Police Civilian Oversight Board member Shadayra Kilfoy-Flores was interviewed about the issue by Channel3000, stating "Candidates providing a video is not going to be sufficient. There needs to be actual community exchange. The community needs to be given an opportunity to interact with these candidates so we can get an idea of who they are as people."

<https://www.channel3000.com/there-needs-to-be-actual-community-exchange-some-say-final-interview-process-for-madison-police-chief-lacks-transparency/>

As OIR pointed out, this is all the more important in Wisconsin cities since, unlike cities in most states, police chiefs here basically can have lifetime tenure, rather than serving fixed terms.

It's also shocking that you have selected Portland Deputy Police Chief Chris Davis as a finalist and believe him suitable to be Madison's Chief of Police. You should examine what a candidate has done, not just their pretty words to you. In 2002, Davis participated in a controversial officer-involved fatality, precipitating major protests by Portland's Latinx community and mental health and civil rights advocates. Later, when Davis headed the Portland Police Bureau Internal Affairs Department, it had a deserved reputation of covering up misconduct. Then in 2014, Portland Police Lieutenant Rachel Andrew filed a \$300,000 civil rights lawsuit against Davis, Chief Reese, and the Portland Police Bureau for retaliation after she investigated Davis for misconduct. More recently, under Deputy Chief Davis' leadership, the Portland Police Bureau became a poster child for brutal mishandling of protests, and was found to be in direct violation of a federal restraining order regarding use of force against protestors. Davis has advocated practices like police in riot gear charging at crowds of protester to scare and disperse them, use of a wide variety of nonlethal munitions against protesters, slashing the tires of protester's cars, etc. His approach and mentality would never be accepted by Madison community members, and would exacerbate unrest here. That you chose Davis as a finalist seems to show a fatally flawed process. The most charitable explanation is that you're not doing adequate independent investigations into candidates but just relying on the materials submitted (i.e., how the candidates present themselves). This is what happens when a commission operates in the dark as you currently appear to be seeking to do. Please allow the community to properly engage, vet, and provide input on these finalists.

Sincerely,
Jack Ringhand