



Berkeley City Council
Minutes: Ad-Hoc Subcommittee on NCRIC and Urban Shield
By Tano Trachtenberg

Monday, June 4th, 2018
3:00-5:00pm
Redwood Room, 6th Floor
2180 Milvia St.

Committee Members:

- Mayor: Jesse Arreguin
- District 2: Cheryl Davila
- District 4: Kate Harrison
- District 6: Susan Wengraf

- Gene Bernardi
- Sarah Jones
- Bob Flasher
- Christine Schwartz
- Bill Springer
- John Lindsay-Poland
- Jovan Grogan
- Jette Winckler
- Tano Trachtenberg
- Brandi Campbell

Others in Attendance:

- David Brannigan, Berkeley Fire Chief
- Andrew Greenwood, Berkeley Police Chief
- Sgt. Fomby
- Cindy Shamban
- Ellen Brotsky

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm

2. Public Comment

Ellen Brotsky expressed that training should focus on prevention and community preparedness. Cindy Shamban encouraged the committee to develop written recommendations to the City Council. Bill Springer feels that community preparedness is separate from how the Urban Shield model works and he continues to support Urban Shield.

John Lindsay-Poland recommended that the committee include prevention to the Fire and Disaster Safety Commission's recommendation. He also encouraged the committee to other sorts of funding in addition to UASI. Sarah Jones would like the committee to define terrorism, and supports modifying Urban Shield.

Jette Winckler, expressed her support for staying in Urban Shield and wants Berkeley to be a part of reforming and innovating it. Christine Schwartz expressed that her support for Urban

Shield that stems from the responsibility she feels to her community. She believes that BPD needs the tactical training that they receive from Urban Shield.

Bob Flasher, a former firefighter, said that the practical training is critical for emergency responder and feels that the committee should adopt the proposed resolution from the Disaster and Fire Safety Commission.

3. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes were approved pending several typos that need to be fixed.

4. Discuss Recommendation from Fire and Disaster Safety Commission

Mayor Arreguín said that the key issue with the recommendation is the inclusion of the police department. His preference was to separate the police from this item.

Councilmember Wengraf feels that you can't separate fire and police when it comes to emergency response, and suggested including the police in the item.

Councilmember Harrison expressed that she has serious issues with the vendor show and does not want any department to participate in that. She is happy for the departments to participate in the other types of commands, but does not support police participating in the tactical component.

Chief Brannigan clarified their participation in Urban Shield at councilmember Davila's request.

Councilmember Harrison and councilmember Wengraf had a dialogue about the merits of the vendor show. Councilmember Harrison objects strongly to any Berkeley officials attending, whereas councilmember Wengraf feels that the vendor show can be reformed and currently displays valuable tools for BPD. Mayor Arreguín felt that it was too late to influence the 2018 program and vendor show. Councilmember Davila reminded others that the vendor show was a mandatory component of the SWAT teams participation in Urban Shield.

Sgt. Fomby emphasized that the other UASI trainings are not comparable to the training provided at Urban Shield. Those trainings are individual training courses, not the team participating together. They are not SRT trainings. SRT does regular, monthly training. He also clarified that there are some scenarios where SWAT works with medics. In his opinion there is nothing that replaces Urban Shield.

Councilmember Wengraf feels it is inappropriate to tell the police department they cannot attend the vendor show. Sgt. Fomby clarified that the vendor show is required.

Councilmember Harrison clarified that she wants to pull for 2018 only, and to look to 2019 to have an influence. She does not trust the Sherriff's department. She is also very upset at the presence of the Oathkeepers. Harrison went on to express that it is a matter of resource allocation. She was upset to hear that the Sherriff is spending millions of dollars on Urban Shield but Solano County was denied fire radios.

Councilmember Davila posited the merits of pulling out of the event altogether. Councilmember Wengraf is interested in providing the best training to make the community safe.

Mayor Arreguín feels there is enormous benefit to the other components of the program. He has kept an open mind during the extensive, yearlong, fact finding mission. He felt that it is clear that there are elements of the program that are positive and should be expanded. He expressed that the alternative trainings that BPD currently receives and other potential opportunities they could access are sufficient in the one-year absence of Urban Shield. He might feel differently if BPD had not participated for the past ten years.

Councilmember Wengraf does not feel it is possible to shield BPD from the values we do not like. She compared it to preventing your kid from sleeping over at someone's house that lets their children watch shows you don't like. She expressed that Urban Shield builds immunity to crisis.

Both Chief Greenwood and Chief Brannigan expressed that it takes enormous resources to develop scenarios at the scale Urban Shield does and that they could not do something equivalent independently.

Jovan Grogan expressed the City Manager's Office preference is to stay in Urban Shield and work on changing it from within. Urban Shield is the best training that exists. He wanted the committee to recognize that the county might not reconstitute the program in a palatable manner within a year. He does not want the city to pull out of Urban Shield without having a ready replacement.

Councilmember Wengraf expressed that Urban Shield is an important opportunity to offer officers given the staffing crisis BPD faces. She added that there are ramifications that are not being considered.

Action: M/S/C (Arreguín/Harrison) to adopt the Fire and Disaster Safety Recommendation and strike the word Police.

Vote: Ayes – Davila, Harrison, Arreguin; Noes – Wengraf; Abstain – None;

5. Recommendation(s) on Berkeley's Participation in Urban Shield for 2018

Chief Greenwood expressed that he would have trouble relaying this decision back to his department because, in his view, there are no negative outcomes to participating in Urban Shield. He also asked what aspects of a multiple scenario-based tactical exercise program the committee would like to see pulled out in order to make it acceptable.

Councilmember Harrison responded that the vendors' involvement and influence, the participation of foreign teams, using terrorist examples that are not common in the United States, and a lack of de-escalation are all examples of things that are problematic.

Councilmember Wengraf expressed that she would like to see BPD's experts still be able to participate as evaluators. The committee discussed ways to include this concern their recommendation, but could not come to an agreement that was satisfactory.

Action: M/S/C (Harrison/Arreguín) to "Suspend Berkeley's participation in the vendor show and BPD's participation in the tactical scenarios in 2018 pending timely reevaluation of the tactical-related offerings from the county in 2019. The suspension should not extend to the table top exercises (Yellow Command), the CERT exercises (Green Command), the Community Preparedness Fair (Gray Command) or to public safety seminars at Urban Shield."

Vote: Ayes – Davila, Harrison, Arreguin; Noes – Wengraf; Abstain – None;

The Mayor suggested that the minority have an opportunity to submit a report to council to express their opinion. The suggested council date was July 24th.

The committee decided that Items 6 and 7 would be discussed at the next meeting on June 13th.

6. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:32pm.