



City of Omaha
Jean Stothert, Mayor

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(Omaha, NE) - Mayor Jean Stothert announced a series of actions today to revise Omaha police policies, require additional training, solicit public input, and develop a strategic plan for diversity and training throughout city government.

“Meaningful change requires action. We are listening, learning, and taking appropriate actions,” said Mayor Jean Stothert. “We will be transparent, accountable, and focused on training. My goal is to make a good police department even better.”

Based on the current discussion of police reforms after nationwide protests, Police Chief Todd Schmaderer has made several changes in the Omaha Police Department’s Use of Force policy:

- Officer Duty to Intervene and Report
- Knee to Neck pin forbidden
- Prone position warning
- OPD has an existing ban on choke holds. (The change involves Carotid Restraint Control Hold (CRCH) only if officer is attacked or deadly force

Chief Schmaderer has also ordered new, mandatory training for all officers beginning in July.

“We want to be part of listening and reform,” said Chief Schmaderer.

Training will include Use of Force policy changes, Taser re-certification, suicide by cop training, the George Floyd case review, the impact of biased policing on community members and law enforcement, and stop stick deployment.

Over the last 10 years, officer-involved shootings in Omaha have decreased from 11 in 2010 to one in 2019, and zero in the first six months of 2020. Chief Schmaderer attributes the decline to five actions already adopted by the Omaha Police Department:

- Full deployment of body cameras
- Full deployment of less lethal tasers
- Mental health co-responder program
- Training
- Early warning tracking system to identify problem officers

Mayor Stothert will also revise the Executive Order that created the Citizen Complaint Review Board.

- The CCRB will provide an annual public report, including the number of cases reviewed and recommendations made by the Board

- Complaints against officers are currently filed with Internal Affairs. Citizens will also have the option to file complaints directly with the CCRB, however the initial investigation will continue to be conducted by Internal Affairs, followed by a review by the Chief of Police

“A citizen-led board provides an independent review of complaints against officers,” said Mayor Stothert. “We agree with suggestions that the results should be more transparent, so we will make the changes we can, without compromising confidential personnel details.”

In addition to the review of police policies and procedures, Mayor Stothert will take a series of initial steps to provide opportunities for input that will be used to develop a strategic plan to improve diversity and inclusion in city government.

- Name a Community Advisory Board
- Name a City Employee Advisory Board
- Hire a Diversity and Inclusion Manager
- Expand diverse representation on city boards and commissions
- Expand racial diversity in all departments including police and fire departments
- Mandatory bias training for all city employees

Mayor Stothert will also consult with community groups and citizen volunteers who serve on existing advisory boards including the Millennial Advisory Board, LGBTQ+ Advisory Board, Native American Advisory Board, and the Mayor’s Youth Advisory Board.

“We have an amazing city and amazing community partners, and we are part of this community,” said Chief Schmaderer. “I have great faith in this community and our future.”

“It will take all of us working together to achieve positive change,” said Mayor Stothert. “Can we do better? Of course, we always strive to do better. You aren’t handed trust, you earn it. These are our first steps, there will be others.”

At the Mayor’s request, Police Chief Todd Schmaderer is conducting a review of the recent protests and the police response. The review is currently underway and will be presented first to Mayor Stothert and the City Council, followed by public release.