



TO: Urbana City Council  
FROM: Diane Wolfe Marlin  
RE: Selection of firm for Independent Review: 4/10/2020 Use of Force Incident  
DATE: June 22, 2020

### **Background**

Following a use-of-force incident involving the arrest of Ms. Aleyah Lewis on 4/10/2020, the following steps were taken:

1. Urbana Police Department (UPD) completed the investigation of the incident
2. Urbana Police Chief Bryant Seraphin, Lt. Jason Norton, and City Administrator Carol Mitten briefed City Council members individually during the week of April 20, 2020.
3. The UPD Use of Force Review Board review was provided to the Urbana City Council on April 27, 2020. The Board found that officer actions were within UPD policy and procedure.
4. The Champaign County State's Attorney concluded that officer actions did not violate state law.
5. Chief Seraphin and Lt. Norton presented an overview of the incident to Urbana City Council on April 27, 2020. Included in the presentation were UPD body camera and dash cam videos from the incident and a follow-up interview in the Champaign County Jail. The video footage was cleared for release by the State's Attorney. The State's Attorney also participated in the April 27 meeting and answered questions from City Council.
6. On Friday, May 8, 2020, I convened a meeting of the following people:  
Ms. Minnie Pearson, President, Champaign County NAACP; Chief Robert Moore, Retired United States Marshal and Chair, Criminal Justice Committee, Illinois NAACP State Conference; Ms. Carol Spindel, President, ACLU Champaign County; Reverend Florence Caplow, Unitarian Universalist Church, Urbana; and Mr. Tracy Parsons, City of Champaign Community Relations Manager and Compliance Officer and Coordinator of the Champaign County Community Coalition. City staff attending included: Ms. Vacellia Clark, Human Relations Officer; Chief Bryant Seraphin; UPD Lt. Joel Sanders; and Mayor Diane Marlin. The meeting was not a public meeting.

### **Independent Review**

One of the steps identified by the above group, the City Council, and many members of the community as being essential to addressing community questions and concerns was to seek an Independent Review of the incident. The City has no authority to review any events that subsequently occurred in the Champaign County Jail.

Over the past weeks, City staff contacted several individuals and firms via telephone to discuss options for a factual, Independent Review. We sought an entity that had the necessary bandwidth to review evidence and documentation; assess tactical decisions; review current policies and practices; meet with city and community stakeholders; and present findings to City Council. We also sought to investigate a public allegation that one or more UPD officers contacted the individual who posted video of the incident on Facebook to ask him to remove it.

## **Selection Process**

Purchases of professional services over \$10,000 may be accomplished through a Request for Proposals (RFP) or Qualifications Based Selection (QBS) process, according to the City's Purchasing Policy. Because of the need to expedite the selection, and because of the sensitive nature of this work, the Mayor elected to conduct an informal qualifications based selection process.

City staff identified several individuals and firms capable of providing a factual, independent review. Key considerations were –

- Necessary expertise and experience to –
  - Review evidence and documentation
  - Assess tactical decisions
  - Review current policies and practices
  - Meet with City and community stakeholders
  - Present findings to City Council
  - Investigate a public allegation that one or more UPD officers contacted the individual who posted video of the incident on Facebook to ask him to remove it
- Necessary bandwidth to conduct all of these activities in a relatively short time period
- Independence

### **Individuals and firms considered:**

**Michael Schlosser, Director, [University of Illinois Police Training Institute](#), Champaign, IL**

Established in 1955 by state statute, the University of Illinois Police Training Institute (PTI) is one of the largest and longest running police academies in the United States. The Institute offers 14-week police academy training, 5-week correctional officer training, and advanced training for current officers in firearm and arrest and control tactics. Students come from more than 300 client agencies across Illinois.

The PTI has an additional focus on academic research in the field of law enforcement and criminal justice. PTI collaborates with numerous colleges and academic departments at the University of Illinois, including the Department of Computer Science in digital forensics research; Anthropology and Genomic Biology in forensics DNA research; Psychology and Beckman Institute in police attention and perception under stress; Kinesiology in police fitness, and Educational Psychology in regards to diversity training for police. Students have the opportunity to be involved in various research studies. The result is new and more effective teaching methods that improve decision-making in an increasingly complex working environment for police.

Many current UPD officers were trained at PTI. Mr. Schlosser has extensive experience in tactics and control instruction.

**Jim Alsup, Director and Jack Ryan, Co-Director,  
[Legal and Liability Risk Management Institute](#), Plainfield, IN**

The Legal & Liability Risk Management Institute (LLRMI) was created to assist risk management and law enforcement in providing a proactive approach to reduce exposure to liability and provide the best legal expertise when faced with litigation. LLRMI provides a team concept approach to liability with legal expertise for legal and constitutional standards and a subject matter expert in accepted police practices. LLRMI is a network of risk management professionals dedicated to enhancing the professionalism, effectiveness and reducing liability risk through training, policy, procedures, practices and legal support

**Debra Kirby, Senior Vice President, Operations, [Hillard Heintze](#), Chicago, IL**

Hillard Heintze is the leading law enforcement consulting firm in the U.S. with significant experience in investigating, reviewing, assessing and establishing modern policies that address officer use of force incidents. The firm served as the sole contract partner with the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community-Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) Collaborative Reform Initiative for Technical Assistance Program to institute collaborative reform in numerous agencies. They have a very large and diverse staff with the ability to address specific incidents, policies, training, supervision, equipment, and tactical operations as well as to seek community perspective and input.

Based on evaluation of credentials, experience, and approach and taking into account the need for an independent review, we contracted with Hillard Heintze. The firm will provide these services at a cost of \$16,575.

Attached is Statement of Qualifications for Hillard Heintze's Law Enforcement Consulting Practice. This firm was chosen based on its experience working with agencies of all sizes; its diverse team of consultants; its ability to engage community stakeholders and examine internal policies and practices in a comprehensive review. Examples of their work include case studies for the city of Boulder, Colorado and Elgin, Illinois

**CASE STUDIES: Hillard Heintze**

[Boulder, Colorado Police Department](#)

[Elgin, Illinois Police Department](#)

**Not Recommended:**

Mike Schlosser of the Police Training Institute is a nationally-recognized expert in law enforcement with excellent credentials. Because UPD officers are trained at the PTI and some are employed there, we decided not to engage him for this review. Likewise, LLRMI has an excellent reputation but did not have the same bandwidth as Hillard Heintze to perform the review.