

# Community Safety Working Group (CSWG)

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Darius Cage  
Debora Ferreira  
Pat Ononibaku  
Brianna Owen, Vice Chair  
Russ Vernon-Jones  
Elisha Walker  
Paul Wiley, Chair  
Jennifer Moyston, Staff Liaison

# CSWG Purpose

**The purpose of the Community Safety Working Group is to (a) make recommendations on alternative ways of providing public safety services to the community and (b) make recommendations on reforms to the current organizational and oversight structures of the Amherst Police Department.**

# CSWG Charge

## The Working Group shall:

- Study the complex issues of delivering community safety services – currently provided through the police department and other means – to ensure racial equity;
- Recommend reforms to the current organizational and oversight structures;
- Examine existing Town funding priorities for delivering community safety services.

## The Working Group can achieve this by:

- Learning from previous work by the Town through previous studies and committees;
- Examining current public safety services and how they are delivered;
- Reviewing policies, complaints, and current training practices;
- Exploring models of resident oversight of police departments;
- Collecting data from people's experiences in Amherst;
- Engaging the communities most impacted by policing to develop alternatives and identify solutions to diagnosed problems;
- Investigating alternative models such as:
  - Eugene “Cahoots” – Crisis Assistance Helping Out on the Street;
  - Albuquerque – Community Safety Alternative;

# CSWG Work Thus Far

- Elected chair and vice chair
- Held 8 meetings, our agenda is public and on the Amherst website, public comment is welcomed at the beginning of every meeting
- Conducted research on policing at the state and national level
- Attended webinars and viewed podcasts
- Solicited and received additional resources such as articles, upcoming workshops, books, etc., from community
- Requested information from the Amherst Police Department/received responses/requested additional information
- Made a public forum available on two dates to hear community experiences with the APD & Safety Services, and asked for the communities input for reform
- Created a survey to hear from people who want to remain anonymous but still provide feedback for our work

# HELP ENSURE RACIAL EQUITY IN THE TOWN OF AMHERST'S SAFETY SERVICES

THE TOWN OF  
AMHERST

COMMUNITY SAFETY  
WORKING GROUP

Come testify at our community forum or submit an online anonymous statement to tell us your experience(s) with the Amherst Police & other Safety Services. Every voice matters as we strive to make effective suggestions to reform safety services to ensure racial equity and community safety in Amherst.

**WEDNESDAY, JAN 13TH AT 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM**

**[HTTPS://AMHERSTMA.ZOOM.US/J/85682249552](https://amherstma.zoom.us/j/85682249552)**

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+16468769923,,85682249552#

**SATURDAY, JAN 16TH AT 3 PM - 5 PM**

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**TO SUBMIT AN ANONYMOUS SURVEY  
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To learn more about our charge, members, and work visit <https://www.amherstma.gov/3566/Community-Safety-Working-Group>

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# Next Steps and Actions

- Acquiring missing data from the APD
- Hearing for Amherst Non-Profits & organizations
- Considering a virtual meet with the APD
- Reviewing our survey responses
- Looking for a consultant to help us with research
- Continue outreach and move toward recommendations
- Secure the essential resources needed to organize and process data, broaden and deepen our community outreach, and write/create a final report in June of this year

# Town Council Support

- Help spread the word about our community survey
- Attend our public meetings and forums to listen
- Letter from the CSWG regarding the presence of a Town Council Member at the Community Forum