

**Members Present:** Rufina Hernández Dawn Holden-Hale, David Martinez, Larry Martinez, Alfredo Reyes, Julia Richman, Tymasha Watkins

**Members Absent:**

**Invited Speakers:** N/A



1. Board Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at approximately 10:00 a.m.
2. Richman shared the following announcements:
  - a. City Council is in the process of appointing Don Long to the Board, filling the vacancy left by Karen Collier.
  - b. Dawn Holden-Hale has announced her resignation from the Board due to an upcoming relocation outside of Denver that will disqualify her from serving on the Board. This will create a second active mayoral vacancy on the Board.
  - c. Board Administrator Daniel Van Schooten has transitioned to an on-call position and will focus his work on completing the annual report while the Board works to fill his position.
    - i. All members present volunteered to serve on the hiring committee for the new administrator.
3. The Board approved the meeting minutes from November 14.
4. The Board discussed various aspects of their draft 2025 Annual Report. Members discussed the need to shorten the report and whether various topics should be included and how much detail should be provided.
5. The Board moved into executive session to discuss personnel matters in accordance with D.R.M.C. 2- 33(c)(3) at approximately 11:00 a.m.
6. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 12:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Rufina Hernández, Larry Martinez, Alfredo Reyes, Julia Richman, Tymesha Watkins

**Members Absent:** David Martinez, Dawn Holden-Hale (excused), Don Long (excused)

**Invited Guests:**

Al Gardner, Department of Public Safety (DOS), Executive Director of Public Safety (EDOS)

Emily Lauck, DOS, Legislation and Policy Director

Carl McEncroe, DOS, Public Safety Compliance Officer

Lisabeth (Liz) Pérez Castle, Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM), Monitor

Wendy Shea, DOS, Special Counsel

Nicole Taylor, OIM, Community Relations Director



1. Board Chair Julia Richman called the meeting to order at approximately 10:00 a.m.
2. Richman shared the following announcements:
  - a. City Council appointed Don Long to the Board last week.
  - b. With Dawn Holden-Hale’s pending resignation due to her relocation outside of the City and County of Denver, there are now two mayoral vacancies on the Board. Anyone who is interested in joining the Board is encouraged to apply.
  - c. The job posting for the Board’s Administrator position will be going live shortly. Members of the public are encouraged to review it and share it with qualified candidates.
3. The Board postponed the approval of the minutes from January 9.
4. The Board heard public comment from Marilyn Ackermann, from Together Colorado. Ackermann expressed her concerns and questions about the status of the City’s contract with Flock Safety and the status of the Denver Police Department’s (DPD) proposed Education Based Development (EBD) policy.
5. The Board elected Rufina Hernández to serve as Chair and the Board re-elected Tymesha Watkins to serve as Vice-Chair.
  - a. Previous Chair Julia Richman agreed to support Hernández as she transitions into the role of Chair.
6. The Board clarified that while it received a request from community organization Transforming Our Communities Alliance (TOCA) to support the creation of a new Public Safety Commission, it has not taken a position on the matter and does not believe it has the resources to actively engage on the subject at this time.
7. The Board discussed various topics with EDOS Al Gardner:
  - a. Gardner stated that the next contract extension with Flock Safety (Flock) is still being negotiated, but that the input of the surveillance task force is being used to guide the process.

- b. Gardner stated that while the current terms of the contract provide Flock with ownership of the data, any sharing of Denver’s data will be prohibited moving forward.
  - c. Gardner shared that he is open to the careful implementation of a narrow version of the DPD’s proposed EBD policy. He has not approved a final policy yet, and is willing to consider any approved policy as a “pilot” that can be modified or cancelled based on the data it produces.
    - i. Special Counsel Wendy Shea outlined that additional changes are being made to narrow the scope of the EBD policy to only offenses in Conduct Categories A and B, and that the OIM’s involvement was being expanded to include the ability to recommend specific elements of the plan and appeal eligibility determinations.
    - ii. Shea also stated that officers would not get training credit for participating in EBD.
    - iii. Shea shared that complainants involved in cases where an officer participates in EBD will be notified and given the opportunity to respond to a survey so that the City can gather data about complainants’ satisfaction with the program.
    - iv. Shea shared that there will be quarterly reviews of the program’s data and an annual reporting of the related data.
  - d. The Board shared its concerns that closure letters to complainants are often insufficient and urged the DOS to include more information in them.
  - e. Gardner stated that the DOS’s project of identifying all active delegations of law enforcement authority in ongoing and the records identified will be audited for necessity and risk by a future Chief Compliance Officer.
  - f. Gardner stated that the responsibilities of the Chief Compliance Officer position are currently being fulfilled by Wendy Shea, while she continues to complete her duties as Special Counsel. Candidates for the position are actively being interviewed, and Gardner shared that the Independent Monitor accepted an invitation to participate in the first round of interviews.
  - g. Gardner stated that he supports the goal of the proposed ordinance being considered by City Council which would ban any law enforcement agent from wearing a face mask purely to shield their identities. He shared that he continues to have questions around whether the ordinance could be enforced against federal law enforcement agents and whether attempts to enforce it might escalate conflicts and put more people in danger.
    - i. Shea shared that federal immigration agents currently notify DPD before conducting operations to avoid conflict between enforcement agencies, but that there is no guarantee that there will not be unexpected enforcement actions.
  - h. Gardner shared that Policy and Legislation Director Emily Lauck is resigning and thanked her for her 19 years of service.
8. Independent Monitor Liz Pérez Castle shared that she has been working with the City of Aurora as they work towards creating their own independent police oversight system.

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9. The Board moved into executive session to discuss matters covered by deliberative privilege in accordance with D.R.M.C. 2- 34(a)(7-8).
  
10. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 11:55 a.m.

Citizen Oversight Board (COB)  
Meeting Minutes – February 13, 2026

**Members Present:** Rufina Hernández, Dawn Holden-Hale, David Martinez, Larry Martinez, Julia Richman, Tymesha Watkins

**Members Absent:** Don Long (excused), Alfredo Reyes (excused)

**Invited Guests:** N/A



1. Board Chair Rufina Hernández called the meeting to order at approximately 10:00 a.m.
2. Hernández shared the following announcements:
  - a. The Board continues to have two vacancies that we are waiting for the Mayor to fill. Today is the last day in this round of recruiting for members of the public to apply to be considered for appointment to our board by the Mayor’s Office.
  - b. Applications for the Board Administrator position were originally scheduled to close this week, but we have extended the application deadline to February 17.
3. The Board approved the meeting minutes from January 9 and 23.
4. The Board moved into executive session to discuss matters covered by deliberative privilege in accordance with D.R.M.C. 2- 34(a)(7-8).
5. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 12:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Rufina Hernández, Dawn Holden-Hale, Don Long, Larry Martinez, Julia Richman, Alfredo Reyes,

**Members Absent:** David Martinez, Tymesha Watkins

**Invited Guests:**

Ron Thomas, Denver Police Department (DPD), Chief of Police

Lisabeth Pérez Castle, Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM), Independent Monitor



1. Board Chair Rufina Hernández called the meeting to order at approximately 10:00 a.m.
2. Hernández welcomed recently appointed Board member Don Long to his first meeting.
3. Hernández shared the following announcements:
  - a. The Board is in the process of hiring a new administrator and is working to select a pool of candidates to interview.
  - b. The Board continues to have two vacancies that we are waiting for the Mayor to fill. The Mayor’s Office is still in the process of reviewing applications it received last month.
  - c. The Board is actively working on drafting its 2025 Annual Report, which is due to be published on March 15. The Board anticipates holding public forums in April and May to share its report with the community.
4. The Board approved the meeting minutes from February 13.
5. The Board heard public comments from three community members:
  - a. Dr. Thomas Mayes commended the leadership of the Denver Police and Sheriff Departments for their service and their examples of leadership during Black History Month.
  - b. Marilyn Ackermann expressed appreciation for the black leaders in Denver’s public safety departments and welcomed new Board member Don Long.
  - c. Boyce Royal shared about his concerns related to an arrest he witnessed involving twenty DPD officers, and the lack of response he has received. Board members encouraged him to file a formal complaint with the OIM and he agreed to do so.
6. The Board discussed the following topics with Chief of Police Ron Thomas:
  - a. Automatic License Plate Readers
    - i. Thomas stated that the City’s ALPR contract with Flock Safety will expire on March 31, 2026.
    - ii. The DPD held a competitive bidding process for the next license plate reader contract, and has selected Axon as its new vendor moving forward. Axon already provides DPD with Tasers, body worn cameras, and a secure database to store related footage. The ALPR data will be stored in the existing secure database, called evidence.com.
    - iii. Thomas stated that Denver will own the data produced by Axon’s license plate readers, and that Axon does not have a national data-sharing network for its data like Flock Safety does.

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- iv. Additional safety features in the new contract include an opt-out of automatic updates that may add new, noncompliant features, and search controls that block searches for prohibited reasons.
    - v. Board members highlighted their concerns around the mass surveillance side of license plate readers and their potential for abuse and disproportionate harm to marginalized communities.
  - b. Drones as First Responders
    - i. Thomas stated that while the DPD signed a no-cost contract to pilot drones from Flock Safety, no such drones have been delivered or flown by DPD.
    - ii. The DPD is currently piloting drones provided by Skydio.
  - c. Proposed Education Based Development policy
    - i. Thomas has submitted a new draft of the policy to the Executive Director of Public Safety for his review and potential approval. Thomas stated that many recommendations from the OIM and the community were incorporated into this draft.
  - d. Discipline backlog
    - i. No disciplinary orders have been issued to DPD officers in the past three months, due to the fact that the Department of Public Safety's Chief Compliance Officer position has been vacant since July 2025.
    - ii. The Board expressed concern about the rising backlog of officers with pending discipline cases, and that the backlog might be used to justify reductions in accountability.
    - iii. Thomas stated that no cases were currently in danger of being dismissed due to delays and that contemplation of discipline letters have not been sent to subject officers in order to avoid triggering legal deadlines.
    - iv. The Board requested the number of disciplinary cases currently awaiting discipline.
  - e. Use of Force Review Board
    - i. Thomas stated that one community member was added to the review board's membership pool in 2025, and two more were added in early 2026.
    - ii. Thomas agreed to share the names and backgrounds of the individuals serving on the review board.
- 7. Independent Monitor Lisabeth Pérez Castle provided the following updates:
  - a. The OIM is conducting a full analysis of the latest draft of the Education Based Development policy
  - b. The OIM's annual report will be published on or before March 15, 2026
  - c. The OIM will be attending a forum on March 23 hosted by the Colorado Black Roundtable, which will include the Mayor and public safety leaders.
- 8. The Board moved into executive session to discuss matters covered by deliberative privilege in accordance with D.R.M.C. 2- 34(a)(7-8) at approximately 11:22 a.m.
- 9. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 12:00 p.m.



**Members Present:** Rufina Hernández, Larry Martinez, Julia Richman, Tymesha Watkins

**Members Absent:** Don Long, Alfredo Reyes, David Martinez

**Invited Guests:**

Elias Diggins, Denver Sheriff Department (DSD), Sheriff  
Lisabeth Pérez Castle, Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM), Independent Monitor

1. Board Chair Rufina Hernández called the meeting to order at approximately 10:00 a.m.
2. Hernández shared the following announcements:
  - a. The Board's 2025 Annual Report is scheduled for publication on March 15.
  - b. The Board is continuing to move forward in the hiring process for a new administrator. Interviews with five candidates have been scheduled for next week.
  - c. The Board continues to have two vacancies that the Mayor is responsible for filling.
3. Approval of the minutes from February 27 was postponed.
4. The Board heard public comment from a community member named Francisco, who shared concerns about a December 8, 2025, arrest at Union Station that he witnessed being conducted by both Denver police officers and Regional Transit District (RTD) officers. He specifically shared concerns about Denver officers not activating their body worn cameras appropriately.
5. The Board discussed the following topics with Sheriff Elias Diggins:
  - a. The Board member emphasized the importance of compliance with body worn camera policies and prompt accountability when those policies are not followed.
  - b. Diggins stated that the DSD has almost completed its transition from paper medical records to a new electronic record system. The new system is currently being tested and staff training will begin in April. Full implementation is expected to occur over the summer.
  - c. In response to questions about declining staffing rates in an already understaffed department, Diggins cited a temporary but large wave of retirements from long-serving employees who had joined during a hiring surge in the mid-1990s.
    - i. Diggins emphasized that the DSD has invested significant resources into recruitment efforts and currently has a class of 30 deputies in training.
    - ii. Diggins stated that some exit surveys for resignations point to deputy frustrations with the length of time it takes to complete the disciplinary process.
  - d. Diggins reported that the County Jail's in-person visitation facility was used 38 times in January and 45 times in February, and that the option for people in custody to change into regular clothing was used 27 of those times.
  - e. Diggins stated that the DSD deputy unions oppose the use of mediation to resolve complaints filed by people in custody, and that he will not pursue a mediation program without employee support.
  - f. Diggins confirmed previous reporting that he is considering retiring in April 2028.
  - g. In response to questions submitted by attendees, Diggins stated that the DSD currently has no plans to adopt the police department's proposed Education Based Development policy.

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6. The Board moved into executive session to discuss matters covered by deliberative privilege in accordance with D.R.M.C. 2- 34(a)(7-8) at approximately 11:00 a.m.
7. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 12:00 p.m.



**Members Present:** Rufina Hernández, Larry Martinez, Julia Richman, Tymesha Watkins

**Members Absent:** Don Long, David Martinez, Alfredo Reyes,

**Invited Guests:**

Lisabeth Pérez Castle, Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM), Independent Monitor

1. Board Chair Rufina Hernández called the meeting to order at approximately 10:15 a.m. after technical difficulties delayed the meeting's start.
2. Hernández shared the following announcements:
  - a. The Board's 2025 Annual Report was issued on March 15. At-large Councilmembers Parady and Gonzalez-Gutierrez have invited the COB and OIM to give a presentation to the community on their reports. That event was initially scheduled for April 8, but has been rescheduled to April 21.
  - b. The Board conducted the final round of interviews for the Board Administrator position on March 27. We have made a selection and are working with HR to put together an official offer soon.
  - c. The board continues to have 2 mayoral vacancies. We received an e-mail from the mayor's office, stating that candidates for appointment were currently being reviewed by the Mayor for appointment.
3. The Board unanimously approved the minutes from February 27 and March 13.
4. The Board heard updates from its two committees.
  - a. Community Engagement Committee Chair Hernández gave a report on the committee's recent activities. They will be sponsoring an event to present our annual report and to engage with the community on issues of concern. After the board administrator is hired, the committee will start issuing a quarterly newsletter to help stakeholders stay apprised of public safety issues in Denver. The committee also hopes to organize at least two community meetings for the public in 2026.
  - b. Management Committee Chair Julia Richman stated that the committee's update would be shared in executive session.
5. As the Board's representative on the City's Surveillance Task Force, Richman shared about the task force's efforts to draft ordinance language establishing guardrails for future surveillance technology.
  - a. The COB did not sign on to the ACLU's letter related to the contract with Axon for license plate reader cameras. The Board has not come to an official consensus on its position regarding surveillance technologies, and should have that conversation when the full board is able to participate.
  - b. Board member Larry Martinez stated that the board should have a clear statement regarding new technologies, mass surveillance, and the infringement of people's rights, and that the Board should engage the community to help them know what is happening. He stated that he is opposed to both license plate cameras and drones. Richman agreed to start working on a draft letter for the Board to consider.

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6. Hernández led the Board through a review of several areas of the Board’s bylaws, including meetings required for public comment, meetings with safety leaders, and attendance requirements of board members.
7. The Board moved into executive session to discuss personnel matters and matters covered by deliberative privilege in accordance with D.R.M.C. 2- 34(a)(7-8) at approximately 11:05 a.m.
8. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 12:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Rufina Hernández, Larry Martinez, Julia Richman, Alfredo Reyes, Tymesha Watkins

**Members Absent:** Don Long, David Martinez

**Invited Guests:**

Lisabeth Pérez Castle, Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM), Independent Monitor  
Ron Thomas, Denver Police Department (DPD), Chief of Police



1. Board Chair Rufina Hernández called the meeting to order at approximately 10:00 a.m.
2. Hernández shared the following announcements:
  - a. On April 21, the COB presented its 2025 Annual Report at a community event hosted by At-large Councilmembers Sarah Parady and Serena Gonzales-Gutierrez. All top public safety leaders attended: Executive Director Al Gardner, Sheriff Elias Diggins, Fire Chief Desmond Fulton, and Chief Ron Thomas. There was strong turnout and meaningful engagement on a variety of topics.
  - b. The Board will also be presenting its annual report at Blair-Caldwell Library on June 23 and before City Council’s Health and Safety Committee on June 24.
  - c. The Board anticipates that William Fenton will begin serving as the Board’s Administrator on May 18.
  - d. The Board continues to have 2 mayoral vacancies. We received an e-mail from the mayor’s office, stating that candidates for appointment were currently being reviewed by the Mayor for appointment. Additionally, two current Board members, Julia Richman and David Martinez, have terms that will expire at the end of 2026.
3. The Board voted to approve the minutes from April 10, with Richman abstaining.
4. No members of the public provided public comment.
5. The Board discussed several topics with Chief of Police Ron Thomas:
  - a. Proposed Education Based Development policy:
    - i. Thomas stated that he had provided final revisions of the draft policy to the OIM.
    - ii. Thomas characterized the policy as a pilot that would be evaluated after one year. The DPD is in conversations with an academic at the University of Georgia who is considering assisting in the evaluation of the policy. That academic has previously worked with the DPD to analyze body worn camera footage.
    - iii. Thomas stated that the following data points that will be collected, and the Board asked for a copy of the full written criteria:
      1. % of cases diverted to EBD
      2. % of successful EBD completions
      3. rate of repeat offenses
      4. satisfaction of complainants and subject officers
      5. types of cases diverted
      6. alignment between DPD & OIM recommendations
      7. duration of EBD cases vs. traditional investigations

- b. Thomas stated that the DPD’s closure letters to complainants have been improved over the past year and that they now contain more detailed descriptions of violations. The Board shared concerns that community members still find letters to be unclear at times and requested recent letters be provided.
- c. Thomas described the circumstances that led to two DPD officers wearing face masks during a search warrant operation on April 16. He stated that the officers were undercover detectives and are allowed by ordinance to wear a face covering.
  - i. The Board discussed how the use of non-standardized face masks generated confusion and fear in the community, and Thomas agreed to consider procuring official DPD face masks to differentiate undercover officers from federal agents.
- d. Thomas provided the following data related to the ongoing pilot of a “Drones as First Responders” program, utilizing two Skydio drones. The drones have been deployed over 900 times, and arrive at the scene before officer 85% of the time. Approximately 40% of the time, the footage provided by drones resulted in the cancellation of a police response. Approximately 25% of the time, the drones provided overwatch services. The drones have been used to locate 150 subject people and 50 subject vehicles. Drone footage is treated like body worn camera footage and stored in the same database with the same retention policies.
  - i. In one case, a drone identified an armed individual on a roof who may have been planning to ambush police officers, allowing officers to approach safely and disarm the individual.
  - ii. In another case, a drone located a suspect who had fled and was hiding in a body of very cold water. The suspect was suffering from hypothermia when they were transferred to medical professionals, and Thomas believes the suspect would likely have died if he had not been located by the drone.
  - iii. The Board asked Thomas to share any hiccups, refinements, and lessons learned during the course of this pilot.
  - iv. Once the initial no-cost pilot contract ends, the DPD plans to continue leasing the drones, docking equipment, and software through the end of the year at an approximate cost of \$150,000. The DPD would likely engage in a formal RFP process only if and when it decides to expand drone coverage beyond the downtown core.
- e. Thomas confirmed that the DPD is updating its use of force policy and allowing officers to use TASERS in more circumstances. Previously, officers could only use TASERS when suspects demonstrated “active aggression” towards officers. Under the new policy, officers could use TASERS against suspects exhibiting “defensive resistance” such as fleeing or non-violently resisting being arrested.
  - i. Pérez Castle stated that the policy was illegally implemented as the DPD had not given the OIM a reasonable amount of time to review it and provide recommendations as required by ordinance. The DPD provided the OIM with a draft of the new policy on April 9 and requested the OIM’s comments by April 23. However, on April 14, before the OIM had provided any comments, the policy was officially published in the DPD’s internal PowerDMS system.
  - ii. The Board expressed serious concern about the DPD’s pattern of disregard for the ordinance language requiring that the OIM be allowed to review and comment on significant policy changes. The Board requested an official legal interpretation from the City Attorney’s Office as to whether the ordinance was

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being complied with and also requested that the DPD rescind the policy until the issue was resolved.

6. Independent Monitor Liz Castle shared additional concerns about the DPD's refusal to share the names of people who submitted public comments on the Education Based Development policy. The OIM is authorized to access and handle highly confidential information, and takes offense at the DPD's refusal to share that data with the OIM.
7. The Board meeting concluded at approximately 11:20 a.m.