

Public Safety Commission Meeting (June 5, 2017) - Public Comment
Gregory Foster, City of Austin Community Advocate Appointee
Austin Regional Intelligence Center Privacy Policy Advisory Committee

Introduction

Before I begin, I'd like to thank the Commissioners for their service to the City; public servants are rarely thanked enough. I would also like to thank you for continuing to honor the Commission's obligation to hear and negotiate representation of the diverse interests of the people of the City of Austin through this public forum.

My name is Gregory Foster and I'm here to announce my resignation from my appointed role as the City of Austin's representative on the Austin Regional Intelligence Center's Privacy Policy Advisory Committee. In the time I have, I will briefly describe that role, my work, and the Commission's opportunity to help find a new appointee.

ARIC

The Austin Regional Intelligence Center is the local law enforcement fusion center for the tri-county area. It has been in operation since December 15, 2010. The Center is primarily operated by the Austin Police Department and is legally indistinguishable from APD. It is funded and staffed by an expanding roster of county, city, and school law enforcement agencies.

ARIC Privacy Policy Advisory Committee

The Privacy Policy Advisory Committee and its responsibilities are statutorily described in section IV.F of the ARIC Privacy Policy. The Committee consists of five appointed representatives tasked with tracking and encouraging the increased integrity of the fusion center's privacy policy and practices. The role of the City of Austin's appointee is to be a "community advocate" although there is no statutory definition of what that role or any of the other roles are responsible for in practice. The primary products of the Committee are an annual report with recommendations for any privacy policy changes to the Executive Board of ARIC, and a secondary report to the partner agencies incorporating feedback from the Board.

Community Advocate Role

I was appointed to the community advocate role on the Privacy Policy Advisory Committee in late 2013. The Committee has convened five times throughout my service and has not recommended any changes to ARIC's privacy policy. My primary contribution has been to ensure the Committee abides by and embraces Texas Open Meetings law by collecting voice recordings of all meetings. ARIC generously hosts those recordings and meeting agendas on its public website, a resource that will be helpful for bringing future appointees up-to-speed.

Resignation and Commission's Opportunity to Help Appoint

I am resigning from my role primarily because my family is moving out of the Austin area. There are other reasons and observations I can share with the Commission publicly during a dedicated block of time at your July meeting and/or as a document included in the public record of the Commission's proceedings. I have identified one potential candidate for the role whom I can privately recommend.

The Commission played an important role in vetting my appointment to the community advocate role. Former Council Member Laura Morrison recommended my appointment to her colleagues and sought further vetting from the Public Safety Commission and the Austin Police Department. With the Commission's approval, the appointment was passed on the consent calendar at a City Council meeting. There is no statutory definition of how this process must work, so it is at the Council and Commission's discretion as to how you would like to carry out the next appointment.

It has been an honor to serve the City of Austin in this small way. Thank you for your support, time, and service. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

ARIC Privacy Policy (September 2013)

IV. Governance and Oversight

F. Privacy Policy Advisory Committee.

- a. The Privacy Policy Advisory Committee (Committee) shall review the Privacy Policy annually to ensure safeguards, and sanctions are in place to protect personal information, and shall advise the Executive Board of ARIC of its recommendations based upon the purpose and mission statements of ARIC.
- b. The Committee shall annually select from its membership a chair and any additional officers that the board finds appropriate. A person may not serve as the chair for more than two consecutive years. Upon selection of the chair and additional officers, the Committee shall agree upon the meeting schedule and other operational procedures.
- c. The Committee shall include the following, as selected by the governing bodies or their designees:
 1. a community advocate, as selected by the City of Austin;
 2. a licensed attorney, as selected by Hays County;
 3. an information privacy advocate, as selected by the City of Round Rock;
 4. a criminal justice expert, as selected by Travis County; and
 5. a law enforcement expert, as selected by Williamson County.
- d. The Committee shall provide a report to the Partner Agencies no less than once each calendar year that details all proposed or executed changes to the Privacy Policy. The report will include the results of any discussion, review and decision by the Executive Board regarding such changes