

The Procedural Justice Committee held a meeting on January 5, 2023 at the Public Safety Building, 505 Main Street. In attendance were Isis Benitez, Ivan Braxton, Carisma Collins, Cecilia McPeck, Carmen M. McGill, Jenna Salmonese, John Zeltmann, John Penney, Jordan Schinella, and Nedra Thompson.

Schinella was attending for the first time, as the committee continues its efforts to add citizen members. Common Council member Thompson was there to find out more about the committee's work.

Penney pointed out that the Common Council recently held a public hearing on crime activity in the city. Some residents spoke of the need for collaboration between the police and community and also the need for more youth programs and opportunities.

Penney said city Police Chief Tom Pape also spoke at the Common Council meeting, saying violent crime has had an uptick but overall crime is down, including shootings.

Regarding Procedural Justice Committee membership, Zeltmann said he hoped the committee can continue its efforts to recruit more members. Committee members agreed that they wanted to restore vitality to the meetings and that it shouldn't take another crisis to get more public involvement in the committee.

Braxton, who works for SNUG, said things have been relatively quiet of late and that SNUG continues its work providing safe passage for children walking home from school in the afternoon.

Regarding crime overall, committee members agreed that there is just a small percentage of people causing most of the problems.

Thompson said there needs to be more parental involvement and that parents have to hold their children more responsible and provide some discipline. Committee members agreed that faith-based organizations and others can play an important role in the development of children.

Committee members also discussed the benefits of the Dutchess County Youth and Police Initiative (YPI) training initiative, a weeklong, curriculum-based program that helps build positive change and trust between young

people and law enforcement by providing early intervention initiatives for students to build rapport with police officers.

The committee's next meeting will take place in February.