

Meeting Agenda and Notice
Community Advisory on Public Safety Commission

Wednesday, January 24, 2024 at 4:30 pm – 6:00 pm

Kelly Conference Room (#155), Showers Building, 401 N. Morton Street

The public may also access the meeting at the following link:

<https://bloomington.zoom.us/j/88064525074?pwd=xqME3WyZXzYbv9E42hJ21i7jxcHV.1>

- I. ROLL CALL & INTRODUCTIONS
- II. ELECTION OF NEW CO-CHAIRS
- III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
- IV. APPROVAL OF MEMORANDA/MINUTES
Regular Session Minutes – November 1, 2023
- V. REPORTS (if any)
 - a. Co-Chairs
 - b. Individual Members
 - c. Committees
 - i. Outreach Committee – Group Exercise
 - d. Staff
- VI. REPORTS FROM THE PUBLIC / PUBLIC COMMENT
 - *BRIEF RECESS* -
- VII. NEW BUSINESS
 - a. Discussion of materials for Commission-sponsored events
 - b. Good Communication Practices
- VIII. OTHER BUSINESS
- IX. TOPIC SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS
- X. ADJOURNMENT

CAPS Commission Goals and Purpose:

Perform research and gather data on the perceptions and preferences about public safety from community members, with specific focus on perceptions and preference data gathered from minority community members, individuals who are disabled, and other often marginalized community members

Research evidence-based alternatives to traditional policing

Identify best practices in public safety globally and evaluate the efficacy of such practices for implementation in Bloomington.

Make recommendations to the Common Council, the Board of Public Safety, and/or the Mayor or the Mayor's designee on policies and programs that enhance public safety for all community members.

MEMORANDUM

**Community Advisory on Public Safety (CAPS) Commission
Wednesday, November 1, 2023, 4:30 p.m. – Hooker Conference Room (#245),
401 N. Morton Street, Bloomington, Indiana**

The Regular Session meeting was called to order at 4:31 p.m.

Commission members present in person: Jason Michalek, Patty Moon (left 5:19 p.m.), Tyler Shaffer, Todd Mullins, Adrienne Weber, Jenna Buckner

Commission members present over Zoom: Kamala Brown-Sparks, Sophia Amos, Nejla Routsong (left 5:31 p.m.)

Commission members absent: None

Public present: Jim Shelton (Zoom), Sam Dove (Zoom)

City staff present: Ash Kulak, Stephen Lucas (left 5:11 p.m.)

INTRODUCTION AND ROLL CALL (4:31 p.m.)

- To transition the three new members, commissioners introduced themselves and explained why they are on or applied for the Commission and, if applicable, some of the work they have done on the Commission.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES (4:40 p.m.)

- Cm. Brown-Sparks moved and it was seconded to approve the agenda and minutes from September 13, 2023. Motion passed 9-0.

REPORTS (4:41 p.m.)

Co-chairs: Cm. Michalek reported attending the board and commission appreciation event on 10/24/2023 and gave some highlights. Cm. Moon had no report.

Individuals: No reports.

Committees:

- Reparations Committee – Cm. Brown-Sparks informed Commission about Black Ancestry Day event on 11/18/2023 from 1-3 p.m. at the Monroe County History Center

Cm. Moon briefly explained Commission committees and their purpose.

- CAPS Public Outreach Committee – Cm. Routsong explained this committee's foundation from recommendations from the Alternative Public Safety Report, updated Commission on event planning for IU Cinema Screenshare event on

2/24/2024 and likely sponsors, and discussed next steps for the Committee's direct outreach efforts

Staff:

- Ash Kulak welcomed new members to the Commission
- Stephen Lucas gave a brief run down on event planning and municipal spending

5:12 p.m. Cm. Moon moved and it was seconded to amend the Agenda to move item VII. b. (Anti-Trans State Legislation Response: Proposed CAPS Resolution 23-01) before item VI. a. (Logistics of Event Spending) of New Business to discuss. Motion passed 9-0.

OTHER BUSINESS (5:13 p.m.)

Anti-Trans State Legislation Response: Proposed CAPS Resolution 23-01

- Cm. Moon read the synopsis and explained the proposed CAPS resolution was drafted in response to a bill passed by the Indiana General Assembly during the 2023 Session banning gender affirming care for minors
- Cm. Moon explained that this resolution is relevant to the Commission as a matter of public safety because it violates the safety and privacy of LGBTQ+ youth. Cm. Moon further explained that the ACLU filed a federal class action lawsuit that is still currently in litigation and that a passage of this resolution would be a recommendation to the City of Bloomington to make a statement that the City is a safe haven for transgender youth, modeled off of a resolution passed by Kansas City (Missouri) City Council.
- Cm. Moon asked for questions. No questions.
- Cm. Moon and it was seconded to pass CAPS Resolution 23-01 and send it to the Office of the Mayor and Common Council. Motion passed 8-0-1.

Cm. Moon left the meeting at 5:19 p.m.

Vote on New Meeting Time

- Monthly 2024 Schedule
 - o Cm. Michalek moved and it was seconded to hold regular sessions for the 2024 year during the fourth Wednesday of the month from 4:30 to 6 p.m. Motion passed 8-0.
- December 2023 Meeting
 - o Cm. Michalek moved and it was seconded to cancel the Regular Session for December 6, 2023. Motion passed 8-0.

Brief Recess was cancelled. (5:28 p.m.)

NEW BUSINESS (5:28 p.m.)

Logistics of Events Spending

- Was covered during Staff Reports by Stephen Lucas

Common Council Special Committee on Council Processes Request for Feedback by November 20, 2023

- Staff liaison Kulak explained what feedback the Council Special Committee was asking for, specifically to review the code provisions that covered the CAPS Commission (Bloomington Municipal Code Section 2.12.120)

Cm. Routsong left the meeting at 5:31 p.m.

TOPIC SESSIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS (5:35 p.m.)

- Cm. Michalek asked for suggestions for future agendas. No suggestions made.

Meeting adjourned at 5:36 p.m.

Memorandum prepared by:
Ash Kulak, Staff



The Community Advisory on Public Safety (CAPS)
Commission of the City of Bloomington Presents

REIMAGINING SAFETY

A film by Matthew Solomon



24
FEB

Reimagining Safety Film Screening

Saturday, February 24th, 4 PM @ Indiana University Cinema

A screening of the award-winning documentary, *Reimagining Safety*, which explores the challenges of policing. The screening will be followed by a short Q&A with the director, Matthew Solomon, moderated by IU professor of American Studies and History, Dr. Micol Siegel.



25
FEB

Community Safety Panel Discussion

Sunday, February 25th, 2 PM @ IU School of Public Health Rm. 125

A panel discussion, also accessible over Zoom, featuring community safety experts film director Matthew Solomon, Nick Voyles of Bloomington's Indiana Recovery Alliance, Jordan McIntre of Bloomington's New Leaf New Life, Amber Sherman a podcaster and Black liberationist of Memphis, TN and Max Felker-Kantor of Ball State University.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!





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24

FEB

25

FEB

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!





The Community Advisory on Public Safety (CAPS)
 Commission of the City of Bloomington Presents

REIMAGINING SAFETY



Press Contact: Nejla Routsong/ CAPS Commission
812-360-6734/ nejlaroutsong@gmail.com



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: LOCAL COMMISSION ENVISIONS ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS TO PUBLIC SAFETY IN BLOOMINGTON

The City of Bloomington's CAPS Commission Invites Community to Reimagine Safety with Weekend Event Series on IU Campus

To highlight its newly released Alternative Public Safety Report and encourage community conversations about the proposed policies to ensure “safety for all at the expense of none,” the City of Bloomington’s Community Advisory on Public Safety (CAPS) Commission is hosting two free events.

On **Saturday, February 24 at 4 PM**, Indiana University Cinema will screen the award-winning documentary, *Reimagining Safety*, which explores the challenges of policing. The screening will be followed by a short Q&A with the director, Matthew Solomon, moderated by IU professor of American Studies and History, Dr. Micol Siegel. On **Sunday, February 25 at 2 PM**, a panel and community discussion will be held in the IU School of Public Health, Rm 125 and online via Zoom featuring local experts in community safety: film director Matthew Solomon, Nick Voyles of Bloomington's Indiana Recovery Alliance, Jordan McIntre of Bloomington's New Leaf New Life, Amber Sherman a Black liberation organizer and podcaster based in Memphis, TN and Max Felker-Kantor of Ball State University.

Both events are co-sponsored by Indiana Recovery Alliance, Care Not Cages, New Leaf New Life, IU American Studies Department, IU School of Public Health, Palestine Solidarity Committee at IU, and Monroe County Women's Commission.

- Reserve a free ticket for the screening: [https:// bit.ly/ ReimagineSafetyScreening](https://bit.ly/ReimagineSafetyScreening)
- Reserve a free ticket to the panel discussion: [https:// bit.ly/ ReimagineSafetyDiscussion](https://bit.ly/ReimagineSafetyDiscussion)
- Read the Alternative Public Safety Report: [https:// bit.ly/ AltPubSafetyReport](https://bit.ly/AltPubSafetyReport)
- Join the Bloomington Community Safety Roundtable: [https:// bit.ly/ BlgtnSafetyRoundtable](https://bit.ly/BlgtnSafetyRoundtable)

To produce the report, the Commission held a public safety town hall, performed in-depth stakeholder outreach, and conducted extensive research on evidence-based models for improving public safety. In the report, CAPS identifies several systemic problems and recommends a significant expansion of unarmed, highly trained community crisis responders to be led by a new department of community safety. The department would focus on resolving the underlying causes that most threaten public safety, such as inadequate housing options and access to drug treatment and mental healthcare. In addition to attending the *Reimagining Safety* events, the Commission invites community members to join the Bloomington Community Safety Roundtable to add their voices to the next iteration of its efforts to provide “safety for all at the expense of none.”

Cut together with hard-hitting, contemporary news footage from such watershed moments as the brutal murder in May 2020 of George Floyd and the ensuing protests in cities across the country, *Reimagining Safety* falls squarely in the center of both the national and local discussions on the best way forward in policing alternatives. Affirming the findings of the CAPS' Report, the film has as its premise that policing is not the only solution to all of society's challenges in public safety. Filmmaker Matthew Solomon will be present at both the screening and the panel discussion, and is available for interviews. Please contact CAPS Commission Member Nejla Routsong at nejlaroutsong@gmail.com to arrange an interview or a class visit.

Email 1

TO: Mayor, City Council, City Commissions/Boards, County Commissions/Boards, Event Sponsors & Partners, CAPS Report Stakeholders & Endorsers, CJAM and others

FROM: The CAPS Commission (via the Co-Chairs of CAPS Outreach Committee, Nejla Routsong and Patty Moon)

SUBJECT: Invitation to Reimagining Safety Events in Bloomington Feb 24 & 25

DATE: To be sent Jan 21-31 (after Jan 17 approval from both CAPS Outreach Committee and Event Co-Sponsors)

CONTENT:

The Community Advisory on Public Safety (CAPS)
Commission of the City of Bloomington Presents
REIMAGINING SAFETY

NEW LEAF
NEW LIFE

MONROE COUNTY
WOMEN'S COMMISSION

DEPARTMENT OF
AMERICAN
STUDIES

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH-
BLOOMINGTON
OFFICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH
PRACTICE

Indiana
Recovery
Alliance

IU PALESTINE SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

CARE
NOT
CAGES

JOIN CAPS COMMISSION FOR TWO FREE EVENTS ENVISIONING ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS TO PUBLIC SAFETY IN BLOOMINGTON

Dear [Insert first name or organization],

To highlight its newly released [Alternative Public Safety Report](#) and encourage community conversations about the proposed policies to ensure “safety for all at the expense of none,” the City of Bloomington’s [Community Advisory on Public Safety](#)

[\(CAPS\) Commission](#) invites you to attend two exciting free events to be held on the Indiana University campus..

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Both events are co-sponsored by Indiana Recovery Alliance, Care Not Cages, New Leaf New Life, IU American Studies Department, IU School of Public Health, Palestine Solidarity Committee at IU and Monroe County Women's Commission.

- **Reserve a free ticket for the screening:**
<https://bit.ly/ReimagineSafetyScreening>
- **Reserve a free ticket to the panel discussion:**
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- **Read the Alternative Public Safety Report:**
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- **Join the Bloomington Community Safety Roundtable:**
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To produce the report, the Commission held a public safety town hall, performed in-depth stakeholder outreach, and conducted extensive research on evidence-based models for improving public safety. In the report, CAPS identifies several systemic problems and recommends a significant expansion of unarmed, highly trained community crisis responders to be led by a new department of community safety. The department would focus on resolving the underlying causes that most threaten public safety, such as inadequate housing options and access to drug treatment and mental healthcare. In addition to attending the *Reimagining Safety* events, the Commission invites community members to join the Bloomington Community Safety Roundtable to add their voices to the next iteration of its efforts to provide "safety for all at the expense of none."

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alternatives. Affirming the findings of the CAPS' Report, the film has as its premise that policing is not the only solution to all of society's challenges in public safety. Filmmaker Matthew Solomon will be present at both the screening and the panel discussion, and is available for interviews and class visits.

In the spirit of community,

[CAPS Commission](#) of the
City of Bloomington, Indiana

P.S. Please **share this email widely** within your network!!

Email 2

TO: Mayor, City Council, City Commissions/Boards, County Commissions/Boards, Event Sponsors & Partners, CAPS Report Stakeholders & Endorsers, CJAM and others

FROM: The CAPS Commission

SUBJECT: Reminder to Reserve Your Tickets to Reimagining Safety in Bloomington Feb 24 & 25

DATE: To be sent Feb 5-16

CONTENT:



TICKETS ARE GOING FAST FOR REIMAGINING SAFETY EVENTS IN BLOOMINGTON

Hello [Insert **first name** or **organization**],

Grab your tickets before they are gone for two upcoming events to be hosted by the City of Bloomington's [Community Advisory on Public Safety \(CAPS\) Commission](#) on Feb 24 & 25 to highlight its newly released [Alternative Public Safety Report](#) and encourage community conversations about the proposed policies to ensure "safety for all at the expense of none." **If you have already reserved your seats for both of these TWO events, please disregard this message.**

To highlight its newly released [Alternative Public Safety Report](#) and encourage community conversations about the proposed policies to ensure "safety for all at the expense of none," the City of Bloomington's [Community Advisory on Public Safety \(CAPS\) Commission](#) invites you to attend two exciting free events to be held on the Indiana University campus..

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Please **share this email widely** and contact CAPS Commission Member Nejla Routsong at nejlaroutsong@gmail.com for questions or more information regarding these events.

In the spirit of community,

[CAPS Commission](#) of the
City of Bloomington, Indiana

Email 3

TO: Mayor, City Council, City Commissions/Boards, County Commissions/Boards, Event Sponsors & Partners, CAPS Report Stakeholders & Endorsers, CJAM and others

FROM: The CAPS Commission

SUBJECT: See you Saturday Feb 24 and Sunday Feb 25 at the Reimagining Safety events!

DATE: To be sent Feb 21-23

CONTENT:



The banner features a background image of riot police in full gear, including helmets and shields, holding batons. Overlaid on the image is the text: "The Community Advisory on Public Safety (CAPS) Commission of the City of Bloomington Presents" in white, and "REIMAGINING SAFETY" in large, bold, yellow letters. Below the image is a row of seven logos: New Leaf New Life (green leaf icon), Monroe County Women's Commission (blue circular seal), Department of American Studies (red circle with Greek letter Psi), School of Public Health - Bloomington Office of Public Health Practice (red square with Greek letter Psi), Indiana Recovery Alliance (purple circular seal), IU Palestine Solidarity Committee (black and white logo with a lamp), and CARE NOT CAGES (black and white logo with a bird icon).

WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THIS WEEKEND FEB 24/25 AT THE REIMAGINING SAFETY EVENTS HELD ON IU CAMPUS

Hello [Insert **first name** or **organization**],

This is LAST CALL for you to reserve your seats at two upcoming events to be hosted by the City of Bloomington's [Community Advisory on Public Safety \(CAPS\) Commission](#) on Feb 24 & 25 to highlight its newly released [Alternative Public Safety Report](#) and encourage community conversations about the proposed policies to ensure "safety for all at the expense of none." **If you have already reserved your seats for BOTH of these TWO events, please disregard this message.**

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Please **share this email widely** within your network and contact CAPS Commission Member Nejla Routsong at nejlaroutsong@gmail.com for questions or more information regarding these events.

We hope to see you at both of these events!

In solidarity,

[CAPS Commission](#) of the
City of Bloomington, Indiana

To: Mayor Kerry Thomson (mayor@)
From: CAPS Commission (to be sent via email by Outreach Committee co-chair)
Subject: Welcome and Invitation from the CAPS Commission
Date: Jan 25 (after approval at Jan 24 CAPS mtg)

Dear Mayor Thomson,

Please accept this hearty welcome from the CAPS Commission in your first term as Mayor of Bloomington! Your stakeholder testimony in our 2023 Alternative Public Safety Report was both informative and encouraging for us. It demonstrates that you have already carefully considered many of the most important steps City will need to take in order to achieve our Commission's goal of "safety for all, at the expense of none," especially as it pertains to public finance and accounting.

Additionally, your campaign's commitment to the provision of important safety resources such as housing, drug treatment and mental healthcare to everyone in the Bloomington community shows us that you share CAPS' systemic and inclusive approach to solving the complex problem of public safety. As you are likely aware from reading our Report, these three resources have been confirmed both by scholars of crime and policing in the classrooms, and by national and local emergency responders in the field, as evidence-based leverage points for improving public safety and community resilience in cities across the US.

As a demonstration of your stated support for our Report, which you called "thorough" and "commendable," we hereby request that your administration fund our most important recommendation for a feasibility study to assess the organizational, economic and legal implications of a new department of community safety and resilience without delay. While \$45-60,000 may seem like a big investment for the City to spend on assessing a new approach to public safety, we would like to remind you, from our [FAQ](#) to the Report that we produced last year:

Our current approach to public safety does not work, either from a crime-based, justice-based or cost-based perspective. The Bloomington Police Department has seen a 50% increase in its budget over the four years from 2019-2023, and in that same time, violent crime went up 24%, and other crimes and calls for service stayed around the same levels. Our lengthy outreach with key stakeholders in all existing City departments related to public safety found that the City is functionally unable to respond in a coordinated and strategic way to address the top three most widely acknowledged threats to public safety in Bloomington, which are rising or persistent rates of homelessness, drug use and mental illness.

The \$8 million¹ increase in the police budget that was invested during these four years certainly dwarfs (by a ratio of 133:1) the funding amount that CAPS has requested in order to explore the more evidence-based approaches to improving community safety and reducing violent crime.

For our part, the CAPS Commission is fully prepared to make Bloomington a more prosperous, safer and more resilient city in 2024 by:

1. Catalyzing important conversations around community safety through public events created through community partnerships, such as the Black Ancestry Day event we held in November and the Reimagining Safety events to be held in February,
2. Assembling a Bloomington Community Safety Roundtable of residents and institutional stakeholders who want to help CAPS create a community-led approach to public safety and who will advise on the creation of the RFP, the feasibility study and the subsequent DCSR, and
3. Deepening our outreach with safety-marginalized residents in order to better understand their needs and life experiences with a program of peer liaisons to be co-designed with the IU School of Social Work.

Of course, achieving ambitious goals such as these requires a volunteer-run Commission like ours to have a realistic view of our own limitations and to welcome the assistance of community partners. In 2023, CAPS is proud to have fostered relationships with Liz Grenat and the Community Justice and Mediation Center, Indiana Recovery Alliance, Care Not Cages, Charlotte Zietlow, Community Kitchen, Middle Way House, Eviction Prevention Project, Help Ourselves and the Monroe County History Center. Those positive experiences in establishing strong connections with Bloomington's leading changemakers in the nonprofit and advocacy sectors led the Commission to focus its efforts towards the end of 2023 on building deeper partnerships with the city's largest institution: Indiana University.

We are very happy to inform you that as of today, high-ranking officials of **three** IU Schools, the O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs (based in Indianapolis), the School of Public Health (Bloomington) and the School of Social Work (Bloomington), have offered to assist the CAPS Commission in its work this year by providing scholarly experts to advise the Commission in criminal justice, policing, public health, policy and social work, helping us to identify grant funding opportunities for our future recommendations, and assigning students to assist us in following best practices to ensure the highest standards of respect, care and professionalism in our outreach with the most safety-marginalized residents of Bloomington. We also hope and anticipate that our major events planned in February, as well as the funding of our proposal for a feasibility study by the City, may motivate even more IU schools, departments and centers to offer to collaborate with the Commission in its work.

¹ "Budget Summary" slide, 2023 City Budget Presentations, Bloomington Police Department, <<https://bloomington.in.gov/sites/default/files/2022-08/Tuesday%20083022%202023%20Budget%20Presentations%20web.pdf>>

In this same spirit of partnership, the Commission would like to officially invite you and your administration to partner with CAPS: Would you attend a CAPS meeting this year, or delegate one or more members of your staff to attend a meeting, where we can discuss how the City might collaborate with the Commission on its work in community safety? For instance, we might co-facilitate the Bloomington Community Safety Roundtable meetings, set up the basic parameters for the feasibility study for the new DCSR, and/or discuss which other community organizations/partners that you feel that we should include our work?

We also look forward to hearing your ideas on how we might collaborate in our efforts in community safety.

In the spirit of community,

CAPS Commission

Ten Thoughts about Working Together

I. Listen

Learn to listen so that you hear clearly what your fellow members have to say, what citizens have to say, and what staff has to say. Focus on listening, rather than on what you will say in response. State what you think you heard and ask for clarification before responding, in an effort to enhance understanding. Listen with respect for the individual speaking and for what is being said in order to build trust. Listen with an open mind. Urge persons of various points of view to speak and promise to listen to these positions seriously.

II. Seek Consensus

By listening with an open mind, it is possible to discern common ground among many competing viewpoints. Seeking this common ground and creating a consensus means that the process may be more important than the product. Sometimes more study on an issue helps to create consensus and may offer opportunities for finding commonalities of interest.

III. Disagree Agreeably

Reasonable people with good intentions may disagree with one another. Disagreement is not bad as long as the opinions of others are treated with respect. Don't lose sight of the issue at hand during a heated debate. Avoid grandstanding—reasonable arguments clearly backed up by careful homework may win a debate rather than making other members uncomfortable with hyperbole. Conflicts can be an opportunity for new insights, learning, and individual and organizational growth. Disagreements can illuminate a topic in helpful ways and can present solutions to problems that previously had not been seen. The successful resolution of conflict can bind people together in powerful ways.

IV. Respect the Will of the Majority

Live with the results of a vote on a major issue. Debate may be lively and heated, but once a decision is made and a vote taken, it is important to recognize this decision as the intent of the majority of the commission and take no actions to undermine this decision. Move on, without rancor.

V. Respect the Rights of the Minority

Be sensitive to the feelings and concerns of those who do not agree with the majority. Respect their rights of conscience.

VI. Treat Everyone with Respect

Do not publicly embarrass or humiliate fellow members, citizens, or staff. While disagreements are expected and acceptable, always maintain an atmosphere of good will and respect, no matter who is speaking. Focus on ideas and suggestions instead of questioning people's motives, intelligence, or integrity. Do not ask questions or make statements in a way that will intimidate or judge others.

VII. Share Information

Always share relevant information with fellow commission members, so that all members have the same information. Staff members also work to make certain that information is shared with all members in a timely manner.

VIII. Make Decisions in the Open

Create an environment in which the City's business is conducted in the open and in which debate is encouraged and valued. Adhere not only to the letter, but also to the spirit of the Open Meetings law. Avoid speaking for the Commission as a group outside of Commission meetings.

IX. Nurture the Value of the Individual; Recognize the Strength of the Team

Individual members have differing strengths, interests, and abilities. Take advantage of these differences when discussing issues-not everyone can be an expert on every issue. Learn what perspectives individuals bring to discussions. However, don't lose sight of the fact that the Commission's strength comes from working as a team.

X. This Too Shall Pass

Controversial issues may cause sleepless nights. However, there will always be another issue looming on the horizon that may be just as controversial. Over time, it will be difficult to remember what was controversial a mere three months earlier. Keep a balanced perspective, and above all, maintain a healthy sense of humor.