

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 5, 2020**

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### **Oceanside Releases Results of Survey Concerning Replacement of Chief of Police**

The City of Oceanside developed a community survey in order to gather input on the replacement of Police Chief Frank McCoy who is retiring in December. This came about after the San Diego Organizing Project (SDOP) and other organizations objected to City Manager Deanna Lorson's plan to limit the search to internal candidates, assemble what might have turned out to be anonymous advisory panels, and hire a new chief by early October (McCoy's original departure date). It would have left little time to discover community aspirations for the qualities of the next chief and the future of the police department.

The City released the [survey results](#) last Friday. They support SDOP's contention that a national search for a new chief is necessary to ensure that the best person for the job is hired—one that has the vision and courage to implement changes at the department that will lead to more humanizing police interactions with people of color and prevent a George Floyd-style murder and other types of abuse by police. Forty-seven percent of the respondents said yes to the following survey question: "The next Police Chief will lead the Oceanside Police Department through a critical examination of policing practices. With regard to the Oceanside Police Department specifically, do you believe police reform is required?" Nearly half want reform rather than the status quo, which SDOP believes is more likely to continue should the next chief come from within the department. Moreover, only 60% of respondents stated that they were "satisfied" with OPD, leaving a sizable 40% who do not feel this way.

It should be noted that the survey was published in English and Spanish. However, out of 1,431 respondents only 6 replied using the Spanish version. This number is greatly out of alignment with the percentage of monolingual Spanish speakers in the city. Also, as the survey did not gather demographic data such as race and ethnicity, it is impossible to know how many people of color responded. Like the tiny number of Spanish-speaking respondents, this places into question whether the survey succeeded in capturing a representative sample of residents, especially those most likely to have negative interactions with police.

Lastly and perplexingly, the survey did not directly ask respondents if they believe a national/external search for the next chief should be conducted. A very small, and statistically insignificant, number of respondents chose to state an opinion on this in the "comments" section of the survey.

Last month Ms. Lorson announced that the police chief search would be paused while survey results are gathered to inform the next steps in the process. The San Diego Organizing Project continues the call to:

1. Open this position to external applicants, so Oceanside has the best chance to hire the best person for the job;
2. Create online public workshops, especially in Spanish, for residents to share their concerns, values, and priorities for the hiring of the next chief;
3. Make the identity of all persons advising Ms. Lorson transparent before the selection of a new chief so residents know who is influencing this critical decision.

The San Diego Organizing Project is a nonprofit network of congregations that work to advance social and environmental justice. Together, our five Oceanside churches count over 13,000 residents as members.

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