

there who felt the same way.”

Most members stayed; some left and were replaced. The new iteration (see infobox, page 17) encompasses citizens of various ethnicities, backgrounds and professions—with one commonality.

“You’re not going to find on this board somebody who doesn’t want the police department to exist,” said Tricerri, who’s served several stints on PCAB since 2016. “If you look at each member of this board, they would really like, with the chief, to make this better, have the hard conversations. That’s what struck me in re-upping with this board.

“I was prepared to step back and not be part of the board any more to free up some time, but we’re in national and local conversations about policing that are important conversations. Those who are on the board now really feel their perspective is valued. And I can attest to the chief, as far as the reason he is not only continuing with [PCAB] but making it deeper and more expansive, is because he really wants to lean into the hard conversations.”

PCAB has met once or twice monthly—so far in private sessions, both Madden and Tricerri said, to have candid discussions while setting out areas of inquiry. The board decided to start on six: community policing; training; communications and messaging; support services; officer safety and wellness; and recruitment and retention.

Moving forward, some meetings will be

public, Madden said, based on the topic and confidentiality considerations, such as personnel matters.

“I don’t want the politics to take over what we’re trying to accomplish,” he added, contrasting PCAB with a Brown Act board. “This is really designed to get into the weeds on issues with the police department and relationships with the community.”

Tricerri, a former City Council candidate, said that “the key to this process is transparency. Yes, we’re meeting in private in many of these meetings and discussions, but what we’re discussing will be very transparent to the public as far as the agendas and minutes and the public report.”

Ample input?

PCAB isn’t Madden’s sole conduit for input. He has engaged community groups and residents, including those critical of his department. Swick, a founding member of Chico’s Concerned Citizens for Justice advocacy group, said she’s spoken with Madden, including about PCAB.

“The chief does say he believes in community policing, and part of what he’s doing is meeting with a variety of community members,” she told the CN&R by phone. “He seems to care deeply about these things, and I’m glad of that. But we kind of are sitting on different sides of the fences.

“Even though this is considered community policing, there’s no format for the public to speak,” added Swick, who observed PCAB meetings under O’Brien and his

Police reformer Margaret Swick says she hopes this version of PCAB will allow for more public participation.

CN&R FILE PHOTO

NEWSLINES CONTINUED ON PAGE 17



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