



The Oakland Observer @Oak_Observer

Nov 20 · 87 tweets

About to go straight into OPC. Tonight, OPD's militarized weapons report/request will be adjudicated & recommendation issued. Council undermined the timely passage of the report with a baseless denial of reseating two commissioners unanimously reappointed by the Selection Panel

VI.

OPD Militarized (or "Controlled") Equipment Report: Recommendation and Vote

The Police Commission will discuss and vote on the Oakland Police Department's (OPD) annual Militarized Equipment Report, including recommendations proposed by the Militarized Equipment Ad Hoc Committee. This item was previously discussed at the October 9, 2025, Commission meeting and referred back to the Militarized Equipment Ad Hoc Committee to clarify the OPD's specific requests. [2024-annual-military-equipment-meu-report.pdf](#) (Attachment 2)

- a. Discussion
- b. Public Comment
- c. Action, if any

Per Chair Garcia Acosta, Farmer was elevated to full Commissioner due to absence of another commissioner, but it appears they may have arrived...will confirm.

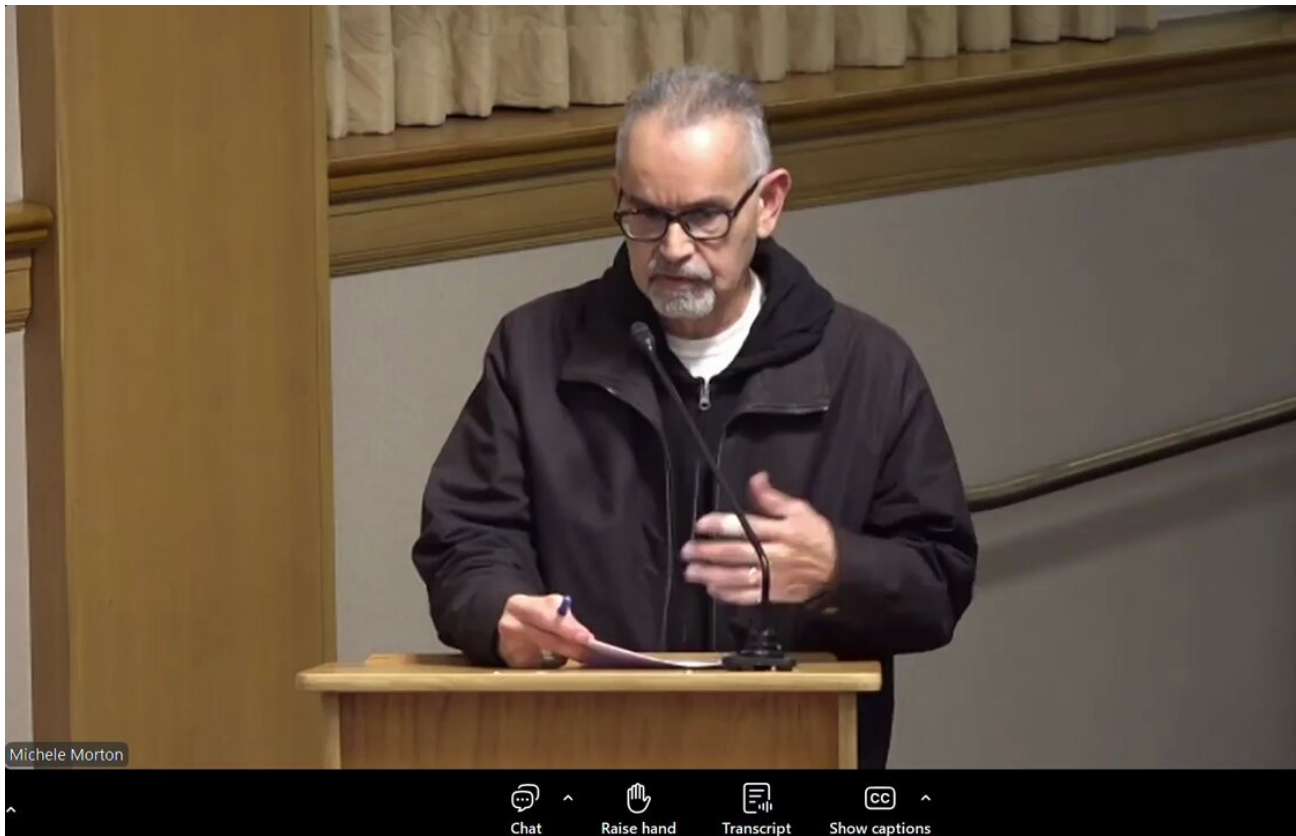
The OPC meeting has begun, after two cancelled meetings after Council literally attacked the resident led body, all Commissioners present, including Farmer, who will remain as alternate because absent Commissioner arrived

Staff is reading in Rajni Mandal's e comment pushing her point of view that Commissioners Farmer and Garcia Acosta violated Commission Rules of Conduct. Her comments, like her accusations previous, are extremely subjective, to the point of being a reach of comical proportions

Jennifer Tu, who was also a target of Mandal's remarks, commends Commissioners on their great work.



Mariano Contreras says that the current composition of the Police Commission is the body he voted for



No word on when the next academy will begin. It should be starting around now, historically. Current academy graduates in January

Academy Recruits	195th Academy: Began July 19, 2025 – 15 Police Officer Trainees (POT) 196 th Academy: TBD	
General	<u>Skelly Data:</u>	* Wait time for each Skelly – Varies

Garcia Acosta asked if there have been any incidents of people impersonating federal officers to commit crimes; DC Ausmus says there haven't been any that she knows of.

Garcia Acosta also asked about the Hoover Elementary area situation with ICE yesterday. Ausmus doesn't really have any answers. DC Casey Johnson takes it on

Johnson says that usually fed immigration agencies notify OPD if they are going to be carrying out an op, but they were not informed. On follow up, no federal agency returned their questions. They learned about it through media, and learned of confirmation same

way

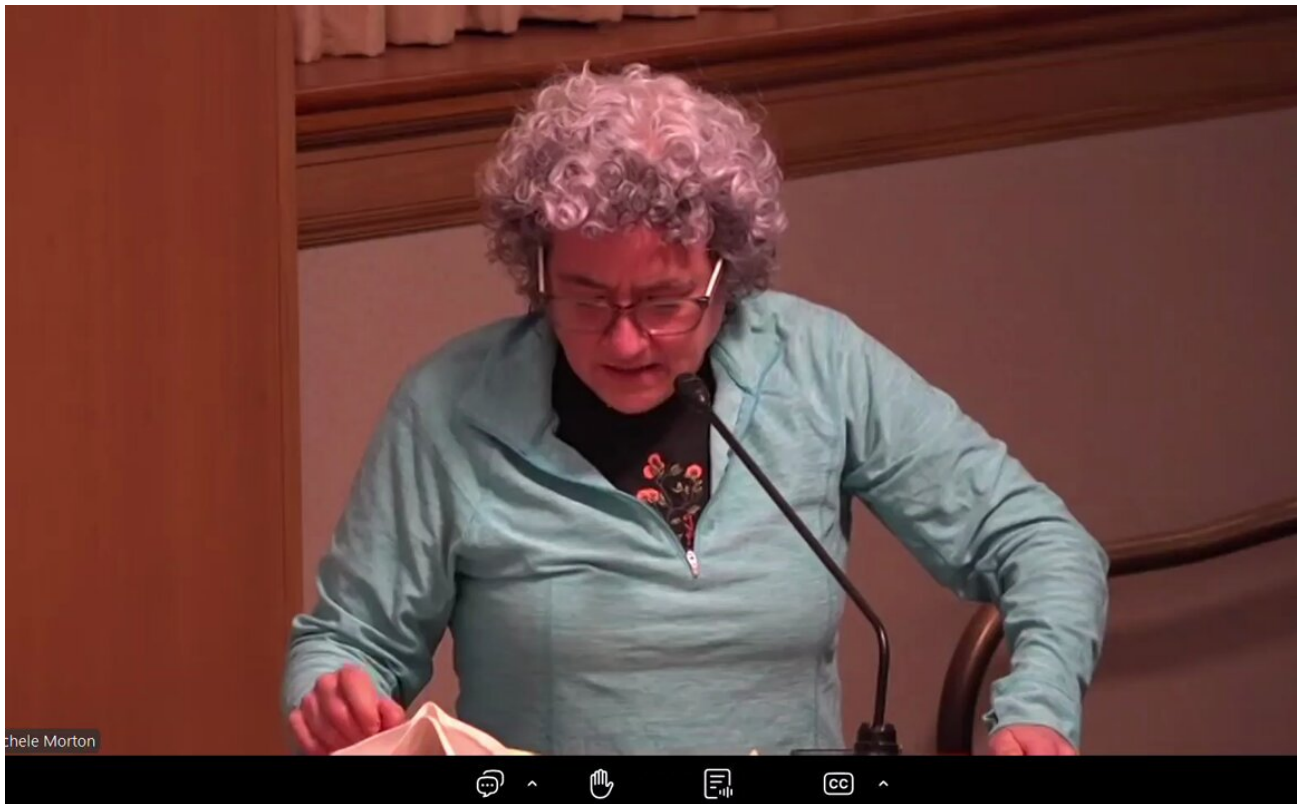


Commissioner Booker asked Johnson if, in a case like this, they may inadvertently respond as if it was a criminal action, not under color of law. [seems like there should be a high level of danger about that, so in that case, its odd that OPD did not respond as if it was]

Commissioner Riles: "former Chief Mitchell...mentioned that police cars don't have GPS and don't have cameras on the dashboard. We know this is an issue that will have to be taken up in June..." Riles asks if Commission can help urge OPD to take on GPS, notes Auditor's comments

Ausmus said that they may have an agreement on GPS in January, but isn't sure. She also implied that all the unions are negotiating on it [but all other city vehicles have GPS to my knowledge, so not sure about that]

Jenks noted, as I did, that it appears that OPD is the only department with vehicles that don't have their GPS on, contrary to the claim by Ausmus. She also noted that CMs didn't show any interest in the GPS issue, unlike Riles.



Millie Cleveland brought up the other obvious facts about GPS. OPD has had this policy in meet and confer for over a year, but they remain the only department that doesn't have it installed in vehicles, and the concern is disciplinary actions



Garcia Acosta agrees with Mario Contreras about the 1000 domestic violence cases, and asked for a follow up in the future, also from DVP

Now on to the militarized equipment report and recommendation. "this has been on calendar...I apologize and thank you all for patience...we've had several things that have been out of our control...it was important to call a special mtg today to dive in, have a vote"

Garcia Acosta says that things have changed between 2024 report and now "at one point in our past meetings there were several different things we were hearing...what we asked to be clear...on what the ask is...OPD provided a memo that outlined specific ask, and have made edits"

Commissioner Riles, from the ad hoc on the issue: "there has been a lot of uncertainty about what the department wanted, told different things at different times..." he says thanks to chair, they eventually got a written doc about what was desired in regards to Bearcat

Riles says that the Bearcat has been one of the biggest hurdles in the discussion. "when it was clear that the ad hoc was not at all interested in adding additional assault weapons beyond what exists now...we accepted that they may need to be replaced, but didn't need

extra ones"

So, Riles confirms that OPD is asking only for one for one replacements of existing assault rifles, not additional ones.

Riles wants to have ongoing militarized weapons ad hoc meetings to guide the policy on OPD's weapons and equipment.

The memo wasn't included in the agenda, unfortunately. OPD rep says that they are requesting 2 Lenco tactical Bearcats on F550 chassis, for six occupants to replace the armored SUV and current Bearcat

OPD rep says that the Bearcats they're asking for, on the F550 chassis, are considered to be armored SUVs [but different from the current armored SUV, which was armored post-production, but not a bearcat]

Riles notes that OPD doesn't have money to purchase the Bearcats, but he says that there needs to be more investigation about whether OPD really needs one "we're at a deadline at this point in terms of Commission recommendation, a few days from deadline"

Riles: "I've come to the conclusion that it makes sense to accept the OPD's request..." to continue discussing it in an ad hoc, since OPD can't purchase the Bearcats at the moment. Riles saying that they would accept the Bearcat, since they can't buy it yet anyway

Jackson-Castain asked whether there are dangers in using older rifles. Johnson came back to address, he says the rifles can explode and become dangerous

Jackson-Castain asks why they need two Bearcats. OPD rep says the current Bearcat holds 12 officers, but the new SUV Bearcats hold only 6, so the goal is to have the same capacity

OPD rep responds to Farmer's question about why the F550 chassis is so important in discussion. OPD rep says the vehicles are different from current Bearcat, because their chassis is different. Current Bearcat is mine-resistant, designed for heavier duty/

OPD rep says that the Bearcat needs to be replaced because of its diminishing function and need for repair

Farmer: "I personally feel as a Commissioner that recommending a Bearcat at this point...we shouldn't be doing that, it doesn't meet the requirements under the charter that we're required to follow"

Farmer strenuously objects to recommending the Bearcat. He says that it doesn't meet the conditions for equipment under the charter for militarized equipment.



more of Farmer's comments. He also said that it's a sole source contract, and no effort has been made to find the least expensive option. He says that the Bearcat is the most expensive version of an armored vehicle



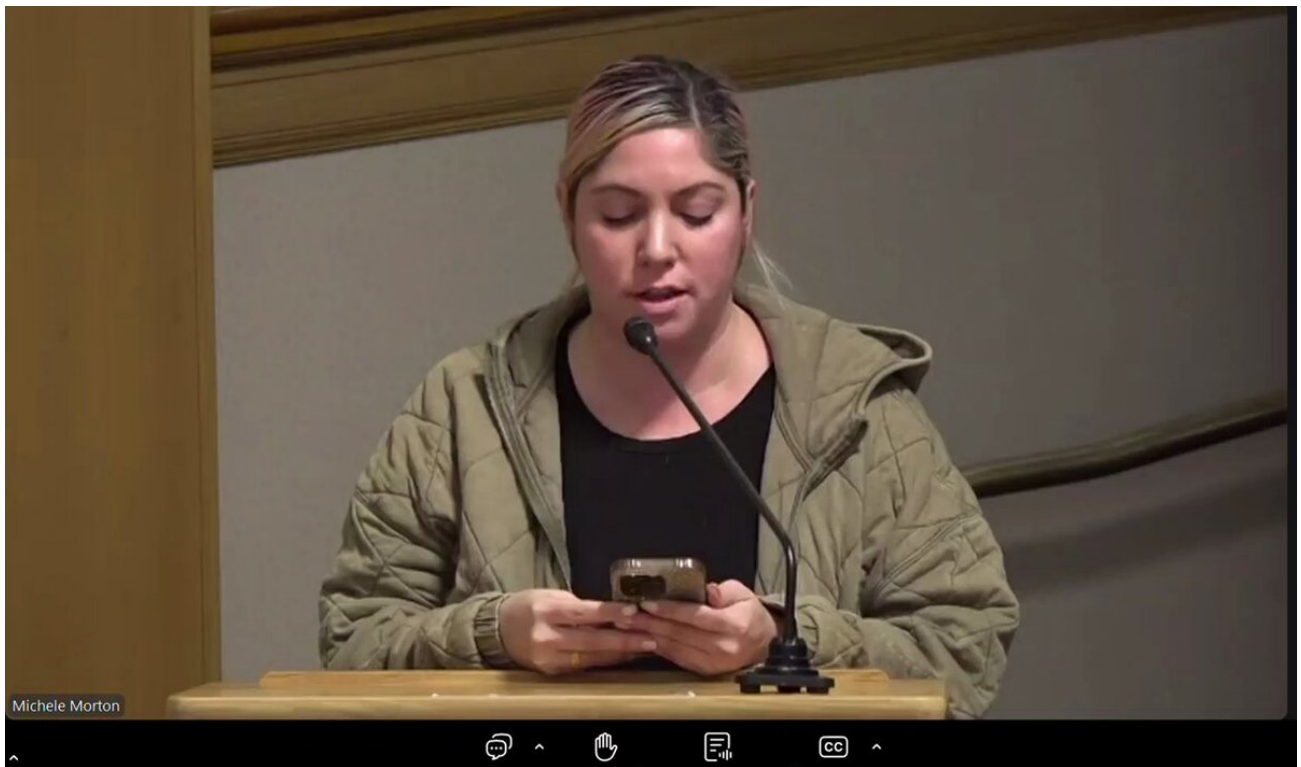
Garcia Acosta argues that the recommendation is to acquire two armored vehicles that are a step down from the current 12 vehicle Bearcat...the smaller Bearcats could meet the definition of a step down.

Commissioner Booker says that in their recommendation they don't back the Bearcats, that they just acquire two armored vehicles that are a step down from current.

Riles also argued that if OPD finds the money for the Bearcats, they still have to come back to OPC to get approval. But Dawitt says that's not his understanding.

It does seem they don't have to come back to OPC to get approval if they find money for Bearcats. But as any normal purchasing above a certain threshold, they would need Council approval

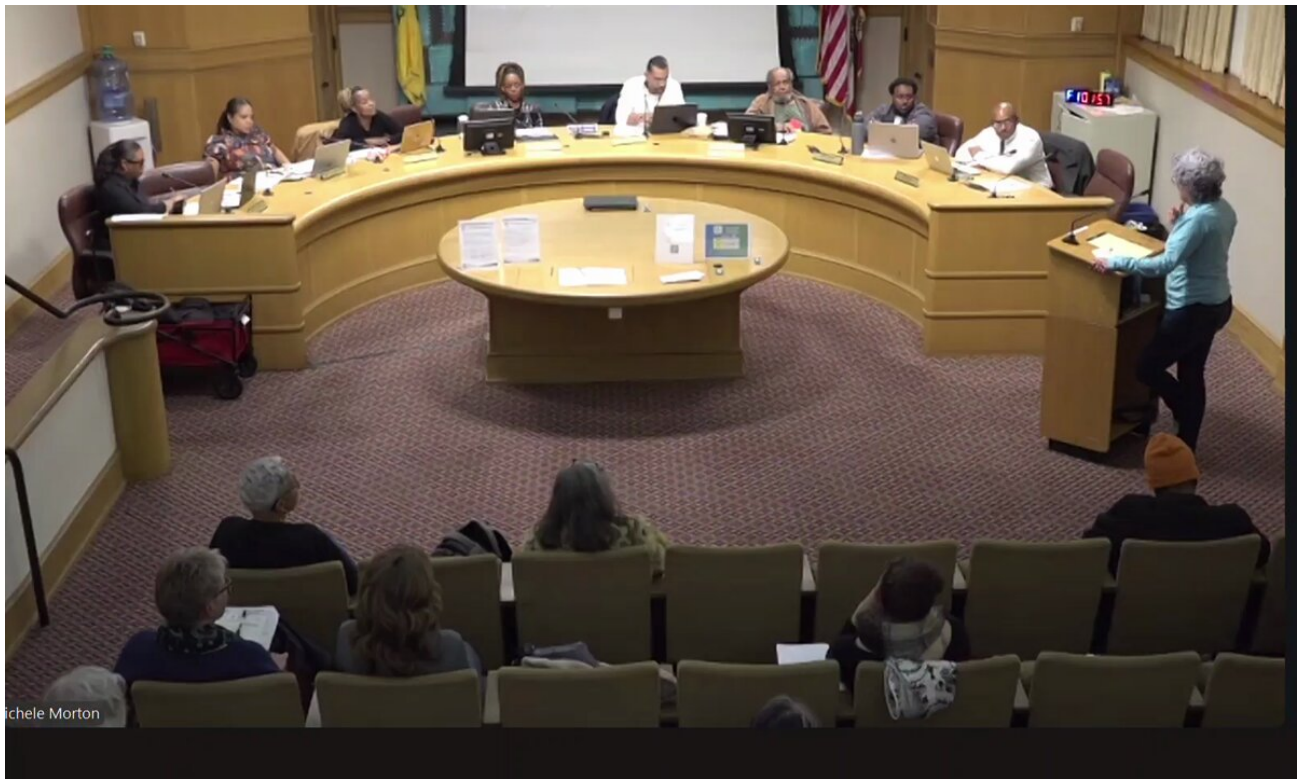
About a dozen speakers now













That's it for public comment, back to discussion.

Farmer correcting Garcia Acosta that its the public's welfare that's supposed to be protected when welfare is mentioned, not the officers.

Farmer says they've asked for alternatives from OPD throughout the ad hoc, but haven't gotten any serious responses. Farmer noting that they presented no evidence for why the Bearcat is a better alternative, mentions the claims that BC is always in the shop

Farmer: "We've not been provided with alternatives to even discuss what's a better decision"

There's some back and forth about why the chassis..."us trying to figure out officer safety...but they are supposed to come up with the options that keep them safe...they're trying to shove this one vehicle...not provided us the information"

Farmer: "we brought up [alternatives like armored passenger buses] but OPD didn't want to discuss them"

[this does sound like OPD brain. They decide they want something and that's it]

Farmer: "I just don't think we have the information to make a recommendation"

Farmer: "they haven't brought the alternatives would allow them to accomplish mission...in 2021...this is not me...I am just reporting to you what OPD says and put it in writing...they put it in the resolution that said they could divest from Bearcats"

This is getting spirited

Farmer: "All I'm saying we have not been given enough information to make an armored vehicle rec...all they've done is push this Bearcat"

Jackson-Castain: "this is disconcerting...I want police to have all the equipment they need to do their job...I find it disconcerting because we don't trust them enough to carry this equip"

JC: "I agree with Ms Tu, that we don't have enough info...they need to be safe, but at the same time, we haven't had enough convos about the restrictive parameters in the policy...we need to talk more about the instances this type of equip is deployed..."

Jackson Castain: "it is really difficult to have this convo without having the necessary information...I would like to hear more information"

Dawitt: "If we don't get the vote out tonight, will this just go through public safety committee"

Booker: "There is some missing information...I too want officers to be safe, public to be safe...but we need the information...I still don't have the info on what types of situations BC is pulled out for...and what types of situations would it be used for now..."

Seems to be rising consensus that OPD hasn't provided enough info about alternatives and usage.

Garcia-Acosta: "we need more info, we need to establish whether its Bearcats or alternatives, we still need to know, what's the story behind the deployments, what were the calls for, did they end in arrests, were they warrants?"

Garcia Acosta: "we need to be able to have a more laser focus on what are the impacts of these decisions, usage and how are they using it in the community...and is that violating constitutional policing"

Garcia Acosta asking some more questions of OPD. "in terms of searching for funds [for equip] is it DOJ money, where does it come from? Or is it General Fund...how does it work if you were going to look for funding"

OPD Rep: "some of it might come from asset forfeiture, grants...funding sources would be addressed after approval. There are multiple sources it could come from..." Riles says they were informed that rifles would come from asset forfeiture, and Bearcats would come from grants

GC asking if the OPC doesn't approve request, they'd be blocking OPD from seeking resources to purchase that equipment. OPD says that's correct.

Riles says that they can vote down any single piece of equipment.

They are going to go through each individual item, reflecting the fourth criteria. Then will vote on the complete recommendation.

OPD rep says that every use of the deployment is documented.

Farmer says that OPD actually hasn't presented any difference between deployments for the existing suburban and Bearcat

OPD rep says that the Bearcat is used for critical incidents, barricaded suspects...the deployments are not just happening...all of these things are being documented, audited.

JC says she wants more specificity on the uses, not to use it on mental health issues, or protests. "it's a slippery slope...because someone could have a mental health crisis where they are threatening to shoot someone"

JC asks if the proposed Bearcat has the hatch, which she also calls "shooting platform". It does.

OPC voted to approve the two smaller Bearcat SUVs as the stepdown from the current

Bearcat, per Chair 3 yes, 2 abstains

Second recommendation is a one for one replacement of rifles, no new rifles. That passes unanimously

Third recommendation on munitions requests, the ad hoc recommends the list [too long to repeat, things like explosive breaching equip] "only to direct replacement numbers...nothing is approved beyond replacement"

About to take a vote to approve the rest of the ad hoc recommendations, including recommendations that the review be on going, not just yearly, and that Chair of OPC meet with Public Safety Chair

Jackson Castain says they shouldn't bulk approve everything for one for one approval; Riles says that's what the ongoing review will be for.

They approved the policy document.

To be honest, that was a very confusing set of votes. Long story short, they approved keeping all of the equipment OPD proposed, but only one for one replacement. OPC did approve OPD's request for two smaller "SUV" bearcats as ostensible replacements of the current one.

The caveat on the Bearcats is that OPD does not currently have funding for the Bearcats, they would have to find it either in GPF, grants, or asset forfeiture. They now have authorization to seek the funding, however.

The rest of equipment was voted for on a one to one replacement status only, but they didn't bar any of the existing equipment, just not getting more of it.

They also approved two policy proposals: ongoing review of the equipment and its necessity and use; and regular meetings between OPC chair and Public Safety Chair.

That's it for me, goodnight.

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