STATE OF NEW YORK
CITY OF YONKERS
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MINUTES OF
CITY OF YONKERS
POLICE REFORM AND REINVENTION COLLABORATIVE
PUBLIC HEARING
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2020 - 6:01 P.M.

AT
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FACEBOOK LIVE STREAM
COMMITTEE BOARD MEMBERS:

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- continued on next page -
COMMITTEE BOARD MEMBERS:

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DET. KEITH OLSON, YONKERS PBA PRESIDENT

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DET. VINCENT TYLER, YPD

LT. CHARLES WALKER, YPD, YONKERS GUARDIANS ASSOCIATION

MS. CECILIA ZUNIGA-ESPIRITU, LA PINATA BAKER/MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHAMBER
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1 FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: We will
2 begin the meeting in one more minute. If
3 everyone can find a Covidly-distanced seat
4 and begin to settle in, I would appreciate
5 it.
6
7 Thank you.
8 (Brief Pause.)
9
8 FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: Good
9 afternoon, everyone. Welcome all Residents
10 to the Yonkers Police Reform Committee.
11 This is the first of three public forums for
12 you to come together as a community to
13 discuss how to rebuild the police community
14 relations with a fact based, open dialogue
15 about public safety needs of the City. This
16 is an opportunity for the Yonkers Police
17 Reform Committee in front here to listen to
18 your comments and your questions.
19 This initiative has been passed
20 down to each local government within the New
21 York State as Executive Order from Governor
22 Cuomo. In his Police Reform and Reinvention
Collaborative, Governor Cuomo outlines four areas to discuss and review. These four areas include, One, what functions should
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1. the police perform. Two, employing smart
2. and effective policing standards and
3. strategies. Three, fostering community
4. oriented leadership, culture and
5. accountability. And, four, recruiting and
6. supporting excellent personnel.

7. Hi. My name is Stephen and I will
8. be facilitating each of these public forum
9. meetings. Tonight’s topics focus on the
10. first two parts from the Police Reform
11. Guidebook. Once, again, they are, what
12. function should the police perform? As well
13. as employing support and effective policing
14. standards and strategies.

15. My role is to ensure that as many
16. citizens as possible have the opportunity to
17. be heard. In order for that to happen, each
18. person will be allotted three minutes to
19. speak. If you have any additional comments,
20. you may submit your testimony in writing to
21. Yonkerspolicereform@yonkersny.gov.

22. If you are here tonight and have a
23 comment, but do not wish to speak, see the
24 ladies in the back for a comment card for
25 you to fill out and to submit this evening.
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1 I will also be acting as the voice for all comments that have been submitted in advance of this meeting, and I will read each e-mail verbatim in the order in which they were received.

6 This forum is also being transmitted live via Facebook. Should any comments be submitted via Facebook during tonight’s meeting, they will be addressed at the next session.

11 The time is now 6:05, let me begin.

12 E-mail from Steve Kanney:

13 (Reading) Below are suggestions to consider. Number one, including a social worker along with police officers on call where mental health or family issues are present may be useful but obviously expensive. They may bring to bear other skills and knowledge of support services.

18 But the need of the police to protect them cannot be understated. Those can be very unstable and/or violent situations.
Two, body cameras and car cameras are a good idea protecting all parties.

Three, ongoing martial arts
training should be required for police.

This helps on three levels, police can suffer from the pressure of interacting with criminals, which can lead to frustration and poor decisions in critical situations.

Martial arts teaches compassion even for the attackers, which reduces these stressors.

Approaching a dangerous situation with a peaceful attitude taught in martial arts increases the potential for non-violent outcome.

Lastly, continuing studying and improving skills in self defense can increase accuracy and lower risk of unnecessary harm. Police officers have varying dispositions, and so need to choose from a variety of martial art disciplines to meet their individuals needs.

Suggestion number four, compassion training. Some may opt for this approach as well as three elements also taught in martial arts with the associated benefits
listed above.

And point number five, the last point, provide both internal and public
statements highlighting officers doing good work. Many of the issues discussed relate to management. Highlighting the good work of officers regularly have several positive functions. It shows other officers what good work they can do, it makes the community aware of the good works that the police are doing, and it increases the ability of the police force to hire high quality individuals.

E-mail from James Notley:

(Reading) I live in the Bryn Mawr section of Yonkers. I am concerned regarding the public safety in our area only because it is mostly a quiet scene or community. The blotter in Nextdoor.com has been helpful regarding the police activity in the area. Of course there have been some homeless issues, car theft, speeding, etc. However, as a civilian I would like to know who to contact if there is a complaint specific to this geographic area.
23 Kimberly Gold:

24 (Reading) Hello. I'm a resident of

25 Yonkers. I fully support the police force
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1 and want them to be generously funded. If
2 any moves are made to defend the police or
3 to materially re-imagine their function, I
4 will put my house on the market immediately
5 and leave Yonkers. Police are critical for
6 a safe and civilized city. I do believe
7 body cameras are important, but other than
8 that I have no desire to change our current
9 police force in any way as I am grateful for
10 the work that they do.

11 E-mail from Tina Michaud:
12 (Reading) Hello. I just wanted to
13 note that the Yonkers PD HR(sic) official
14 Twitter account follows Dan Bongino. A far
15 right barely concealed racist who Tweeted
16 recently that if Black Lives Matter to you,
17 then you can't possibly support the black
18 Lives Matter group. They are a Marxist
19 group of terrorists committed to destroying
20 the lives of community of the Black
21 residents. That's a fact. Inappropriate
22 and unprofessional for the Yonkers PDHQ to
23 follow this guy. How are Yonkers citizens

24 supposed to feel like their voices and

25 concerns are being serious -- taken
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1 seriously by the PD with this clown in their
2 Twitter account.
3 E-mail from Maria Rosa:
4 (Reading) Judging by the recent
5 arrest in Getty Square of the individual who
6 was shooting, but no police shooting, what
7 other changes in going after suspects are
8 being taken to be eliminate problems? I am
9 concerned that those are who are suspects
10 will knowingly attack and hurt and possibly
11 kill the officers attempting to arrest them.
12 What kind of tactics are being developed
13 that meets the requirements of the new laws
14 and effectively eliminates the claims of
15 injury by the suspects.
16 And the last e-mail submitted,
17 Lawrence Sullivan:
18 (Reading) I might suggest that the
19 YPD be used as a model for other large
20 diverse city police departments to learn
21 from. For example, how to balance the needs
22 of the people, good and bad, with very
little to no negative incidents. No large city can police with zero negative incidents but YPD seems to have figured it out very
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well. The public also needs to understand

and respect the law or deal with the

consequences. Keep up the good work.

(End of reading.)

With that I'd like to call forward

our first speaker for the evening.

TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: The first

speaker tonight, Pauline Sachar? Is there a

Pauline Sachar?

PUBLIC SPEAKER: Pauline.

TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Pauline. Do you

want to speak?

PUBLIC SPEAKER: Yes.

TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Please go up to

the microphone in the front.

PUBLIC SPEAKER: Okay. I wasn't

going to, but I will.

FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: I'll let

you know when you have one minute left to

speak.

PUBLIC SPEAKER: What?

FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: I'll let
23 you know when you have one minute left to
24 speak.
25 PUBLIC SPEAKER: Okay.
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1 My concern is for the policemen and
2 the jobs that they do. And that the
3 revolving door when these people are
4 victims, they take the, the -- wait. Give
5 me a minute. Not the victims. The
6 perpetrators or whatever. And they let them
7 out of jail. They arrest them and as soon
8 they're arrested with the Governor's no bail
9 and all this other thing, they let them
10 right back out. So I think that they have
11 more rights than the victims and the police.
12 I'm very concerned about that.
13 FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: Next
14 speaker.
15 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: The next speaker
16 we have is Jerry.
17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He's not
18 going to speak.
19 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Okay. Sandy
20 Dawson?
21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's okay.
22 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: No? Drew
23 Dawson?

24 FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: I'll let

25 you know when you have one minute left to
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1 speak.

2 UNIDENTIFIED PERSON: Wait. Hold

3 on a second. Just turning it on. I'm

4 sorry.

5 (Brief pause to adjust audio

6 issues.)

7 PUBLIC SPEAKER: Good evening. I'm

8 a recent graduate of Saunders Trade and

9 Technical High School and I was curious to

10 know if there's any opportunities for young

11 individuals to work with the police

12 department and also --

13 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can't hear you.

14 PUBLIC SPEAKER: -- the youth

15 department as well --

16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can't hear you in

17 the back. Can you double check the mic.

18 (Brief pause to adjust audio

19 issues.)

20 FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: Why don't

21 you wait one moment.

22 Can someone adjust the volume level
23 on the microphone, please.

24 (Brief pause to adjust audio issues.)
FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: We need to contact the appropriate person to raise the volume on the microphone. So I'm going to ask the speaker to come up and use the podium mic, please.

PUBLIC SPEAKER: Good evening. I'm a recent graduate of Saunders Trade and Technical High School. And I'm curious to know if there's any opportunity for young individuals like myself to obviously work with the police department and the youth department so we can create the bond that was possibly lost.

(Applause.)

TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: June Bateman? John Davis?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I decided not to speak.

TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Hector Santiago?

PUBLIC SPEAKER: All right. Good evening. My name is Hector Santiago. I'm the founder of Stop and Shake. You'll see
it all over the literature that you have tonight. There's a few things that I just want to bring to the forefront, make sure
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1 that the Board and other communities are
2 aware of. In Yonkers we have 45 to 50 Black
3 officers out of 700 officers in Yonkers.
4 Right? And I think those numbers need to
5 change. It can change originally by the
6 Mayor offering a tax break for police
7 officers who want to buy inside their
8 community. So that we have more police
9 officers that serve our community.
10 I wanted to speak more on youth
11 representation on the Board. If there's any
12 call for -- how are they seeking to get more
13 youth on the Board? I think the -- right
14 now I definitely want to give a shout-out to
15 those Board Members who really deserve to be
16 on this Board. There's other Board Members
17 that I feel were just put on and I want the
18 -- the Community, we're going to keep an eye
19 on the Board. This is not just going to be
20 another box checked off for funding.
21 Please. Get more youth on the Board. Get
22 more diversity on the Board. Reach across
the aisles. I'm here to help support in any way.

And my biggest thing is really the
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1 tax break for the Yonkers officers who want
2 to move into Yonkers and be part of the
3 community.
4       Stop and Shake has been a program
5 here in Yonkers for about five years. Most
6 -- I don't get no funding from the City.
7 Everything that you see and other programs
8 you can look up and see, comes from my
9 pockets or the community. I think Stop and
10 Shake is also the only program made created
11 from a community member running the Police
12 Department and I think that it needs to be
13 utilized more as a deescalation tool and not
14 just for something that looks good on
15 pamphlets.
16        Thank you and I hope to be working
17 with a lot of you soon.
18        (Applause.)
19       FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: Next
20 presenter, please.
21       TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: David Ancruem.
22 Sorry.
PUBLIC SPEAKER: My name is David Ancruem. I own a house in the First District of Yonkers. And in July I had an
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1 incident. One of my tenants that rent
2 upstairs from me, had gotten in an argument
3 or some trouble with some members that he
4 knew. I didn't know them. I'm in my bed
5 sleeping. And I hear people banging on my
6 front door trying to get in. I get out my
7 bed. I say, what is this. They want to get
8 in because the guy upstairs had an incident
9 with them I knew nothing about. So, I told
10 them go away. They kept pounding. I told
11 my daughter, call the police. The man
12 pulled a knife and told me if I don't open
13 the door, he's going to kick my door. I
14 went in my room. My daughter called the
15 police. Police said they'll come. This is
16 at ten at night. I had to go in my room and
17 get a shotgun. Ran out. When I opened the
18 door, they ran out. Out of my gate. The
19 police never came to my house. I called the
20 911. I called 4th Precinct. And I called
21 John Proctor's phonetic spelling number
22 377-777. That was at 10:30 at night. Two
in the morning, the police call me up and
say, do I still need police. And I said to
myself, is this only in the First District
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1 which is mostly a Black and Hispanic
2 district that the police are not responding
3 now to incidents when you call?
4 So I want to ask Olson, I want to
5 ask the Police Commissioner, how could this
6 happen? Anything drastic could have
7 happened and the police never came. What's
8 going on? Is this only in the First
9 District? I hope somebody company give me
10 an answer.
11 Thank you.
12 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: John and Daryl
13 Morrison?
14 FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: Use the
15 microphone on stage.
16 PUBLIC SPEAKER: Good evening. I'm
17 John Morrison. This is my brother Daryl
18 Morrison. We represent Brother and Brother.
19 We're here for the police reform. My thing
20 is that we can the meet every day --
21 AUDIENCE MEMBER: We can't hear.
22 PUBLIC SPEAKER: Okay. We're here
for police reform. People can come up with ideas. But it's not going to make a difference if we don't do three things. It
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1 has been said the experience, and there may
2 have been given some mistakes, if we cannot
3 acknowledge it, we can't gain experience.
4 First, we need to acknowledge that there's
5 systemic racism. Then we need to
6 acknowledge that there's police brutality.
7 We need to acknowledge that there's a
8 disconnect between the community and the
9 police. So, the police did good work the
10 other day.

11 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can you speak up
12 a little bit?
13 AUDIENCE MEMBER: We can't hear
14 you.
15 PUBLIC SPEAKER: I'm sorry. Can
16 you hear me now?
17 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes.
18 PUBLIC SPEAKER: Thank you.
19 The other day the Mayor said, the
20 police did good work. And they did. And I
21 take my hat off to them. That was a great
22 job they did. But when you make reference
to someone, we should say their name. And I
will say their name. And I will stand with
them. The disconnect is when something goes
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1 wrong with us, will they come stand with me
2 and say my name? That's what I'd like to
3 see. The police stand with me and I stand
4 with them. That's how we do it in the
5 community.
6 Number two, accountability. We
7 have to hold people accountable. Let's be
8 clear. Accountability from the police
9 department does not make me anti-police.
10 I'm only asking that the police department
11 hold each other accountable for their
12 actions. That's all. It is not anti-
13 police.
14 And number three, and the most
15 important part of this whole meeting,
16 respect. There has to be respect from both
17 sides. Respect from the police. Respect
18 from the community.
19 There's times things elevate for no
20 reason. Both sides. I've seen police let
21 things elevate acknowledging something. Why
22 you acknowledging something on the side?
23 Deal with what you're dealing with.

24 There was an officer that asked me

25 one time, do you think we do more bad or
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1 good in the Black community? I said, you do
2 more bad due to fear. Both sides have fear
3 of each other. And if you don't want to
4 acknowledge that we both have fear, then you
5 don't want to be here to solve the problem.
6 It's as simple as that. I shouldn't be
7 scared of you and you shouldn't be scared of
8 me. And I think if -- there's one thing in
9 common. Now, that I feel better. There's
10 one thing in common. That we all have. A
11 common denominator: We all want to come
12 home to our family safe. That's the one
13 common denominator that I have and you have.
14 And if we come together, it can happen. But
15 if we got two sides, one side this doesn't
16 matter, one side this doesn't matter, it
17 will never happen. So, I agree that this
18 Committee is good. And we should be able to
19 reach -- we should be able to
20 come -- Yonkers should the example.
21 But there's one thing that -- that
22 I have to remember. I wanted to bring up
23 the talk. When I said fear. The other
24 thing I do, that some of y'all don't do is
25 the called the talk of fear to our sons. I
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1 talk to my son about how to deal with the
2 police. That's the fear I have. I have to
3 talk to him. You may not have to talk to
4 your son about that. But a bigger fear for
5 me, I have to tell my mother the talk. The
6 way things are today. My grandmother has to
7 have the talk the way things are today. Why
8 should an 80-year-old lady have fear of the
9 police? For what? You're supposed to
10 protect and serve. Not have people scared.
11 So all I'm saying is, we need to do better.
12 Everybody. Thank you.

13 (Applause.)

14 PUBLIC SPEAKER: My name -- how
15 y'all doing out there? Y'all hear me?
16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes, sir.
17 PUBLIC SPEAKER: I got a strong
18 voice, right? Y'all hear me, right? In my
19 profession I have to have a strong voice for
20 my profession. I just want to say to
21 everyone here in order to have police
22 reform, you have to be in the community. If
you not in the community, all this right
here, is irrelevant. If you're not in the
community where police reform needs to be
at, you have no solution. Do you understand what I said? You have no solution if you don't know the neighborhood. If you as a cop cannot walk by and say certain people's names, you don't know the community. If you don't walk by and have street, street, street cops to interact with kids, not about crime, just about everyday life. How are they doing? How's your mother doing? How's your father doing? Did you eat today? If none of y'all in the neighborhood, we can't change nothing. So some of these meetings are irrelevant. Because look around. It's nobody from Schlobohm here. It's nobody from School Street here. It's nobody from Cottage here. Nobody's from Warburton here. So what we're doing is talking to each other. About changing. And it's going right here, right here. But if you're not the community to know who's who, what are we changing? We're not changing anything. If you know anything about the
hood, you know when something happens if
someone got raped in that neighborhood, you
just don't put a man on the, on the wall who
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1 wash cars. It's somebody shooting a gun in
2 the neighborhood, if he's not known for
3 shooting a gun, you don't put him on the
4 wall. And that goes back to saying, you
5 don't know the neighborhood. So how could
6 you change something that you don't know
7 nothing about? I can't go to other side of
8 the town to change nothing, because I don't
9 be over there. Do you understand what I'm
10 saying? So when you try to do a police
11 reform in the neighborhoods you're trying to
12 reform, if you don't know nothing about it,
13 what are you going to do? Somebody tell me.
14 Raise your hand. I want to hear it.
15 Because if you don't know who, who the
16 person is or if you don't know the
17 neighborhood, you can't do nothing in that
18 neighborhood, but throw everybody against
19 the wall.
20 I'm a DJ. I don't sell drugs. So
21 I'm standing somewhere waiting for a pizza,
22 you put me on the wall. I play music. I
23 don't sell no drugs. But if you knew me, if
24 you know the neighborhood, you would know
25 I'm not a suspect. Everybody in the
neighborhood is not a suspect. That’s the problem we having. Everybody in this color right here, is already a suspect before anything happens. We gather around and we sitting here talking about sports, y’all think we talking about robbing somebody. But you don’t know the neighborhood so you don’t know what them dudes are talking about. You know.

So, when you talking about reform, you need to go to the neighborhoods, pass out flyers in the neighborhoods and do some meetings in the neighborhood. We at the library. We at the end of Getty Square. They're not coming down here. They not coming down here to hear anything about reform. You gotta go to the people and ask them what they want and what they need. We can’t do this right here. Because nobody right here is in the neighborhood right here. I ain't never seen too many people around here where I'm at. You know what I'm
23 saying? So you gotta go into the
24 neighborhoods to do police reform. That's
25 the bottom line. You can't go pass out
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1 flyers.

2 (Applause.)

3 You can't do, like,

4 office-to-office with flyers. No, you gotta

5 go to the neighborhood. What do y'all need?

6 How can we change? How can you guys feel

7 comfortable with us? Right? Somebody tell

8 me I'm wrong. Raise your hand. We can

9 debate. We ain't got time to debate.

10 All right. That's all I gotta say.

11 Thank y'all.

12 (Applause.)

13 PREVIOUS PUBLIC SPEAKER: I know my

14 time is up. Just to add one more thing. On

15 the committee, we talk about Governor Cuomo

16 having put it out -- he also said that

17 you're supposed to have members on that

18 community. He didn't say you should, he

19 said must have members who live in the

20 community who have --

21 (Applause.)

22 -- have actions with the police.
23 He said they have to be on that Board. And
24 when you look at the list, they're not
25 there. He said members of the community
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1 with interactions with negative with the
2 police. He even said it could be people
3 incarcerated. But they need to be on that
4 Board. So hopefully you have four more
5 spots, put them on the Board. Thank you.
6 (Applause.)
7 FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: Just a
8 quick Covid-related break. We have reached
9 capacity inside the auditorium. And we do
10 have other speakers who are waiting
11 patiently outside. So if, we'd like to keep
12 a kind of a rotation system going tonight.
13 So once you have spoken, although we welcome
14 you, of course, it would be appreciated if,
15 again, we rotate, if a few members of the
16 community can leave to allow other members
17 of the community to enter and have an equal
18 opportunity to speak and share their
19 comments as well.
20 Thank you.
21 Next please.
22 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Ansel Lurio?
23 Yesenia Tovar?
24 Donna Clayton -- Douglas Clayton?
25 Tyrone Brown?
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1 PUBLIC SPEAKER: Good evening,

2 everybody. I did not sign up to speak, but

3 I'll speak anyway. The DJ actually pretty

4 much said everything that I thought he would

5 have said. I probably have a lot more to

6 say but there's not enough time to say it.

7 Everybody watches the news. Everybody sees

8 what's goes on in different communities

9 where people are getting killed for traffic

10 -- for taillights for broken taillights.

11 The stories can go on. I could stay here

12 all day citing all these stories. Let's

13 just hope Yonkers doesn't become one of

14 those. These kind of cities.

15 I'm glad that I got the message to

16 come here, but I only found out an hour ago

17 through a phone call that they was even

18 having this meeting. Now, if they promoted

19 it in advance, I apologize, I didn't hear

20 about it. But I do think they need to push

21 this out more. Because I know a lot of

22 people who would've loved to come to be here
to show the fact that they do need police reform.

Now, I know the numbers the -- the
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1 hall here may not hold the numbers because
2 of Covid, but there a lot of people who
3 would've showed up who have a lot more
4 voice, a lot more voice than me and probably
5 more eloquent than I am. So who can speak
6 to the issues and address their concerns.
7 So if they could just push it out there and
8 promote it. Because from the message I
9 received, there's two more forums to be had,
10 but it didn't say when they were. So if
11 they can promote it more, have more people
12 come to speak their piece and speak their
13 experiences. Because I do have relatives
14 that have had bad experiences with the
15 Yonkers Police. I can't voice their
16 concerns the best way that they can. They
17 would be here.
18 Thank you.
19 (Applause.)
20 FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: Just to
21 help a little bit with the communication
22 regarding these forums, we do have two
23 posters out front today. One in English,
24 one in Spanish. The information is listed
25 on the Yonkersny.gov site. And I will let
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1 everyone know who’s in attendance here
2 tonight, the next meeting is Wednesday,
3 November 4th, 6 to 8 p.m. At the Grinton
4 Will Library at 1500 Central Park Avenue.
5 The third and final public forum will be
6 held on Wednesday, December 16th, 6 to
7 8 p.m. on Riverfront Library here at One
8 Larkin Center. We do continue, because of
9 Covid, we do continue to re-evaluate the
10 spaces that we have available to us. So
11 some of these locations may be subject to
12 change. Please check the Yonkers web site
13 often and/or prior to any of these scheduled
14 dates.
15 Next speaker, please.
16 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Desiree Dismore?
17 PUBLIC SPEAKER: My name is Desiree
18 Dismore. I live in Yonkers. I work in
19 Yonkers. I actually live on Warburton
20 Avenue. First, I wanted to commend the
21 Yonkers Police Department for how they
22 handled the recent shooting in Getty Square.
23 I think it's important to acknowledge what's done right, as well as point out areas that can be improved upon. There are several
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1 people on the Committee that I know and
2 respect. And have had the chance to
3 interact with just being in the community.
4 Do I need to speak up louder? I
5 hate mics. I can speak without the mic.
6 Can everybody hear me better this way? Than
7 with the mic?
8 Yeah. So my name is Desiree. I'm
9 a Warburton resident. I also work in
10 Yonkers at the Plant and the Manor. I
11 wanted to first acknowledge and recognize
12 Yonkers Police Department for how well they
13 handled the shooting in Getty Square on
14 Friday. I also said that I know many of the
15 Committee Members through my interactions
16 with the community. And I'm happy there. I
17 do think that there needs to be more
18 conversations to be held between the public
19 and the department to establish I guess
20 natural community leaders as well as to have
21 ongoing conversations. I think that this
22 Committee probably needs to be much larger.
And include more members that don't have official titles. I think the only person on the Committee right now who doesn’t have an
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1 official is Donnell. So hopefully someone
2 on that Committee will change that soon.
3 Because he deserves the same title everyone
4 else does.
5 And I will say many times my
6 children fear the police. I cannot say why
7 that happens, but if there is any way or
8 anybody on the Committee knows of ways for
9 me to bridge that gap, I would love to hear
10 them because I do think that the perception
11 of the police starts within our homes. And
12 we can go from there.
13 That's all. Thank you.
14 (Applause.)
15 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Karen Schuller?
16 Brigette Griswold?
17 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I did not sign up
18 to speak.
19 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Sherry
20 Berabowski(phonetic spelling)?
21 PUBLIC SPEAKER: Okay. Can you
22 hear me? Okay. I have a few issues.
First, I think someone else mentioned briefly, I don't know all -- any of the Board Members, but I do believe that the
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1 Members should not have any monetary
2 affiliation with any City, State, or County.
3 Or at least have some lay people on the
4 Board. Again, without any affiliation
5 monetarily with any of the City, County or
6 State entities. Doctors, teachers, store
7 workers, or victims of crime, or victims of
8 any alleged police abuse. It would be
9 helpful to have at least one representative
10 on the Board to have the better
11 conversation.
12 Also, to have more open policy. I
13 believe the police should supply -- when
14 someone requests a copy of a police report,
15 it should be supplied and not blackened out.
16 If someone is accused of any issue, they
17 should have full access to see exactly
18 what’s going on for due process.
19 And for all people’s protection,
20 police and the citizens, body cameras should
21 be on, worn, and on at all times.
22 And someone mentioned martial arts.
23 I studied martial arts. That's an excellent
24 way to keep calm. To address any issue in a
25 non-violent way. Or also just on -- I'm a
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1 doctor, to, in medicine we have workshops.
2 Even if we know how to do whatever
3 procedure, we have workshops occasionally to
4 reinforce. It might be helpful to have
5 workshops for police just to see different
6 ways to address someone who may have a
7 emotional issues. Who may seem violent, but
8 is maybe is on drugs or just needs
9 psychological help. Having real workshops
10 would possibly be helpful.
11 And I think that's really my main,
12 my main issues.
13 Oh, there is one more. If a police
14 officer sees, or is aware of any police
15 misconduct, they should be allowed to report
16 this without fear of retaliation. I know
17 there is fear just like Adrian Schoolcraft
18 of New York City, who tried to correct
19 certain issues. He was retaliated against.
20 Any officer who sees anything improper,
21 should be allowed and to report the issue
22 and not have any retaliation. There should
be something in place to protect the

officers on that level. That's all I have.

(Applause.)
FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: Just another quick reminder, we are still at capacity within the room limits. Tonight's session is being streamed live through the Yonkers Facebook page. So you can, you can certainly leave the auditorium tonight, go to the Yonkers Facebook page and continue watching this forum from the comfort of your home. We, again, we do need to have some sort of rotation system going here to where people are exiting the auditorium to be able to allow for new speakers in order to give everybody the opportunity to -- and have to -- give everybody a chance to speak.

Thank you.

Next, please.

TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Nancy Vazquez?

PUBLIC SPEAKER: My name is Nancy -- my name -- can you hear me? Okay. My name is Nancy Vazquez. I'm a resident of Yonkers over 25 years. My daughter went to school at Lincoln. She graduated many years
23 ago. At that time, my daughter did very
24 well at Lincoln High school. She received
25 many scholarships. She graduated from Kings
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1 College in Pennsylvania. And presently

2 she's working at the Governor's Office as

3 the Diversity Officer for the Department of

4 Person with Disabilities.

5 So, this week I was reading on the

6 Internet the newsletter and I learned about

7 the Police Reform Committee. I called the

8 Mayor's Office to ask how do you become a

9 member of the committee? So I was told that

10 I was asked, are you a participant of a

11 community organization? I said, no, nothing

12 recently. So I was invited to come to the

13 forum.

14 The reason I want to be a member of

15 the committee is in 2007, my daughter had a

16 serious encounter with Yonkers Police.

17 Okay? My daughter survived that. And I

18 feel and I just learned that there are four

19 spots in this Committee. And that the

20 Governor wants people, families, that have

21 gone through this experience. I did not

22 know that. I learned that just now.
23 So, I just want you to know I still
24 love Yonkers. My daughter lives in Yonkers.
25 Like I said, my daughter has done very well.
She went to Lincoln High School. At that time it was a school that needed review. So, there's good citizenship coming from Lincoln High School. So, I just would like to be a member of the committee. I think I have a right to be a member of the committee. (Applause.)

TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Liesbeth Drewes?

PUBLIC SPEAKER: Hello. My name is Liesbeth Drewes. I've lived in Yonkers for about 20 years. I don't live down here in the First City Council District, I live in District Four. I am, I guess, here to say a little bit about the fact that in general, I guess, there are several ways that the police and the community could work better together. Community comes on several levels. I happen to like the natural world and I'm outside in the parks and in the river a lot. Community can help prevent crimes.
As a couple of people have already said, you know, where are the police in our community? We see them driving around in
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1 cars. I'd like to see them in general a

2 little bit more on their feet. A little bit

3 more in the community. Do they play and

4 volunteer as we do in our own neighborhoods?

5 That would help us to get to know them and

6 they to know us. So that we can understand

7 each other a little bit better and we can

8 introduce other kids and our parents. A

9 little bit more often and not just at one

10 national night out or so. We want to get to

11 know, you know, there's Mike on the corner,

12 I can talk to him. His kids know my kids.

13 You know. His parents are around on a

14 regular basis visiting. And I think that

15 would be very useful.

16 Can we have police who stay in our

17 neighborhoods, please. Do our tax dollars

18 pay for those who are leaving and living

19 elsewhere? They do. Apparently, you know,

20 there's something that the union say they

21 can leave, firemen and policemen, after a

22 couple of years of living here. You don't
really get to know a neighborhood in two

years. Certainly not if your kids are

elsewhere. Can we please have people who
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1 live here.

2 How long is their training compared to that of a US soldier? Perhaps we can look at different training methods with the police. These are just some other questions. How do you vet the police that are coming here? We do need more minority officers. Absolutely. As someone pointed out. There are very few.

9 Times have changed a little bit.

11 And, you know, we’d like to see the local beat. We’d like to see a lot more police and minorities.

14 The DJ mentioned a tax break for officers and maybe firemen who live here.

16 How about after their first two years here, that would be a perfect solution. I hope the City Council would please address this with the unions.

20 I do understand, as the Doctor said, it’s probably necessary for auxiliary workers to be hired who are professional
mental health workers to work and advise the police. I understand probably having a lot of other people around to help the
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1 population would be a good idea within the
2 police force.
3 Those are just a couple of my
4 ideas. Thank you.
5 (Applause.)
6 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Jacqueline
7 Boone?
8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I don't wish to
9 speak.
10 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Brandon Dowell?
11 Rox Fontaine?
12 PUBLIC SPEAKER: Good evening,
13 everybody. My name is Rox Fontaine. I'm a
14 relatively new resident of Yonkers. Air
15 Force veteran. And I also have a
16 19-year-old son who is currently in his
17 second year at the United States Naval
18 Academy. I only say that for your frame of
19 reference.
20 What I want to discuss is that
21 United States of America has a hero complex.
22 What do I mean by that? I believe that this
country has a fascination with the careers and occurrences where heroes carry out the violence that the average person doesn't
have the courage to carry out on their own.

What does that mean for the position of policing? What does that mean for the institution of policing? It means that, at least for me and my understanding, the men and women who serve on police forces around this country have been convinced and have convinced themselves that violence in their roles is noble. When in actuality the restraint and the ability to resolve issues, whatever the case may be -- obviously there are some instances where things happen and it just has to go crazy. But in most cases, and this is coming from someone who's been in the violence, nobility is in resolving it peacefully. Right?

So I challenge the institution of policing. This is not specific to Yonkers PD. Not specific to NYPD. The institution of policing as it stands in the United of America, needs to take a long hard look at re-evaluating what it means to protect and
serve. That's all I got. Thank you.

(Applause.)

FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: Just a
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1 quick check. Tracey and our employees in

2 the back, are we near capacity? Do we have

3 a lot of people in the waiting room? We're

4 just about at the top of the hour.

5 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: There's about

6 three people in the waiting room.

7 FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: Okay.

8 Thank you.

9 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: One.

10 FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: One

11 person. Okay.

12 Next speaker, please.

13 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: PA Freed? No?

14 Henry Barrera?

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm fine for now.

16 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: All right. So

17 then I have Danny Sullivan, Jonathan

18 Alvarez. John Cabrera. And Davis?

19 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah, guys. We

20 want to see hear from you. Good to see you

21 guys.

22 FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: So each
23 of the gentlemen will be taking a turn to
24 speak.
25 PUBLIC SPEAKER: Mine's will be the
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1 short and sweet. Pardon me. Excuse me.

2 Just by a quick show on hands,

3 y'all, how many of you gentlemen or ladies

4 are officers?

5 This is where the problem starts.

6 We having a police reform meeting with three

7 officers in the building. When are we going

8 to get change? Like it's three officers.

9 We're all here. All we can do is ask for

10 things. Make our suggestions. Pour our

11 hearts out. We're all going to have similar

12 stories when we get up here. But it's

13 mostly the community and three officers. So

14 that's the first thing I came up, I looked

15 to see who was here. It's three officers,

16 y'all. See one captain back there. He slid

17 out. The points of community is for all of

18 us. Even us, besides, before we get mad at

19 the officers, before I get mad, we all have

20 to take responsibility for the City of

21 Yonkers for it to do better, for it to be

22 better. Me as a ex-felon, a businessman,
23 entrepreneur, I have to take responsibility
24 for my past and do the best I can for my
25 City.
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1 So before I leave, here's what I'm
2 going to say, the most we, like I said, the
3 most we can do is ask, make suggestions.
4 Pour our hearts out. There's three officers
5 at a Yonkers Reform Meeting about police.
6 How are we going to get reform, y'all? And
7 thank you, gentlemen. Thank you, three
8 officers, from the bottom of my heart and
9 soul, that really means a lot. But like
10 let's think about it. So let's be for real.
11 We need to hire more people that are around
12 here. You heard that already. You're going
13 to hear that a lot more. But you have to
14 hire people from the community. Not just
15 Black people. If you're going to hire White
16 officers, make sure it's a White officer
17 from Yonkers, Mount Vernon, New Rochelle.
18 White Plains. Someone in the area where he
19 gets to know us. Not someone that's scared.
20 Scared of our skin color. Scared of our
21 people that's just going to come get
22 benefits, a good job. Make it a people of
the person.

Our next reform meeting with police, can we please have more than three
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1 police officers in the building? We up here
2 pouring our hearts out. Heartbreaking
3 stories. It's tearful. It's hurtful. It's
4 pissing you off, but it's three officers.
5 This shit doesn't make sense, y'all. We're
6 not going to get anywhere.
7 And for the White officers in the
8 town, please understand, this is no harm, it
9 means a lot to me that you came here. All
10 we could to do is ask, pour our hearts out,
11 and make suggestions. You guys have to the
12 ability, Black cops on the force, Latin cops
13 on the force, check the racist cops on the
14 force. White cops that's on the force, if
15 you see a White cop, check 'em. That's
16 where it's all going to start. And the
17 people in the community, we're going to try
18 to play our part. You guys play your part.
19 And let's see where we can meet in the
20 middle. But three officers at a Yonkers
21 Police Reform Meeting is ludicrous.
22 We really need change and this
ain't it. Like us as a people -- there are

people in here pouring their hearts out.

Really upset. Really wanting a change. How
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1 are we going get that with three officers
2 here? Look around the room. Look at all
3 the people. Three officers. You three are
4 going to spread the message to the whole
5 force? It means a lot that you're here,
6 but, like, how is that really going to work?
7 We need this whole responsibility and
8 accountability on all parts of the town.
9 That's White, Black, criminal and cop.
10 Love is love. Peace.
11 (Applause.)
12 (Stenographer requested name.)
13 PUBLIC SPEAKER: Ghost. Ghost from
14 the Lox.
15 PUBLIC SPEAKER: My name is Daniel
16 Sullivan. Good evening. I'm here today to
17 speak on behalf of the poor Black and Brown
18 and White folks of Yonkers affected by the
19 Yonkers Police Department. Please do not
20 get me wrong. There are good cops. I have
21 had experiences with a handful. But on the
22 other hand there are bad cops that make --
that take away from the good ones. I myself am a victim of a handful of bad cops. I made a complaint to internal affairs before
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1 my complaint was about a officer smacking me
2 in the face. Days later I was arrested for
3 possession of crack cocaine by the same
4 officers that were present at the time I was
5 smacked in my face. A few months later I
6 was arrested by another set of officers that
7 were present when I was smacked in my face
8 and charged with possession of crack
9 cocaine. I was -- I was warned by these
10 officers I would face repercussions for
11 filing a complaint. At no point in time was
12 I in possession of crack cocaine. I am only
13 guilty of standing up for myself by doing so
14 I paid for it with legal bills, jail time,
15 and a criminal record. Just as there was --
16 just as there was repercussions last time I
17 spoke up, I fear by me speaking up tonight,
18 I will face the same repercussions. I can
19 only live -- I cannot live my life scared
20 anymore. I feel like less of a man every
21 day I do not speak on the injustice that I
22 went through. I know multiple others that
23 have went through this as well. I hope, I

24 hope they will see this and build the same

25 courage as I have to come forward and speak
Families have been torn apart by these officers' actions. Their loved ones have been wrongfully convicted, children suffered as well growing up without a father, because of these officers' actions. It's sad to say after this occurs, these officers go home to their families and their children. This would have been easily resolved if the complaints that were brought forward were not overlooked and taken seriously. The same officers from the era I am referring to have been promoted multiple times. I myself as well as others in the community as well as the officers themselves know that they are -- that are bad police and it is a mockery to justice to see this occur.

People wonder why the public does not get along with the police. Look at, look at what they have -- sorry. Look at what they have done. Look at what they are
still doing. I ask for you -- I ask you for
an honest answer, would you want to interact
with someone on that caliber? Granted there
are some that cry wolf and wrongfully accuse
officers; however, it is outweighed by on
how many people have made several complaints
about the same officers and nothing has
happened. If you get multiple complaints on
an officer, evidently something is wrong.
One of the biggest slogans of the Yonkers
Police Department is if you say something,
say something.

PRIOR PUBLIC SPEAKER: If you see
something, say something.
PUBLIC SPEAKER: My fault, "P".

Thank you.
PRIOR PUBLIC SPEAKER: I got you,
brother. I'm with you.
PUBLIC SPEAKER: Thank you. If you
see something, say something. Practice what
you preach. If you see your partner doing
something wrong, say something.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Talk to 'em.
PUBLIC SPEAKER: I ask each and
everyone in this room tonight, how would you
23 feel if this happened to your children?

24 Including the officers.

25 You cannot have cops policing other
cops. Internal affairs complaints have been handled by an outside agency. Nine times out of ten whoever their internal affair officer is that is handling the complaint, work alongside the other officers being accused of wrongdoing. Favoritism always leans towards the brotherhood. No one wants to go against the grain and make a difference. This is why I feel as well -- this is why I feel as well as others a lot of complaints are swept under the rug. Before you try to fix what is wrong today, you have to travel back in time and fix what happened then.

Thank you very much for your time. God bless you. Love is love. Thank you.

(Pause.)

PUBLIC SPEAKER: Good evening. Good evening. Sorry. My name is Jonathan Alvarez. Many of you know me professionally and personally. I have many labels tied to various organizations. My Brother's Keeper,
23 YMCA SNUG, including 914 United. But today
24 I stand here as a Yonkers native, a
25 32-year-old Yonkers native.
And my one point I want to bring forth, is critiquing the committee. I feel that the Committee was rushed. Perhaps met to, like, meet the demand of the State and therefore compromised the selection process. I feel like we need better representation.

Right. Yes, I do believe we do have people on the Committee who will represent the people. Advance the conversation and take action. However we are missing young people of color. Young men -- young boys and girls. Especially those individuals who come from the trenches. I'm talking about the inner city who have direct contact who are directly impacted by law enforcement.

Why are they not on the Committee? I can ask many of you in here, what does it look like to walk through School Street at 6:00 at night. Along that street 4:00 in the afternoon. Many of you cannot answer that.

So how are you here speaking for those people? Those people need to be present.
23 So on behalf of them, I'm saying this

24 Committee needs to be re-negotiated. We

25 have a -- we should call for a new selection
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1   process. And forget deadlines.

2   Another point to bring forth is, we

3   need a new strategy to galvanize the

4   community. This here, is not going to work.

5   The people who need to be here are those

6   from those trenches, from those communities.

7   And there's division among our City. Blocks

8   don't like blocks. So many people will not

9   come to this so-called neutral space because

10  they don't want to be in company with those

11  that they be in conflict with. Have y'all

12  considered that? Many probably have not

13  because many don't come from those trenches,

14  or are in those trenches in 2020. So that's

15  my two points forth.

16   It's one, we need to re-negotiate

17  the Committee and let's not have figure

18  heads there to look like they're about --

19  that they're going to represent the people

20  effectively and have those who will

21  represent the people effectively.

22   And two re-strategize on how to
outreach work and also galvanize the
community. How do we get into the trenches
and let them voice their opinions and also
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1 listen to the conversation. Thank you.

2 (Applause.)

3 PUBLIC SPEAKER: Good evening,

4 everyone. My name John Cabrera. I'm a

5 resident of this community for 25-plus

6 years. I support my brothers that are

7 behind me. I respect everything that was

8 just stated. I'll be very short with my

9 message today. I will not ask a question.

10 Questions have been asked for years now and

11 we haven't seen much results. What I come

12 here to say is to give a demand. Not just

13 to the Committee. Not just to law

14 enforcement, but this here that what we have

15 presented today, is a great start. Right?

16 Don't know if it's the effective start. My

17 demand here today is let’s not make this a

18 check in the box for the Governor. Let's

19 sit here and actually really come together

20 with community leaders, community members

21 and actually find a result to this thing

22 that we call change.
Change is not going to start with having members that are outside of the inner city come here and voice their opinion
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although it is welcomed. But those that
have been affected by police in our
community have to be part of this
class conversation.

So in closing along with what my
brothers had said today, I demand those on
the Committee and in law enforcement, let's
not make this a check in the box to please
the Governor's demand. Let's actually do it
for the people of the city and their
communities. Thank you.

(Appause.)

TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Ruby Thomas?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes.

TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Would you like
to speak?

PUBLIC SPEAKER: I'll be short and
sweet. I'm in ministry. And I'm Pastor
Ruby Thomas from the Kingdom Christian
Culture Center. I'm a veteran. I served
eight years in the Army. And I know and in
military intelligence, top secret. So all
this stuff I see going around this country,

this world, it saddens me. Seem like the

more we see, the anger, the frustration, the
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1. killing, everything. I come home, it seems
2. like a marvel war, there was no war when I
3. was in there those eight years. But seeing
4. shootouts in the street or in the
5. communities, it hurts. This one dead, that
6. one dead, I'm saying, oh, my God. Here I am
7. a sharpshooter in the Army. I said, well,
8. Lord, do I have to lock and load in my home
9. now? So I see the things and I do prison
10. ministry. I did the teens seven years up in
11. Valhalla. The stories I hear. Why they got
12. arrested. What went down. The different
13. things that I hear when I talk to their
14. parents. Talk to their loved ones. You
15. know. You hear the sadness. You see the
16. grief. You see how they feel nobody trust
17. nobody. You know.
18. Even in my neighbor. I live on
19. Lawrence Street. Now my mother is deceased.
20. I own her building now on Lawrence Street.
21. So I'm still there. I grew up here. Went
22. to school here. Public school and up.
Graduated from Commerce High School in 1974.

So I know. At 63 years old, the kids don't even believe that. We have a new park on
the block. Who cleans that park in the
evening. I do. I go there and I make sure.
I got a little stick to pick up the dirt.
They cannot believe how I keep the park.
They think I'm the owner. I say, no, I'm
here because I love this park and it's new.
They redid our park last year. So I'm
thankful for the things that's being done.
And I want the kids to appreciate it.
I rap. I write poetry. So I have
a virginity rap. I did the teens -- I
shared it with them. They said, oh, my God,
Ms. Ruby, you should -- I say, hey, I'm
doing this because it's in my heart to do to
show y'all how important it is. To care
about yourself and love yourself so you
don't walk out here doing crazy stuff
because everybody else is doing it. You
don't have to get high. You don't have to
walk around be a pothead or whatever you're
taking, you're drinking. But to be real.
You know.
And I thank God that I can be an example. At 63. They look at me, you don't look your age, I said, because God is
keeping me and I’m doing the right things
with my body, eating right and taking care
of myself. I said we got to think about a
lot of things. You know.
I just know that it's time to wake
up our community. To come in and see the
police what they do. When they come in our
community, I talk to them. I approach them.
Why? Because I’m not afraid. What's going
on? What happened? You know. You got to
be concerned. You know. The young people.
Ms. Ruby, this happened, that happened.
They tell me, they share with me. Why?
Because someone was in my group as
teenagers. My nephew said they call you my
holy aunt. I said, whatever. Because they
see that I'm real about God and I'm real
about what I do. And I'm not walking here
with a big heavy Bible busting them in the
head with it when I'm telling them about the
love of God. And to do the right thing.
Like someone said, they went back
to school, they did this, they did that. I don't blame them. Go back. Get what you can get. It's hard out here for everybody.
Yes, we see the violence. Yes, we see the rage. Yes, we see the police. What happens? Because people are angry frustrated. And have gone to the left with a lot of things. And now it's all coming. It's rising up. Even in the Bible, it says, the last days are the evil days. So let's just wake up. Get strong. And be an example.

Love you all. God bless.

(Appause.)

TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Shanae Williams?

PUBLIC SPEAKER: Hello, everyone.

My name is Shanae Natalee Varese(ph) Williams. And, yes, I have two middle names. I'm aware. If you didn't know, now you know.

I am a Council Member for this district, the First District in the City of Yonkers. And I'm here on behalf of the tens of thousands of residents that I represent. But I'm also here on my behalf, a resident,
23 a community advocate and someone who cares
24 deeply about what this Committee has been
25 tasked to do.
I'm thrilled to be here before you and before I continue and tell you all the suggestions I have, I did come prepared. I do want to say thank you to our Mayor and to our Governor for getting us to this step because it is important. It is necessary. So, first, I think, we must have mandatory training for all of our policemen and policewomen including captains, lieutenants, sergeants in all areas of implicit bias and cultural diversity. They must take a course in how to undo racism and prejudices, because it is necessary. Very necessary. These training courses must be administered at minimum every four years. In person. And it must be done by an outside facilitator.

Officers should not treat people with disrespect in the City. There should be no name calling, swearing, degrading of people that they're arresting regardless if they're criminals with a record and they
know them, I get it. But this is what my
constituency come to me about and I am
telling you it is not okay. That must
Secondly, Yonkers Police Department should improve their community policing practices. They should continue to build community relations through Coffee with a Cop and Stop and Shake and all other lovely initiatives that they have in place already; however, they should also be required to get out of their cars, to walk down the streets that they're policing, to stop and shake the hands of the people that they're protecting and policing. Or at the very least, because of Covid, I get it, they can just start with a simple greeting. Hello. How are you? That will go a long way for the people in this community.

There should also be more cops on bikes. Most people know Chris on the bicycle in Getty Square. They see him, they talk to him, they love him. We need more Chrises on their bikes engaging with the people that they serve.
Third. YPD should be reflective of the community. Community policing becomes easier when they're already from the
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1 community that they're policing. When they
2 already know the people in the neighborhood.
3 There should be a easier process for Yonkers
4 residents to access the exam and get an
5 opportunity to excel.
6 Youth that graduate from Yonkers
7 Public Schools and the Charter School should
8 be given extra points on their civil service
9 exam so that they can increase their chances
10 of being hired. Every single year there
11 should be study courses offered to the
12 people in the community not only when the
13 year that the test is being given.
14 And lastly, more officers should be
15 hired to reduce the cost of overtime. With
16 more officers hired, we'll also have more
17 cops on the streets to talk to the people,
18 biking, walking, engaging with the people as
19 I've already discussed. And with that,
20 officers should not be paid overtime for
21 attending community events and meetings.
22 They can use that overtime money elsewhere,
23 as I just said. They should, they should be
24 able to come to the community meetings and
25 talk to people because they live in the
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1 community. Because they are invested in the
2 community and nothing more.
3 The culture of policing in Yonkers
4 is important. And these are some things
5 that are smart and effective which will help
6 shift the culture to a more positive one and
7 not one that is simply there to take
8 advantage of the taxpayers.
9 Thank you.
10 (Applause.)
11 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Bree --
12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: It's Brenton.
13 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Oh, Brenton.
14 I'm sorry.
15 PUBLIC SPEAKER: Good evening. My
16 name is Brenton Brown-Bullock. I am 30
17 years old. I'm a resident here in the City
18 of Yonkers, community leader, activist and
19 social worker.
20 I want to start off by
21 acknowledging first and foremost the great
22 work of our Yonkers Police Department and
the recent event that happened in Getty

Square, but not only for that, but on a
daily basis. I think it's important to
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1. acknowledge the work that you all do, the
2. lives -- you put your lives on the line, and
3. you, at the same time while protecting all
4. of us. So thank you for that. Each and
5. every day for what you all do for us.
6. While there are great strategies of
7. policing in place, there's always room for
8. improvement. So one of the things -- few
9. things that I'd like to see happen is for
10. the Yonkers Police Department implement
11. implicit bias training for all officers of
12. all ranks. These trainings should be held
13. on a yearly basis. They should definitely
14. be held by an outside third-party to
15. facilitate those trainings. There also
16. should be training in undoing racism.
17. That's a very specific training. One of the
18. organizations that provide that training is
19. the People's Institute. They're renowned at
20. what they do and incredibly effective.
21. In addition to training, there is
22. -- there should be measurable outcomes for
these trainings. So, you know, because people go to training all the time, right?

But how do you measure if the training is
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1 effective and how do you measure that those
2 folks are receiving, are taking something
3 away? So, I believe that measurable
4 outcomes for the officers that are taking
5 the trainings should be implemented. In
6 addition to who should be overseeing that
7 should be the Reform Committee. And the
8 Committee should be coming up, implementing,
9 developing a plan to measure such outcomes.
10 In addition to that, in terms of
11 the committee, this has come up, but I'd
12 like to add to it again. It's really,
13 really critical that the committee has young
14 -- that it's multi-generational. You know.
15 I think some of the selections are
16 incredible but I think we need to see more
17 young people in my age bracket and younger
18 who are a part of this community, living
19 here, and working here, and going to school
20 here. So that I hope is on the horizon. As
21 this Committee continues to develop and move
22 forward.
There should also, I'd like to see a civilian complaint review board. I think that is an incredible way to hold officers
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1 accountable when things go wrong, when there
2 are issues and complaints. We've heard a
3 lot about people saying that that's not
4 happening, and there's no accountability.
5 So hopefully that's something that this
6 Committee can put forth.
7 Lastly, community policing is
8 crucial to us having a safe city. Officers
9 should feel safe when engaging with the
10 community and community members should feel
11 safe when officers are engaging with them.
12 No one should ever feel unsafe when there is
13 a police presence. Thank you.
14 (Applause.)
15 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Matt Walker?
16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Not to talk.
17 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Tom, I can't
18 pronounce -- I can't see the last name.
19 PUBLIC SPEAKER: Tom Ray?
20 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Could be. I'm
21 sorry, your handwriting. Doctor in
22 training.
PUBLIC SPEAKER: Hey. I'm going to keep this short. Actually, Tom was supposed to be with me. But, my name is Shandon
Murray. 23 years old. Victim of police whatever you want to call it.
I actually just got on probation,
five-year probation sentence that I did not do. But we going to keep it very short. To be honest, I think those ideas that I just heard was, you know, pretty great.
Referring to, you know, the police having some type of training. I don't think it should be four years. Every four years though. Me, myself, I am a business owner.
I have two businesses. And one of the, one of the businesses I actually have to renew maybe every year, every two years. So I don't think a police officer with a, with the type of duty they have should be able to renew every four years.
Another thing, I think it was pretty good ideas that, you know, that, you know, people came up with. The problem is actually implicating those ideas. That's obviously the problem. That's obviously the
And one thing that, you know, I find interesting, these police officers, if
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1 you look up, it's public record, the top
2 2019, the top paid workers in Yonkers
3 itself, were police officers and fire
4 departments and by a landslide. We're
5 talking $225,000. And you could look it up.
6 It's public record, so, I'm not, you know,
7 up here just talking. But and for the most
8 part, these people don't even live here.
9 So, there is a problem as far as, you know,
10 the police officers not living here.
11 Obviously it's going to be conflict if they
12 don't live here, and they're trying to
13 govern the people that obviously live here.
14 Yeah, so I think it's a huge
15 problem. And one of the, I don't want to
16 say, solution, but I think I encourage
17 everyone in this room and I encourage, you
18 know, everyone to spread the word. One, one
19 solution that I do think is very positive
20 especially in this community, everyone
21 should get some, I'll say it, everyone
22 should get whole life, life insurance.
23 Why's that? And I hear someone laughing.

24 Why is that? Well, every time -- well, me,

25 I know, every time if, I would pass by,
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1  whatever police brutality, whatever, my
2  family would be in wealth. Wealth starts at
3  $150,000 a year. My family would obviously
4  get over a half a million dollars. So, that
5  would a start. Also, if I go to the
6  hospital any day, every day, because of my
7  policy, I would literally, I would literally
8  get paid every day I'm in the hospital. So
9  that would obviously stop -- it wouldn't
10  obviously stop, you know, police brutality
11  or anything or in that nature. But it would
12  obviously stop the violence if they know
13  they're putting all of these different
14  families in wealth. Most of these families
15  don't even, you know, have any type of
16  policy for themselves. So, this is
17  something that we should spread. The
18  education that should be spread. And
19  obviously the -- everyone that's on council,
20  committee, you know, these are great ideas,
21  but I would love to see another meeting.
22  I actually got dragged here. I
didn't even know how I end up here. But I
want to see another meeting. I'm looking
forward to seeing another meeting because I
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1 want to bring obviously facts. I'm actually
2 just speaking off the heart right now. But,
3 you know, yeah, I definitely want to see
4 another meeting. Some more, you know,
5 obviously police officers in the room.
6 And, yeah, that's it. So thank
7 you, y'all. Have a good day.
8 (Applause.)

9 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Vern?
10 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Peace, y'all.
11 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: No?
12 Samuel Andrea?
13 Rei Spain?
14 Mike Khader?
15 PUBLIC SPEAKER: Hello, everyone.
16 My name is Mike Khader. I'm the City
17 Council President and I'm also a lifelong
18 Yonkers resident. Actually I was born and
19 raised a couple of blocks away from here.
20 I've been listening along with
21 Councilwoman Diaz, the liaison for this
22 Committee, and along with Councilwoman
I'm not going to get into how the Board was chosen. I'm fortunate enough that
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1 I know many of the Board Members. And I
2 know that they're qualified to get the job
3 done. I'm not going to make any demands,
4 but I'm going to respectfully request some
5 of the following considerations. That
6 there's absolute discussion with
7 deliverables about the micro aggressions
8 that happen many times when there is law
9 enforcement confrontation. And I purposely
10 use the word, confrontation, because many
11 times that's how the community feels it.
12 So, if there's a respect, then people will
13 feel more positive about that interaction.
14 Unfortunately, right now, perception is
15 reality and the perception is law --
16 interaction with the community and law
17 enforcement is always on the negative side.
18 That's number one.

19 Number two, many of the comments
20 we're talking about youth on the Board, goes
21 back to the concept of diversity of
22 prospective. So I think the DJ said it, I
23  think Style P said it, I think that this
24  Committee should actually go to certain
25  communities. I don't have the actual
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1 sectors in my head. But I know there's data
2 out there that's readily available. Most of
3 our calls for service are actually in a
4 triangle not too far from here. So I do
5 hope that this Committee takes it on the
6 road. And have it in a parking lot on
7 School Street, or at Schlobohm, or on
8 Lawrence Street. And unfortunately you see
9 the social distance there, but if we go to
10 -- you got more people hanging out right now
11 that will join in.
12 We constantly use the word,
13 community policing, and we need both of
14 them. We need the community and the
15 policing to collaborate together. Because
16 as Councilwoman Williams said, I also
17 believe that we need more patrols, more bike
18 cops, more interaction with the community.
19 Number three, the diversity. A
20 little data points. You know, there was
21 data point about where the calls for service
22 are in the City of Yonkers. My numbers are

not exact, but they're fairly accurate. In the history of the Yonkers Police Department, I believe that there's been
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1 approximately 89 Black law enforcement personnel. From those 89, approximately, 45 are active. So I just want to give those numbers again. In the history of the Yonkers Police Department total number is 89. Active is 45. I know under this administration, that there's been concerted effort to diversify and it is trending in the right direction but it's not enough.

10 I believe, you know, people said it, we need more diversity in the work force. We need to hire locally. And ironically, if you hire locally, the diversity happens organically. If you hire locally, the diversity happens organically. And there's obviously, it's easier said than done. So you have the civil service laws, you have collective bargaining agreements, but when both sides want to make it happen, they can make it happen.

21 My last point is about implicit bias. We all have it. Me. Every single
23 person in this room has implicit bias. And
24 if we don't acknowledge that in ourselves,
25 we're fooling ourselves. We're not being
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honest. The issue is when we make decisions on those implicit biases. So what happens is, we have to address how to do we deal with those implicit bases where when we come interaction with a community member or a resident that those implicit biases don't go off.

There was a member -- check off the box. I think that that's the old way of doing things. You constantly have to adapt. We live in a new model. We live in a new world. And as we continue to have changes in our society, policing needs to change.

So, again these are not demands. I just hope I look forward to the final report. I know I know many Members. I look forward to establishing rapport with Members I do not know. But the credibility is here, the experience is here, the commitment is here. I know the work could be done.

I do want to close off by saying, I think everyone seen videos of what happened
in Getty Square last week. And that should
be noted that, that was fine training from
the Yonkers Police Department. What was
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1 minor injury, I believe, for one of our
2 officers, a minor injury. No one shot.
3 Could have been a tragedy. And that goes
4 back to our work force. I said, it again,
5 Tweet it, Snapchat it, we have one of the
6 best law enforcement in the State of New
7 York. That being said, there's room for
8 improvement. We could be pro law
9 enforcement and also want to some reforms.
10 The narrative that it's either one or the
11 other is a false narrative. So, take it
12 down, I support law enforcement, but I also
13 want to see some positive reforms.
14 Thank you so much for allowing me
15 to speak. Take care.
16 (Applause.)
17 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Joshua
18 Drummonds.
19 PUBLIC SPEAKER: Good night,
20 everyone. Hello, my name is Joshua
21 Drummonds. I'm 16-year-old -- I'm a
22 16-year-old. And I attend The Charter
23 School of Educational Excellence.

24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: We can't hear

25 you.
AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can't hear you.

PUBLIC SPEAKER: Oh, you can't hear me?


Right. I'm here tonight to ask the Yonkers Police Department to make some major changes and improve the way we do view the police. After seeing what happened to George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, I think we have, have to do everything we can to make sure nothing like that ever happens again in this country.

I do not feel safe with the police. And that's because I don't know them, and they don't know me. All they see is a young Black man and that makes me a target. I think one of the biggest changes that must happen in Yonkers is that, that would help
improve in how we view the police moving forward, is that they need to be trained in how to deal with people like me.
I think we also need to see more cops that are Black from, and from Yonkers, so that they will understand us and not target us. I think we all need -- I think that we need all of cops not some of them to wear body cams when they are working in the streets.

My friends and I marched in protest in the streets of Yonkers because we want to see these changes happen so we can feel safe. I hope that you guys make this happen and understand.

Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Rock Winford? Dulce Ochoa?

PUBLIC SPEAKER: Hello. Racism in Yonkers is alive and well in the City and very existing in the police department. The reform and training of the police is very crucial for the well being in the community and more for the low income community and
people of color. There have been many

stories where this police has met civilians

with the resistance and hostility from the
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1 start even when we are the ones asking for help. Talking back to these officers can even get you assaulted. How many of you know about that spot at the edge of the pier where the police will take civilians and assault them?

7 These officers walk and talk like they're superior to us and untouchable.

9 When I tried to report a crime, I was met with ignorance and victim blaming. Literally putting words in my mouth, assuming my sexual assault. If it wasn't for the advocacy groups, my voice would not have been taken seriously and I would have been another person failed by the system.

16 The system is broken and the only way to fix it, is when it is torn down and rebuilt for the people, because we all know where the police department started.

20 (Applause.)

21 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Richard Crews?

22 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Oh, I know that
23 guy.

24 PUBLIC SPEAKER: All right. First

25 of all, praise God. Thanks for allowing me
to come up here and say something. I am --

I wasn't going to speak, but I have kids in Yonkers Public School Systems. I grew up in Yonkers since I was five years old. I have friends that are on the force now.

Lieutenant, how are you, sir?

Yonkers is a great City. I grew up here. I enjoy it. I love it. My nephews are here. My kids are here. But there's definitely room for, how can I say, growth.

The biggest thing that I'd like to see is the neighborhood policing, go back to where they had a beat cop. Where that particular beat cop would know the kids, whether they were troubled kids or whether they would be positive, that particular officers or officers that rotated that particular area, would know where to go if something went wrong or if something went right. He would be able to immediately say, hey, look, somebody did something. He would have these names, and say, look, check these four guys
out. That's where my problem area is. If
you get to know the kids in your
neighborhood, as a police officer, you
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1 actually form a rapport with them. And
2 where you may have had trouble with them
3 then, they would then, say, look, you know,
4 what that officer did, we're going to do
5 something, let's wait until that gentleman
6 walks past, does his job and go. Anyone
7 who's met with respect, nine times out of
8 ten, gets same the thing back. Respect.
9 Most of these young guys are raising
10 themselves sometimes. So we have to
11 remember that, where they get their
12 education from, where they get their love
13 from is from the street.
14 Second thing is, maybe the police
15 department might want to have some more gang
16 training in the schools. Talk to the school
17 superintendent. Maybe you guys can form a
18 partnership where you tell the kids, or get
19 a consult to come in. I see Kenny Davis
20 back there. He was pretty good in the gang
21 unit. Come talk to some people. Talk to
22 the kids. Start early. Get them an
education as to where -- what gangs are,

what they're about and where to stay away

from. How to steer them away from it.
I just wanted to come up and say, I really appreciate y'all giving me the opportunity. I appreciate what the police force is doing so far. I also wanted to say that going into the neighborhoods, the Commissioner, really great guy. He went out in the neighborhood, took a bag, started cleaning up the neighborhood. Got to know some of the people while doing this. While he was the captain of the 4th Precinct, I think it was. That's something that maybe the police department wants to do again. Just pick a day. Neighborhood cleanup. Get to know the neighborhood get to know the people in the neighborhood; the kids, the grownups, the adults that are there. And I'm sure that you will find common ground. Every man and woman has common ground. And as police officers, there might be a target on your back right now, but every single one of you have family members that love and care about you. You have people in the
community that love and care about you.

Find a way to gel with that community and make that happen and anything is possible in
God.

Thank you very much. I appreciate you all. Have a good night.

(Applause.)

TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Shereese Edwards?

PUBLIC SPEAKER: That's me.

Hello, my name is Shereese Edwards.

And I'm a resident of the City of Yonkers.

I've been a resident for 45 years here. And living in and growing up on School Street, I really vaguely see many Black police officers. I frequently, in every hood, every area, and I do not see enough Black Police Officers. How long is it going to take and when it going to take for us to have a enough Black police officers in the community?

The accident that happened in Getty Square, all I seen was, no disrespect White officers. Where was the Black officers at?

There was an incident on Riverdale Avenue.
23  All you see on camera is White officers at.

24  Where are the minority officers? How long

25  is it going to take? For 45 years I've been
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1  living in the City of Yonkers. I barely see
2  ten of them. No answers? Thank you.
3  (Applause.)
4  TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Tim Blu?
5  PUBLIC SPEAKER: Hello, everyone.
6  My name is Timothy Blu. I am 19. I go to
7  Monroe College. I have recently graduated
8  with my Associate in Criminal Justice.
9  I want to say, I agree with a lot
10  of people said. Michael Khader, Shanae
11  Williams, Richard Crews. With Shanae
12  Williams, I think there should be training.
13  I would, I do think it should be minimum of
14  every three years.
15  Where Michael Khader, the amount of
16  African-American police officers, I do think
17  that is an issue. Diversity is important.
18  It shows, it shows unity and it shows that
19  we do care about one another.
20  Me specifically, I have tried to
21  apply for the Yonkers Police Department.
22  And it has actually been a struggle for me.
23 There was problems with the website. A
24 little while ago. And I called different
25 numbers to try to find out what's going on.
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1 I called with four different numbers and I
2 finally found out what happened. I know
3 it's Covid. They told me about how that
4 they are no longer applying until 2021. And
5 I asked them, is it every year or every two
6 years. They said, it's every two years
7 where they create a list of people that want
8 to take exam. But when I looked on the
9 website, I told them that it said October 2,
10 2017. And when I called the person back,
11 they said that list was formed from people
12 that did not take the exam or applied again
13 that same year, but did not have the
14 opportunity. And they went off of that list
15 from before October 2, 2017.
16 With what Mr. Richard Crews did
17 say, he spoke about going to schools and
18 communicating with the students. I do think
19 that is important. For somebody who went to
20 high school a little while ago, I seen
21 people that steered down a path that they
22 should not have went to and a path they
23 could have done if they had help from the community.

25 Middle school, high school, I seen
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1 students that tried to impress, tried to
2 represent gangs that they were not
3 affiliated with whether it was Blood or
4 Crip. And there it was an issue and it
5 continued with them in high school. Some
6 had dropped out. Some had gotten into
7 altercations trying to fit in. Some had got
8 arrested. Actually some that I actually
9 knew personally had passed away, because of
10 issues like that. And I was affected by it.

11 And I do think that the Yonkers
12 Police -- the Yonkers Police, the symbol is
13 a shield. Protection, unity. It says right
14 here, Service, Integrity, and Respect. And
15 I do think that they need to represent what
16 that shield means more.

17 The importance of communication is
18 important. It shows how it leads to
19 understanding and diversity is important
20 because it shows how, we get together, in a
21 time like this, we do need to be together.

22 Thank you.
23 (Applause.)

24 FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: It's 7:45

25 right now. And the meeting does end at
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1 8 p.m. sharp. We have time for four more

2 speakers. It looks like we have about two

3 people left. If anyone has -- and has

4 thought of any other comments since they've

5 arrived, you can continue to feed your

6 comments in through the e-mail site at

7 Yonkerspolicereform@Yonkersny.gov. As well

8 as we still have the cards, the comment

9 cards in the back. You can still fill those

10 out and submit them while you are here

11 today.

12 Next speaker, please.

13 TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Ken Davis.

14 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Get close to the

15 mic.

16 PUBLIC SPEAKER: As long as it's

17 not Kenny. I'll take Ken or Kenneth.

18 FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: Welcome.

19 PUBLIC SPEAKER: How you doing?

20 FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: You have

21 three minutes.

22 PUBLIC SPEAKER: Three minutes?
Okay. I think I can do it in three minutes.

Hi, everybody. My name is Ken Davis. I've been in Yonkers since I was
five years old. And one of the jobs that I truly love and I had honored to have was back in 1985 when I was appointed as a Yonkers Police Officer with the Yonkers Police Department. During the first five years I worked the streets, it wasn't until I got sick with sarcoidosis I was transmission stage, so I was put into community affairs. So what is community affairs? In some police department's community affairs can be a ducking ground for somebody who can't talk to people in the street. Or doesn't do their job or it's something that you come off of sick leave. Which I came off of sick leave. But I remember reading an article in New York Times. And I always try to find that article. And I said to myself, I didn't want to be that cop. I didn't want to be that police officer. I didn't want to be that community affair officer. So I was in community affairs. I was with Lorenzo
Paul. So we worked community affairs.

I worked for like a decade. Then I
got moved out to other places. I became a
school resource officer. And one thing led
to another, I was in the gang unit. I did
the graffiti. I traveled west coast. I
traveled all the way through Canada doing
presentation on graffiti.

So what I’d like to say, I came
across a guy called Ben Bernanski(sic). And
I hope I’m pronouncing it correctly. So who
is he? He’s an economist. Financial
advisor. So what did he have to do? Back
in, I believe, was 2008 financial crisis, he
was called to the White House to try to
figure that out. And one of the things that
he did and they talked -- President, it was
President Bush at the time. And that’s the
only time I liked a statement President
Bush, said, you know, free trade, that’s
their problem. They said, Mr. President,
you don’t understand. There are so many
mortgages attached to this whole thing, that
people will lose their jobs, they’ll lose
their houses. So one thing I liked about
23 him, he studied the depression era. That's
24 all he did. He just studied the depression
25 era.
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1 You know, that's pretty much one
2 the things I do now. I go up to the library
3 and I just look at the '90s, 1990s all the
4 way up until 1999. I just look at it.
5 Because what we're going through now,
6 besides what happened with the police, is
7 pretty much the same thing.
8 So one of the programs that we had
9 back then was Operation ID where we went
10 around and we talked to the gang members.
11 And back then, the gang members were listed
12 on a piece of paper. It was not put into a
13 database or was not utilized by artificial
14 intelligence. And that's another thing that
15 we need to look into. And one thing about
16 Operation database, we went to their homes.
17 And we talked to the kids. We talked to the
18 parents. And it sent out two messages. It
19 sent out, we care. And it sent out, we know
20 where you live at so start some stuff now.
21 And with a lot, a lot of things
22 going on in Getty Square, when kids don't
23 know that you don't know where they live at,

24 they think they can get away with stuff.

25 Okay.
And that was, that was really good because now what’s going on today and I hope the police department adopt this too now. With the gang database. A lot of things are going on around in the country where if you're in a gang database, you can have an appeal process, where you can get yourself out the gang database. That is a gang database. And we all know it throughout the country. I’m not telling you anything secret, it's a secretive database. And people, even Black law enforcement will tell you we need it, and others will say, no, we don't need it. Which gets back to current events. It's great and dandy to go into the schools as a police officer. But if you look at the trend now, most of the trend is they don't want police officer in their school. As a police officer -- well, I keep on saying. As a retired police officer, sorry. As a retired police officer
something happened in Minnesota that sent a
message around the world. And I think
everybody don't know that message. If
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1 you're a person of color, it sends a
2 different message. Just like a dog whistle.
3 Everybody gets it differently. And when
4 that knee went on that neck, it sent a
5 message that to where you start having peace
6 rallies. I know New York City was getting
7 hurt with these peace rallies. But like I
8 tell some of the people, it's no peace
9 rally. There's a lot of messages that's
10 going around. As far I'm concerned, Black
11 police officers, people of color, is working
12 overtime, because they trying to dissemble
13 or get rid of that message, because it could
14 be dangerous for a police officer, not only
15 for a police officer, but also for people in
16 the community too.
17 And to make this short. There's
18 something that we're going through now. And
19 it's going to take awhile. It's going to
20 take awhile for it to even out. People are
21 going to get hurt on both sides. I hope
22 it's not going to be that drastic. But
until we figure this thing out, we're going
to have problems. And I'd like -- one more
thing. Police departments are not
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1 standardized throughout the whole
2 department. So if you see something going
3 out in midwest or west coast, it's a whole
4 different police department. Okay?
5 I, as a retired police officer, I'm
6 sure police officers here, we are taking
7 that responsibility and we are owning what
8 happened that day.
9 So, to make this message short --
10 Because you didn't, you didn't hit
11 me with three minutes. So.
12 To make this message short, I, I
13 hope that we can all -- like I said, I've
14 been in this town. I hope we can all get
15 together. Things are going to happen. What
16 happened in Getty Square the other day, even
17 I looked at it. And that's very rare. But
18 I do know that we do have policies where we
19 try not to get other people hurt while we're
20 doing our business. I was in narcotics for
21 several years and I did search warrants.
22 And we pretty much was accountable for what
23 we did. Okay.

24 Thanks for your time.

25 (Applause.)
TRACEY KUZEMCZAK: Dr. Alexandra Connally.

PUBLIC SPEAKER: Greetings. My name is Dr. Alexandria Connally. And I want to like to thank you for this opportunity to speak before you tonight. I am the Director of Equity, Inclusion, Innovation at the Nyack School System. I am a lifelong resident of Yonkers. I was born in Cross County Hospital which doesn't even exist anymore. It's now a Hyatt Hotel. I lived in the same ZIP code my entire life. I am Yonkers.

When we talk about policing, the history of policing in the Black community, we have to understand that there is a foundation that we have never -- there's some foundation issues that we have never addressed. The first law enforcement in this country were charged to go capture run away slaves. And not all those slaves were run away. And so the foundation
of policing in a Black community is complex.

And goes back for generations. And so when

we talking about reform, real reform, we
have to go back and look at our systems.

So I'm going to leave this here.

I'm not going to get into it. This is the Groundwater Analysis. And it basically teaches us how systems interact with Black people. School system. Medical system. Police departments. Fire departments, et cetera. Right? And so I really want to clearly talk about the history of Yonkers.

In the history of Yonkers, we have not had 100 Black officers in the history of the City. Let that sit with you for a minute. We are a City of 200,000. Almost 20 percent of us are Black. And we have not in the history had 100 Black officers. 90 -- 70, 75 percent of our school population are Brown and Black kids. What if we invested in those students, raise them up, and have them really become part of our community? Let me tell you what happens when somebody does when you do that. You create a Dr. Connally. Dr. Connally was
created by the community. By the members of
the community. My mother died when I was
very young. And so this community, the --
is the Andrea Cousins, and the list can go
on and on, raised me. I would not be here
today if it wasn't for those people. And so
we have the opportunity, the real
opportunity to make change. But we can't,
we can't sugar coat it. We can't just talk
about, oh, there's one bad apple. This is a
systemic problem. We understand that
standardized tests are biased.
I work for the New York State Board
of Regents Chancellor who said publicly,
standardized tests are biased. I've had two
elected officials who sit in office right
now, who have told me that Black -- there
are not enough Black police officers because
they can't pass the test. Black students
are the only group who are suspended twice
the amount that they exist in the school
system. How can we suspend Black students
twice the amount and then expect them to get
the education they need to go on and pass
standardized tests? It's a rigged system.
And until we get to the root of it, all of
this is very pretty. But it's not going to
go anywhere. We have the real opportunity
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1 in this City, in this Country to make a real
2 change.
3 Thank you.
4 (Applause.)
5 FACILITATOR BARANKEWICZ: Thank
6 you. Thank you very much.
7 We are approaching the 8:00 hour
8 and that does conclude the public forum for
9 this evening.
10 I want to thank all the residents
11 and community members who spoke tonight. Be
12 assured that all your comments were captured
13 as we did have a meeting stenographer taking
14 notes for this event.
15 Once again, our next event, our
16 next public forum will be on Wednesday,
17 November 4th, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. I don't have
18 my glasses on. At the Grinton Will Library
19 1500 Central Park Avenue. Should there any
20 changes to these public forum schedules,
21 they will be posted on the Yonkersny.gov web
22 site.
Again, on behalf of the Committee for the Police Reform, I want to thank you.

And that concludes this, this
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1 session for this evening.

2 If the Committee Members can just wait

3 for one moment. I do have some information

4 pertaining to our next, our next meeting.

5 (Time Noted: 7:58 p.m.)
US Legal Support, Inc.
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1 STATE OF NEW YORK  

2 ) ss. 

3 COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER )

4 I, LYNNETTE MORATO, a Court 

5 Reporter and Notary Public within and for 

6 the State of New York, do hereby certify:

7 That I reported the proceedings 

8 that are hereinbefore set forth, and that 

9 such transcript is a true and accurate 

10 record of said proceedings. 

11 I further certify that I am not 

12 related to any of the parties to this action 

13 by blood or marriage, and that I am no way 

14 interested in the outcome of this matter. 

15 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto 

16 set my hand. 

17

18

19

20

21 ____________________________

22 LYNNETTE MORATO, 

23 COURT REPORTER