

NAACP head on the Chief: “I personally have not experienced any kind of racist attitude from him”

The Bethlehem Gadfly Police September 4, 2020

 *Latest in a series of posts about the Bethlehem Police* 

Gadfly published on this [yesterday](#) with the Facebook post, the Chief's apologies, and the statements by the Mayor and Councilman Reynolds. Now the incident is totally out in the open. Have you been thinking about it like Gadfly has? NAACP head Esther Lee gives the Chief an “F” for paying attention but gives him a pass on racism.

from Andrew Scott and Peter Hall, “Bethlehem police chief called out for reposting meme mocking athletes protesting police violence.” Morning Call, September 3, 2020.

A Bethlehem resident called out city police Chief Mark DiLuzio for reposting a meme that mocks professional athletes protesting police violence against African Americans.

DiLuzio, who has been meeting regularly with a citizens advisory board on how police can avoid being racist and using excessive force, reposted the meme Sunday on Facebook and then apologized after deleting it, saying he didn't realize the offensive nature of its message.

The meme spoofs a scene from the movie “Jurassic Park,” using images of Los Angeles Lakers basketball player LeBron James to suggest that nobody cares about last week's strike by NBA players and other professional athletes.

Beneath the images, the person who originally posted it states, “Truth ... I just saved a bunch of money by canceling my sports package with DirecTV and I don't have to hear all the racist, anti-white, complaining, leftist, divisive hatred from a bunch of multimillionaire spoiled little brats.”

The repost prompted apologies by DiLuzio on his personal Facebook page and in a letter to Bethlehem City Council. Mayor Robert Donchez

told council in its meeting Tuesday that he had met twice with DiLuzio to discuss the incident.

“Chief DiLuzio has been justly criticized and embarrassed by this incident. He has promised that nothing similar will happen again and accepts [that] the consequences of breaking that promise would be of the most severe nature,” Donchez said.



In an apology on social media, DiLuzio said he reposted the meme and later, “learned there was a message attached to it that does not represent me and which I find offensive.

“I immediately deleted the post after it was brought to my attention,” he said. “This message does not represent what I have stood for over the

past 40 years as a law enforcement officer.”

To City Council, DiLuzio wrote: “Several of you know me, know my stand on fairness and issues, and you know I admit when wrong. I’m sorry, if this re-post caused anyone any concerns.

“I will not be posting or re-posting anything in the future. The lesson learned here is don’t trust what is on Facebook when you post and/or re-post. It may not be what you actually see or want posted,” DiLuzio’s memo says.

DiLuzio did not return calls for comment. Donchez’s chief of staff, William Karras, said the mayor’s statement to council speaks for itself.

He “gets an ‘F’ for not paying attention to what he reposted,” [NAACP head Esther] Lee said. “It gives the impression that he has a problem with diversity, though I personally have not experienced any kind of racist attitude from him.”

Lee noted DiLuzio was “very apologetic and sorrowful” about the post at Monday’s advisory board meeting. She said Donchez was also at the meeting.

The meme uses still images from a scene in “Jurassic Park,” in which character Dennis Nedry calls out the name of the villainous Dr. Lewis Dodgson, portrayed by actor Cameron Thor, to show that none of the other patrons in a crowded outdoor restaurant recognize Dodgson. “See, nobody cares,” says actor Wayne Knight, who portrays Nedry in the movie.

In the meme, Lakers star James’ head is superimposed over Thor’s. At the top of the image are the words, “We’re not going to play anymore,” At the bottom are the words, “Hey everybody! They’re not going to play.”

A second still shows Knight delivering his “nobody cares” line to James.

Others on social media became aware of the post, despite DiLuzio deleting it.

“This is NOT a social media problem, this is a racial problem,” Michele Ryder of Bethlehem tweeted at Donchez when sharing a screenshot of DiLuzio’s post. “I have to wonder if [DiLuzio] didn’t read it prior to posting, what exactly about the photo was so funny it was worth posting?”