

Councilwoman Crampsie Smith: “I applaud all the sides”

The Bethlehem Gadfly George Floyd killing, Police August 5, 2020

🌀 *Latest in a series of posts responding to the George Floyd killing* 🌀

Councilwoman Crampsie Smith, co-sponsor with Councilman Reynolds of the resolution that will be discussed at the August 11 Public Safety Committee meeting, spoke last night at City Council, explaining the term “defund the police,” her support for the police, and her anticipation of hearing ideas for the structure of the Community Engagement Initiative.



- There’s confusion regarding this term “defund the police.”
- The term “defund the police” does not mean by any means to eliminate the police or take all their funds away.
- It just means possibly to reallocate resources especially so that we have more resources in the areas of mental health and drugs and alcohol and training.
- I have never myself meant taking funds away or eliminating police nor will I.
- I have recommended looking for grants . . . for additional mental health specialists . . . look at the training.
- I’m a mental health professional with a master’s degree. and I do counseling every day, but I still need to be trained on a very frequent basis.
- I think there’s a lot of confusion since the **“8 to Abolition”** group condones eliminating the police. I don’t support that.
- I have supported the **“8 Can’t Wait,”** and we talked about it.
- And our Police Chief and department and our administration have been gracious to assure that we change some of the

language in our use of force policy so that we are in compliance with “8 Can’t Wait,” and I applaud them for that.

- I want it to be known as I’ve said multiple times . . . confused by people trying to paint me as anti-police . . . I grew up with a police chief . . . [my father] was a police chief . . . my nephew . . .
- So how anybody can say that I am anti-police just boggles my mind.
- I have a personal investment in police, and I know personally the struggle that they endure every day.
- I also want it noted that I proposed a resolution months ago to insure that our police and emergency responders are covered for PTSD . . .
- [Community Engagement Initiative] is a way to engage the community, so the community has a voice . . . we have not framed that . . . we have not sat down with the Mayor and said this is what it’s going to look like.
- We’re going to see in what direction the community wants us to go as far as enhancing the relationship between the community and the police.
- Certainly we have some ideas . . . in my mind . . . look at the type and frequency of training.
- I applaud all the sides . . . pro-police, Black Lives Matter . . . that’s what democracy is, everybody having a voice
- I think it’s unfortunate that there appears to be a scare type campaign that paints some individuals or groups as wanting to get rid of the police just to scare certain populations . . . It does nothing to help us as a community, as a country, and conversely I think it’s doing nothing but dividing us further.