

Councilman Colon: “Now is the time for listening and to keep the dialog going”

The Bethlehem Gadfly City government, George Floyd killing, Uncategorized June 8, 2020

 *Latest in a series of posts on the George Floyd killing* 

On behalf of the department, Chief DiLuzio read a statement on “George Floyd’s Death & Policing in America” at the Council meeting Wednesday night. You can find the text [here](#) and the audio below. (The Mayor’s May 31 statement was not read into the record but can be found [here](#).)

Audio Player not available in this archive

The Chief’s statement was the occasion for response to the local and national events of the last ten days or so by each member of Council.

Followers know that a main purpose of this blog is to help you know your Council members better. These Council responses are a good way to do exactly that, so Gadfly is taking some time to present each one individually for better focus.

Listen to the voices of our elected officials.

We began with President Waldron and are proceeding in the order in which the comments were presented at the meeting. Previously we have posted on Councilmembers Van Wirt, Crampsie Smith, Reynolds, and Callahan. Negron comes after Callahan here.

Councilman Colon

Unfortunately, Councilman Colon’s presentation is occasionally garbled.

Audio Player not available in this archive

“I really don’t have that much to add that members of Council haven’t said already other than I am glad things have been going peaceful and well for the past few days. I’m someone who comes from a diverse family, a Puerto Rican family. My youngest brother whom many of you know and have met is African American. And I’m still using now as a time

really for listening, thinking that my experience and what I see and the life that I live is reminding myself every day that my existence isn't the scope of all that goes on here in Bethlehem. I'm using this time to listen. I'm glad that others have mentioned that now is the time for listening and to keep the dialog going. So I hope we can really achieve . . . I know the department is trying to stay ahead a lot of the things that are coming whether the norm or ahead of the times a little bit but keep all those things going. I was glad to hear from Mr. Dobyen who called in, some of those things I thought were just common operating procedure in all departments across the country, they all sound pretty reasonable [The Chief interrupted to say that all depts don't have guidelines, that we're talking about criminal justice reform, the system is broken and reiterated that what he saw in Minneapolis is disgusting as well as everything else going on. That was murder on national tv.] I truly believe that Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, we aren't going to be the ones to change the world, to change the country, I think we could continue beyond today as we have and even change is incremental. As I said before, change takes time and effort. The calendar days keep ticking away. I know the effort is there, and I really just hope we can stay . . . I'm proud of the city I grew up in, I think we could all say we appreciated whether it's the cultural diversity that go no further in South Bethlehem and all the different churches and ethnic backgrounds that really built Bethlehem through the Steel and just growing up in the City and the people I grew up around and the family I come from, I really hope we can just continue again not only having the time for listening but keeping the dialog going and continue to do whatever we can here locally. We're not going to change what's going on in D.C., we're not going to change what's going on even in Harrisburg necessarily, as long as we keep doing our part to change what's going on in Bethlehem."