

# FOP president to Council: “If you want to work together to make our community even stronger, we’re here to work with you”

The Bethlehem Gadfly George Floyd killing, Police June 22, 2020

 Latest in a series of posts about the Bethlehem Police 

Here is the second part of Bethlehem’s FOP president Officer William Audelo’s presentation at the beginning of the June 16 City Council meeting. Find part one of the Officer’s talk [here](#).

Read for yourself, and send comments. Gadfly will comment in a later post.

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**Audio Player not available in this archive**

*“There is real racism in our country. We do not need to create events when it is actually occurring. I know that our police as well as members of our city government must be held to a higher standard. The FOP is here for any conversation regarding inequality. Well before the murder of George Floyd we have worked with our community to build a better and stronger Bethlehem. We are proud to support our great NAACP personally and financially for years. I even spoke at this year’s Dr. King celebration. and I consider it one of my greatest honors as a police officer. Councilwoman Negron, you’ve come to me several times for feeding our seniors at the Hispanic Center, for donations to the Lynfield Public Housing Community Center. Councilman Colon, we’ve read Dr. Seuss to the amazing kids at Marvine Elementary for years, and we’ve seen firsthand the incredible work that school is doing for our young people. Councilman Callahan, when you asked if a police officer would compete in a boxing match to benefit at-risk youth and gun violence, I trained for three months before Covid-19 forced the event to be canceled. And the FOP doesn’t act just when people ask for help. This past winter Officer Shea, who will soon be a mother, met an African American woman who did not have a refrigerator but did have a list of health problems. The FOP purchased one for her and delivered it to her. I’m sure you didn’t read the press release, but that’s only*

because it was kept private. The females stated that her neighbors might not be as appreciative of the police, and she feared retribution. Last year we were dispatched to the Southside Little League garage because someone decided it was worth their time to vandalize the property. I got a call from the officer on the scene who said someone damaged the Little League's stuff and the FOP is going to pay for it. I said ok, consider it done. And, again, you wouldn't have known because we didn't make it public. The money for these donations comes directly from the paychecks of your city police officers. This is not the police department; these are your police officers. Now I know there is a stigma in our minority communities with the police, just like I know there are social and economic injustices within our minority communities. Our officers can not come close to healing the pain caused by the murder of George Floyd. Nor can we take responsibility. We can't change \_\_\_\_\_ about our city. We can't change the fact that the majority of public housing is made up of a majority of our minority residents. Or the fact that an overwhelming number of our runaways are minorities. Ask Liberty High School for a breakdown of their expelled students by race. Your police officers are the band-aid of society. Councilwoman Van Wirt, last week you stated the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing. I can assure you that I've seen enough evil for several life-times. I've held your loved ones up as my partner cut the electrical cord, holding their lifeless body. I've performed CPR on a 20 -year-old female with a gunshot wound in her head. I knew I couldn't save her. But I also knew that her family would want me to do everything I possibly could. I heard a 5-year-old boy describe his rape as being tickled, because a child doesn't comprehend what's happened to them. Your police carry the memories of these things every day of their lives. To the point where we seem to be unaffected by it because it has become our norm. And I hear from the naysayers, well, you signed up for this. No one's forced me to be a cop, fair enough. I \_\_\_\_\_ rape my mother, and it's accepted by everybody in this room, then it's just part of my job. And I still love my job. I can't exactly start selling insurance after living this life. We're blessed to have this police department we have. We're blessed to have this city we live in. We've had your support in the past, and I'll continue to try and earn it. I can't promise you perfection. At the end of the day we're just imperfect people like everyone else. But if you want to work together to make our community even stronger, we're here to

*work with you. The people in this room might not be able to change the country, but we can be an example for other communities. Hard work and a reasonable amount of hope can accomplish great things. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you here tonight. . . . Thank you generally to you all for letting me be here with you and speaking tonight, and please know you can reach out to me at any time, and we might disagree, we might, but I'm absolutely dedicated to working with you for whatever issue we can resolve. Thank you."*