

# Gadfly tries to look at the facts

The Bethlehem Gadfly Police August 31, 2020

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

Gadfly would like to return to the work of **Individual-1** he wrote about **yesterday**.

Gadfly has called it the most vigorous local attack on systemic racism that he has encountered, and the word reaching his ears shows that Individual-1 may speak for many of our residents.

Since Individual-1's position is completely contrary to the one about systemic racism that Councilman Reynolds articulated for the Community Engagement Initiative, we must look carefully at it.

Gadfly hopes not to put words in Councilman Reynolds' mouth, but if there is no systemic racism, there is no need for a Community Engagement Initiative.

Gadfly moves carefully here. He knows 9 uses of the comma, but statistics are definitely not his forte.

Gadfly, till he is better instructed, understands systemic racism to mean that we have structures that produce racially skewed outcomes, that produce statistically skewed outcomes in the area of race.

Gadfly, till he is better instructed, understands systemic racism to not mean that everyone operating the structure or system is racist.

Individual-1 titled his essay (it is really too long and carefully crafted to be called simply an email) "Get The Facts – Systemic Racism Is A Lie," and Gadfly would like to focus attention here on these specific points:

1) "Statistics do not support the 'systemic racism' narrative in policing."

2) “The systemic racism issue is being created in communities where there currently is not one, a tactic used by many politicians, certain media, and domestic terrorist groups like Black Lives Matter (BLM) or Antifa.”

3) “There was not one single incident of fact provided at the meeting or in the article to support any claims of systemic racism.”

Gadfly, till he is better instructed, ventures to say that the statistics provided by the Bethlehem Police Department themselves at the August 11 Public Safety meeting show evidence of systemic racism according to the above definition.

### **CITY ETHNITY**

White – 78.7 % (Hispanic -28.5%)

Black – 7%

Asian – 2.9%

Other – 5.8%

For instance, in 2019 there were according to the Bethlehem Police Department statistics 143 cases of use of force.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>White</b>
2019	3	45	36	1	58

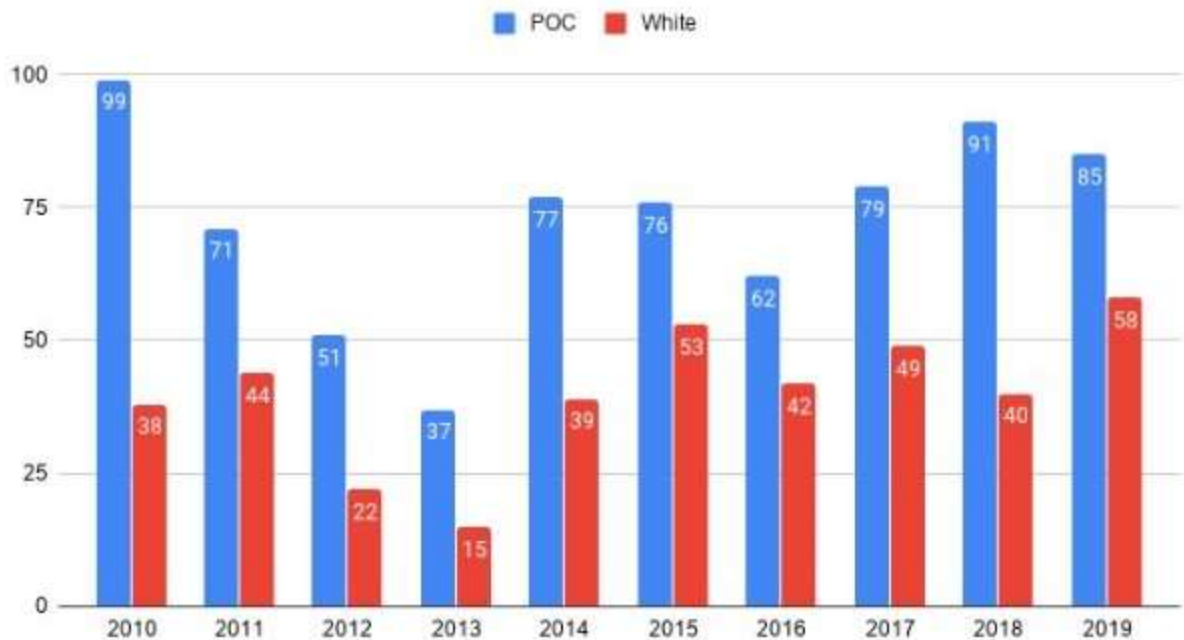
Use of force involving Blacks, who are 7% of the Bethlehem population, made up 31.5% of the cases.

Use of force involving whites, 58.2% of our population, made up 40.5% of the cases, while POC, who make up 38.4% of the population, made up 59.4% of the cases.

There is significant statistical disparity here.

Here's how Lehigh's Prof Holono Ochs charted the statistics showing the disparity over a decade.

Use of Force Incidents by Race - Combined POC vs White



Gadfly thinks this is evidence of systemic racism, but he waits for better instruction and is always grateful for it.

*Good conversation builds community.*