

No censure vote in Allentown

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

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

This withdrawal of the **censure resolution** against Gerlach and Siegel is a shame in a way. Would have been one helluva discussion.

But the **citizen censure** is still on the agenda? There may be still hope for drama.

from Andrew Wagaman, “Resolution withdrawn: Allentown City Council won’t vote Wednesday to censure Siegel, Gerlach.” Morning Call, August 4, 2020.

Allentown City Council has decided not to consider a resolution demanding a censure and no-confidence vote against council members Joshua Siegel and Ce-Ce Gerlach.

The resolution, which was to be introduced at Wednesday’s meeting, claimed Gerlach and Siegel betrayed the oath of office and “are unfit and not worthy to hold the position of councilperson” because of alleged actions taken and remarks made in the aftermath of an incident outside St. Luke’s Hospital-Sacred Heart in which a police officer used his knee to restrain Edward Borrero Jr.

Councilman Ed Zucal drafted the resolution against Siegel and Gerlach, and council President Daryl Hendicks and councilwoman Candida Affa initially supported it.

When City Clerk Mike Hanlon published Wednesday’s meeting agenda Monday afternoon, however, the resolution was not included. He confirmed that it was withdrawn.

On Tuesday, Hendricks said in a statement that it was removed “due to the press treating the resolution as a statement against Black Lives Matter and not as a statement relating to behavior.”

“We have no concerns with peaceful protests by Black Lives Matter or any other group,” Hendricks said. “We are concerned about certain behavior that creates the potential for litigation and increased costs for insurance.”

Their actions, the resolution alleged, placed the city in “a position of future litigation” and showed they can no longer be objective about the police department or trusted by citizens.

The resolution will most likely not be revisited, Hendricks said. Instead, council members will propose amendments to the city’s ethics code to “cover this kind of activity.”

Affa said Monday that while she still had concerns about her colleagues’ behavior, she no longer supported the censure resolution because she believes it’s poorly timed and distracting the legislative body from focusing on more important issues, such as a proposed \$16 million bond issue intended to weather pandemic-related financial issues.

“I apologize for my role in the distraction,” she said.

Allentown citizens who are part of the Black Lives Matter movement countered Saturday with [their own petition](#), calling on Hendricks, Zucal and Affa to resign over their alleged lack of support of Black and brown citizens, who make up the majority of Allentown’s population, and to apologize to them “for denying their democratic voice, safety, well-being.”

The petition was signed by about 100 people and appears on Wednesday’s agenda.