

# What's this defunding of the police all about?

The Bethlehem Gadfly George Floyd killing, Police July 2, 2020

 *Latest in a series of posts about response to the George Floyd killing* 

Let Gadfly say it again.

There's a Public Safety Committee meeting on the horizon. Date unspecified.

And in addition to discussion of the Police Department's use of force policy, there will be discussion of a Community Engagement Initiative.

Gadfly bets that in the background going on right now by Councilfolk Colon, Reynolds, Crampsie Smith, and others is significant preparation for that part of the meeting.

The first CEI step seems to be "engaging" a committee and setting a structure for them to meet and set their own agenda.

So we don't know yet what the engaged citizenry will ultimately take on. Their agenda will probably be related to consensus about pressing local problems.

But you've been following the news like me, and it's obvious that reform in the way police do business and relate to the community is much in the air.

There is great appetite for change evident.

For instance, you probably didn't need Gadfly to call the Cuomo plan to your attention in past posts.

And just within the past day we learned that New York City transferred a billion dollars out of the police department budget, though there is some question if that signals real reform and change or is just paper shuffling since some of those line items were transferred to other parts of city government.

So, just like what Gadfly said about studying our use of force directive, we, as informed citizens who want to be part of the good conversation that builds community, need to be aware of the plans proposed in other cities and understand such ideas as “defunding” the police department.

Gadfly has just spent the last hour or more reading around about this radical defunding idea — basically shifting and trimming police department responsibilities and reallocating funds into social programs — and gives to you here two short, helpful, and easy to read FAQ-type articles:

*Ryan W. Miller, “What does ‘defund the police’ mean and why some say ‘reform’ is not enough? USA Today, June 8, 2020.*

*Scottie Andrew, “There’s a growing call to defund the police. Here’s what it means.” CNN, June 17, 2020.*

Suggestions for additional reading invited, as well as your comments.

We need to be ready to discuss change.