

Police peacekeepers need peaceful resolution as their initial focus

The Bethlehem Gadfly George Floyd killing, Police July 21, 2020

 Latest in a series of posts about the Bethlehem Police 

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Gadfly,

Thank you for providing this insight into Professor Ochs' work.

I'm nowhere near an expert in any of this, but from a common sense viewpoint there are three points that jump to the front for me and in no particular order.

First, mental health services have suffered a severe decline over the last nearly 40 years. Instead of cuts, counties and the state should be boosting their financial commitment to this area.

Second, and this was mentioned, I believe, by one of the speakers at the most recent City Council meeting, is the need for de-escalation training. Circumstances can change quickly in a civilian and police officer interaction. Officers trained to ratchet down a situation benefits everyone. Training is the local government's responsibility.

And, third, crisis intervention training should also be part of an officer's training. Along with de-escalating a situation, it makes sense to have an officer prepared to assess and make a determination as to the best course of action when handling a person going through a difficult time.

This training should also be a local responsibility. Perhaps higher level government funding support could assist communities with limited resources on training issues.

If we want our police to keep the peace, then it makes sense to have them arrive at each call with a peaceful resolution as their initial focus.

Dana