

The full Allentown resolution

The Bethlehem Gadfly George Floyd killing, Police, Uncategorized July 30, 2020

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

This resolution was discussed but not voted on last night at the Allentown City Council meeting. Gadfly will encourage you in subsequent posts to follow discussion at the meeting by breaking it down into parts for easier focus. There's a lot we can learn and think about. Gadfly would assume that, though we haven't had an incident like Allentown had in the Sacred Heart Hospital episode, that the basic issues regarding the operation of the Police Department will be basically the same. And viewing the dynamics of the Allentown Council in handling this matter can be valuable to us as well.

CITY OF ALLENTOWN

No. 86

RESOLUTION

R - 2020

Introduced by City Council on July 15, 2020

Recommends Community Strategies for Police Oversight Review and Recommendations

Resolved by the Council of the City of Allentown, That

WHEREAS, Allentown City Council is committed to a dialogue that includes examining police operations, legislative and community oversight, requiring certain reporting requirements and establishing a policy on force; and

WHEREAS, Allentown City Council supports along with the Human Relations Commission the Eight Can't Wait recommendations from the Obama administration related to the use of police force; and

WHEREAS, City Council will meet on Wednesday, July 29, 2020 at 6:00 PM to begin to take public comment and work on recommendations for policing in Allentown; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of Allentown will foster a dialogue inclusive of but not limited to reviewing, discussing the following:

- Mandating body cam use and imposing discipline up to and included termination for failing to use it;
- Reporting to Council Public Safety Committee of any changes to the discipline and use of force policies;
- Requiring Council approval to policy changes that would decrease adherence to 8 Can't Wait policies;
- Banning of no knock warrants;
- Removing any exceptions for chokehold and neck restraints from the use of force policy;
- Banning stop and frisk;
- Requiring officer intervention to stop any excessive use of force and imposing discipline consequences including termination for not doing so;

- Establishing a Citizens Review Board that reviews, among other things, cases where excessive force was used and cases where a weapon was discharged;
- Requiring Bi-annual reports of use of force, discipline, positive interactions, policy changes and types of calls/responses that are disaggregated by race and gender to be given and discussed at Council's Public Safety at a public meeting;
- Requiring misuse of force situations immediately given to the attorney general (3rd party);
- Suspending officers who are suspected of violating the use of force policy while the investigation is conducted, this should be automatic;
- Requiring quarterly reporting to Council's Public Safety Committee that identifies the nature of calls in Allentown, i.e. reason for call: mental health, domestic disturbance, violent crime, traffic accident, and an annual report. The report should be made public immediately following their release;
- Making body camera footage available to the public and easily accessible with no delays in its release;
- Mandating community meetings following use of force incidents to contend with the psychological ramifications and fear that emerges from the use of lethal use of force and force community concerns to be fielded and responded to;

Be it also Resolved that the dialogue will be ongoing but with the goal that the initial public review of this matter will be completed within three months of passage of this resolution and will result in recommendations proposed by Council;

Be It Also Resolved that City Council effectuate such recommendations through legislative action by resolution or ordinance, as appropriate, and by asking state and federal officials for legislation as appropriate.

Be It Finally Resolved that the City begin to draft a plan of divestment of resources currently allocated to the police department to other areas or sectors of the city to more appropriately address such issues as mental health, drug & alcohol treatment, housing and social services, and the like.

to be continued in next post . . .