

# Councilwoman Crampsie Smith: sympathy and support not mutually exclusive

The Bethlehem Gadfly Budget, Lehigh Valley Good Neighbors Alliance, Police December 8, 2020

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

*“I can do both. I can sympathize with people of color and the hurt and pain they are feeling, and I can also support the police. They are not mutually exclusive things.”*

*Councilwoman Grace Crampsie Smith*

Last week was a quite busy week for your city government and thus for Gadfly. A regular City Council meeting and the final budget hearing. Lots of interactions by our elected officials, the kinds of things that are not only important for us but also give us a good view of our elected officials. Gadfly will try to provide a few more scenes from the City Council meeting today to catch up on that one anyway.

The response from City Council members at the December 1 City Council meeting to the full court press that the Lehigh Valley Good Neighbors Alliance put on to obstruct Council’s suspected conspiracy to defund the police was vigorous.

Led off by Councilwoman Grace Crampsie Smith in strong words that were praised by her colleagues (5 mins).

- No one on Council has ever proposed eliminating the police.
- That has been the message sent out to the community over the past days and weeks, and that is unfortunate.

- Many on Council have been hurt and moved by the pain and hurt that people of color have experienced.
- This doesn't mean that we are anti-police.
- In my personal and professional life I have had many friends and clients and students who have been victims of systemic racism.



- I see them, and their hurts, and I sympathize, but I can do both.
- I can sympathize with people of color and the hurt and pain they are feeling, and I can also support the police. They are not mutually exclusive things.
- And that needs to be clear to the community and the individuals and the groups that are spreading falsehoods about me and my fellow Council people.
- [Council supported resolution for supplies for police.]
- [She enrolled in the Bethlehem Citizens Police Academy to get a better feel for what police do.]
- [Have been meeting with police since June about how to improve the quality of services and officer training.]

- The biggest concern I have . . . is the falsehoods circulated by individuals such as the Lehigh Valley Good Neighbors Alliance.
- They have instilled fear in our community needlessly at time when we should be encouraging and supporting of others, especially like the elderly, crime victims, and those with PTSD, etc.
- [Personal experience, daughter of a police chief, knows the stress.]
- I saw my father get hurt and have a heart attack in the line of duty and almost die when I was 10 years old.

*“She claims she’s not for eliminating the police but she wrote the resolution that gives radical Marxists direct influence over City policy and policing.”*

*The LVGNA “coffee cup” brochure*

- I saw the stress that that job took on him and I saw him go to an early grave because of the stress.
- I am appalled, I am angered by the individuals and the groups that say I and my fellow Councilman do not support the police.
- My father was a police chief and frankly I feel you are spitting on his grave by saying I do not support the police.
- You can insult me, you can attack me personally, but don’t attack my family and that is what you are doing.
- [Other family members in police work.]
- I have nothing but complete respect, love, and admiration for them.

- I would just ask that the individuals and groups that are spreading these falsehoods please consider the ramifications of your actions.
- The one thing that is most upsetting is that you are instilling fear needlessly in innocent citizens of our community.

*The claim that the Community Engagement Initiative Councilwoman Crampsie Smith co-sponsored with Councilman Reynolds gives direct influence to anybody much less radical Marxists is false.*

**The Bethlehem Gadfly**