

# Reynolds rationale for the resolution

The Bethlehem Gadfly Community Engagement Initiative, George Floyd killing July 10, 2020

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

Gadfly is moving chronologically covering the July 7 City Council meeting and the **“Resolution urging the creation of a Community Engagement Initiative in the City of Bethlehem”** sponsored by Councilpersons Reynolds and Crampsie Smith.

Gadfly has brought you the in-person and by-phone public comment, which, as the newspaper characterized it, was “lukewarm at best.”

Give Councilman Reynolds credit. He was “in the room” (the other Council members except president Waldron participated online) directly facing and speaking to the activists.

His rationale for the resolution was clear and strong.

- I agree with a lot of what’s been said.
- . . . the most learning goes on where there is the most amount of discomfort . . .
- What is in front of us here is really a concept
- I attended and I marched in every one of the rallies that have gone on in Bethlehem during the last several weeks.
- The energy there was unbelievable, and the people in this room deserve a lot of credit for that.
- What I am trying to do here . . . is find a public, open structure by which that energy is able to continue.
- This is not about me saying I have the solution. This is not about me saying we should do A, B, and C.
- I kept the resolution vague for that reason.
- Trying to work out having a public space meeting during a pandemic . . . has been impossible.
- Unacceptable to me to do nothing till August or September.

- I had an hour and a half conversation with [Prof Ochs] at Lehigh . . . [the kind of research] that needs to be at the center of what we're looking for going forward.
- I disagree that anything I've been involved with has been a band-aid, I think that me record of public service shows that I don't usually get involved in things that I don't think will lead to real change.
- It's about creating real change.
- The energy we have about making change . . . extends beyond the police department.
- The reason I came up with this idea now is to start the conversation.
- The structure is designed to create public pressure such as we've seen tonight to create change within the city and within our police department.
- I'm trying to create something here that will allow for permanent access for these conversation and actions that need change.
- What I wanted to do here is create an organic structure that does not have a lot of direction . . . no votes, no official members, but it's about transparency and accountability.
- We need to look like a department that understands that not every call needs to be answered by a police officer.
- . . . opportunity to hear from our police department about what we currently do . . .
- We need to allow conversation from all different corners of the city.
- I was just trying to create a space, not an agenda, in which for one month we are hearing from [anybody /everybody] that wants to.
- People deserve to have a voice, and it's important that the right people are in that room to hear about those topics, and it's not just us.
- What I am trying to do here is create a permanent structure that will change the face of that conversation going forward.
- We need to draw the lines [from what happened in the past] to what's going on today.



- What this was to me was just the opportunity to create that space.
- [vague] designed that way.
- It was never about we need to do this, this, and this. I felt that would be disrespectful to those who have other ideas.
- The best that we can do is to give people who have ideas about what we need to do access to power and a voice in being able to have these conversations.
- This is an opportunity, an opportunity for all of us to create real change.
- But it only happens if we get buy-in from the city and buy-in from the community.
- The only way this piece of paper means anything is if we've made progress a month from now . . . year . . . two years.