

# President Waldron: no will on Council to defund or eliminate the police department

The Bethlehem Gadfly Budget, Lehigh Valley Good Neighbors Alliance, Police December 2, 2020

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

President Waldron began last night's City Council meeting with a brief announcement that, despite rumor (think Lehigh Valley Good Neighbors Alliance), there is "no will among Council members to defund or eliminate the police department."

President Waldron asked Council members to submit amendments to the budget for discussion at the Thursday budget meeting by Monday, and none were received relating to the police (sounds like there is something coming related to the Fire Department, however).

Even before going to a longish list of callers in the comment space of the meeting, President Waldron wanted to "assure" the public that Council "will not be amending or making any changes" to the police department budget for 2021.

"It is our intention," he said, "as Bethlehem City Council to continue to support all of the employees of the City of Bethlehem, including the police department."

The police department budget, President Waldron said, is, in fact, larger than last year mostly because of a 3% salary increase, like all of the 600+ City employees.

The salary of elected officials remains the same, no increase.

President Waldron's announcement took some of the drama away from the subsequent string of pro-police callers, for the Lehigh Valley Good Neighbors Alliance was in a kind of blitz mode during the previous 36 hours or so, including the appearance on the Bobby Gunther Walsh radio show and including the skewering of Councilwoman Van Wirt in the image Gadfly posted for you yesterday right before the meeting.

The meeting was robust both at the beginning from callers (overwhelmingly against "defunding" but powerful voices on the other side too) and at the end (the spirited interaction among the Council people).

Given some time, Gadfly will provide details and audio clips as usual, but, of course, in the meantime, you can go to the [video](#) (begin min. 1:46:00 with Councilwoman Crampsie Smith's passion and eloquence for the Council interplay at the end).

Also, in the meantime, Gadfly suggests that you go to the Lehigh Valley Good Neighbors Alliance Facebook page to see their reaction to the meeting.

Yes, go there. Whew!

**The Bethlehem Gadfly**