

From: [KELLEY FELCHLE](#)
To: [Nancy Higby](#)
Subject: FW: WPD policing changes
Date: Monday, August 24, 2020 11:11:29 AM

Kelley Felchle
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-----Original Message-----

From: Kendra Wyatt <Kendra.Wyatt@WATERLOO-IA.ORG>
Sent: Monday, August 24, 2020 11:10 AM
To: KELLEY FELCHLE <KELLEY.FELCHLE@WATERLOO-IA.ORG>
Subject: FW: WPD policing changes

-----Original Message-----

From: bgirsch@mchsi.com <bgirsch@mchsi.com>
Sent: Monday, August 24, 2020 11:03 AM
To: Mayor <Mayor@WATERLOO-IA.ORG>; Sharon Juon <Sharon.Juon@WATERLOO-IA.ORG>; Margaret Klein <Margaret.Klein@WATERLOO-IA.ORG>; Dave Boesen <Dave.Boesen@WATERLOO-IA.ORG>; Ray Feuss <Ray.Feuss@WATERLOO-IA.ORG>; Jerome Amos Jr <Jerome.Amos@WATERLOO-IA.ORG>; Pat Morrissey <Pat.Morrissey@WATERLOO-IA.ORG>; Jonathan Grieder <Jonathan.Grieder@WATERLOO-IA.ORG>
Subject: WPD policing changes

Good morning, Mayor Hart and Waterloo City Council Members. May my e-mail find you and your families safe and healthy. My name is Leila Girsch, proud and lifelong resident of Waterloo. I am contacting all of you with my concerns regarding changes being considered involving the Waterloo Police Department.

There are falsehoods being brought forth by a small group of citizens, unfortunately, a city council member and a private attorney among them. I am quoting Waterloo Courier articles, "Many states incorporated the stars and bars into their state flags in the 1960's. Waterloo adopted the Klan dragon." (attorney Kathryn Mahoney) In addition, Mr. Morrissey, your comment about the WPD law agency "putting on a Ku Klux Klan logo", is an offensive, misleading lie, which, dangerously, can spearhead misguided social unrest among uninformed citizens. The WPD griffin is no more a Ku Klux Klan dragon, than is the Scottish logo, proudly used by your pipe and drum band. There is absolutely no correlation between either of those symbols to any hatred group.

Our WPD griffin was adopted in 1964. A griffin is NOT a dragon: it is a cross between a lion and an eagle; it has not, nor ever will, stand for racial hate. In my research of the griffin symbol, which symbolically dates back to before 3000 B.C., these words were used in definition: vigilance, courage, strength, boldness, leadership, protection, guardian. Do these words not describe our law officers?

These explanations are easily accessed through many websites. I would ask that you all seek this readily available information. As city leaders, you must make informed decisions based on facts; you were elected and sworn to do so. When we have misinformed citizens spreading false messages to the public, it is imperative that we continue to

answer to those misconceptions.

I have certainly had perceptions throughout my life that were unfounded; we all have. When I educated myself and found the real truth, I accepted those truths and moved on. The group in our city perpetuating these falsehoods must do the same. They are promoting disservice to our community and to our men and women in blue who have proudly earned the honor to wear the griffin logo each and every day.

Another great concern of mine, is the possibility of reduced funding to our police department. While some policing changes can be positive, cutting funding is surely walking down a dangerous slope.

We are a city of nearly 70,000. Any city of our size has crime, much of it centering around drug trafficking, gun violence, stolen firearms, break-ins, assault, with many of these crimes related to gang activity; it is not unique to Waterloo. We must retain civility and law and order. I would not want it any other way, and I believe you feel the same way.

Your job is to do all you can to support and reinforce law and order and safety for all of our citizens. We must leave it to our law enforcement agencies to properly carry out those tasks. In doing these often dangerous and thankless duties, our force needs all the resources and funding available.

Some community members and leaders are calling for more training in certain areas of law enforcement; training is fruitful; training takes funding. We have an exceptionally well trained police force. They continue to make themselves better officers and leaders, always seeking ways to improve. As city leaders, you must continue to foster and fund their growth.

It is vital that in your decision making, you involve our Chief, our Majors, our Captains, our Lieutenants, our Sergeants, our officers. Set up work sessions with them, learn of the great work our VCAT team, our Tri County Drug Task Force, our Gang Task Force continues to do, hear of their successes, hear of all of the firearms they have taken off the streets. Learn of the work our brave patrol officers perform. They deserve to be heard.

You will also hear of their frustrations, their ideas, their many stories, their financial and emotional needs, the long hours they put in, the dangers they face. Would you do their job? Would you put on that uniform, leave your family and go out and put your life on the line for all of us each and every day? I know I could not, nor would the majority of our population. Yet we want and need their constant protection. You must, as city leaders, not bow down to the one-sided demands that may be presented to you by some citizen groups. You must be fair and just in getting "all sides of the story."

In closing, I offer this quote, as told to ABC news, by acting Homeland Security Secretary, Chad Wolf:

"Painting law enforcement with a broad brush of systematic racism is really a disservice to the men and women who put on the badge, the uniform, every day, risk their lives to protect the American people"

Thank you to all of you for your attention to my great concerns. My e-mail is: bgirsch@mshci.com should you desire to respond And thank you for taking on all the difficult decisions city leaders must tackle.

Sincerely, Leila Girsch

