

Camilla Greene
5265 Rockrose Lane

I am putting forth two recommendations to the Allentown City Council regarding the Allentown Police Department's implementation of the eight (8) principles of conduct.

1. Where the verb "require" appears, add the verb "practice"

Examples: Require and Practice De-Escalation

Require and Practice Warning Before Shooting

Rationale: "To require" is a passive action; "to practice" is an active action and an action that can be measured and observed. For far too long there has been the use of passive language that has a minimal level of accountability. If we want different outcomes, we cannot continue to do what we have already done.

2. I recommend a Citizen Review Board for the Allentown Police Department comprised of **racially conscious** Allentown citizens representing the ethnic and racial groups in Allentown be formed to review, monitor, and censure case by case, incident by incident the interactions of the Allentown police with Allentown citizens.

Rationale: Each of us has ongoing internal work to do to rid ourselves of white supremacy and if we are not in white skin identity, we must decolonize our thoughts and actions. Prior experience has proven that if we form Citizen Review Boards to monitor the actions of the police force comprised of people who are steeped in white supremacy or people who are colonized, we do not change the dynamics or the number of Black and Brown people being murdered by the very people paid to protect them.

Yamelisa Taveras
The Unidos Foundation
1329 Hamilton St

If the Allentown Police Department refuses to implement the "8 Can't Wait" Policies to ensure preservation of life, how will City Council intervene on behalf of its constituents?

What are the steps that City Council is taking to ensure representation and equity in a city that is predominantly People of Color?

What safety measures are being implemented across all city public spaces for the children of inner city to remain active and healthy this summer?

Andrew Leahy, 2 Meadow Lane, Hunlock Creek, PA, 18621

To the City Council members:

Thank you for the opportunity to have the Floor. I appreciate your willingness to accept public statements amid these exceptional circumstances.

I am writing to amplify comments delivered at the last City Council meeting on June 7th, which brought before this Council the current national discussion surrounding policing and public trust. In that vein, I want to briefly and sensitively highlight recent incidents of excessive force employed disproportionately on minority members in our own community. While I concede that these incidents may not be reflective of the values of the Allentown Police Department, and that the Department, given last meeting's closing discussion and a recent Morning Call article¹, is interested in concerted efforts at self-assessment, I nonetheless want to invoke these incidents as testaments to the ongoing need to seek sustainable, proactive, and, perhaps, uncomfortable reforms that prioritize fortifying public trust, especially for the communities of color that are impacted asymmetrically by mistreatment both nationally and in Allentown.

I will not identify names since I have not been given permission, but the Council may recall the tasing of a high school student in September 2011, garnering scrutiny toward the city's "Taser training and use-of-force policies."² In 2014, policing was brought to the forefront of city attention again when an unarmed college student was beaten and tased on his front porch despite compliance, an encounter spurred by his alleged physical similarities to a description from a robbery nearby.³ Shortly after, in May 2015, a robbery suspect suffered

considerable injury to his jaw after an officer kicked him during a stop, despite conspicuous compliance and being, as was later found, unarmed.⁴ In September 2018, a man was beaten by officers patrolling a gathering of residents; prosecutions that he resisted arrest and engaged in disorderly conduct were later found to be untenable, and the officers were deemed confrontational after evaluation, with a judge disparaging them for having “escalated a situation without cause.”⁵ And lastly, as recently as 2019, the Council may recall a civil rights lawsuit filed by a former officer who was fired in 2014, alleging racial harassment on duty and dismissal of his grievances while employed with the force.⁶ With the exception of the latter, all of these instances resulted in considerable settlements on the part of the city.

Again, I bring up these cases not to defend, cherry-pick, or generalize but, rather, to evince a pattern inseparable from the dynamics we’ve seen play out most recently in Minneapolis and Atlanta. The evidence that our police department is not immune to abuses of power echoed in the national narrative warrants close inspection of its exemptions, policies, and, most importantly, how these policies translate to praxis. I also want to express how I have a difficult time reconciling this series of incidents with the \$29,861,971 difference between the current APD budget (\$40,289,036) and the budget for Community and Economic Development (\$10,427,065), as sourced from Allentown’s 2020 Final City Budget record.⁷ Alongside providing comment on and, perhaps, justification for this gap in funding, I hope the City Council will support measures like those promoted by local Black Lives Matter advocates.¹ We need to improve oversight, transparency, and accountability of the city’s police department while seriously investing in struggling communities and access to alternative interventions, like services for mental health, domestic violence, education, and homelessness. I hope the City Council will move forward by prioritizing proactive reallocations, resources, and reforms.

My name is Michael Hu and my address is 4385 Green Tree Lane (Allentown, PA)

Here is my statement for the city council:

I believe Allentown requires looking into its budget and allocating money into community sectors (eg: Allentown School Districts, drug counseling, medical involvement, etc.) to divert policing funds into separate areas that directly benefit the community, instead of relying on the police to solve issues that don't require brute force action.

Nia Watson, Linden Street

Racism

Racism is as trans generational as the trauma it creates.

Privilege is the illusion.

It hibernates in denial until it kills.

A life that existed.

Which kills a family.

That kills a childhood.

That destroys a community.

It is broadcasted for the world to see like a sport.

Then, quickly forgotten about by those that have created it.

But it lasts forever in space and time.

There are many systems in our country (in the world)

that operate with this corruption.

Intricately interwoven and protected.

There can be no trust in the system that is supposed to keep me safe

if it's the same system that can kill me

Or look at me through color vision

And limit me.

You don't have to be a person of color to consider what it would be like to live with this realty.

In fact, it could be the catalyst to create something new.

If you think about it, most likely you will speak about it.

Ask yourself the questions that make you uncomfortable.

As uncomfortable as it is to know you can be killed because you are alive.

Sharon A. Fraser, Human Relation Commissioner

We are requesting City Council support and accept the HRC resolution **8Cantwait** as the standard for the Police Department of the City of Allentown to implement as part of their policing practice.

These 8 practices are shown to be effective where they are implemented in decreasing the killing of black and brown citizens of this country.

Secondly with the wake of the unnecessary killing of George Floyd these standards are being adopted and implemented in cities and towns all over the United States.

Allentown, being the third-largest city in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with a large population of its citizenry being of Black and Latina heritage should support a policy that provides a safer environment that allows its citizen to not be afraid to call the Police out of fear of being killed.

City Council I am asking you to be on the right side of history by adopting this resolution that will start to rebalance and shape how citizens of Allentown are treated. There is more to be done including retraining and accountability. This would be an effective first step. I have attached the resolution and included the 8cantwait website link FYI. <https://8cantwait.org/>

Julian Kern

252 E. Walnut St. Apt. 2RR Allentown, PA

"For the past couple months, residents have set off fireworks all over the city every night and it's worse on weekends.

Local police have said it is impossible to appropriately enforce something that is sold at countless stores.

Residents shoot them off close to homes and vehicles. Sometimes they even shoot them off towards vehicles and homes. The debris from the fireworks end up hitting homes and land in our yards.

There are some nights that people can't sleep because of the constant explosions from the fireworks. People try to close their windows and turn on air conditioning to muffle some of the sound.

In June of 2019, McKinley Elementary School in Allentown was started on fire from fireworks landing on the roof of the school.

The law says you have to be 150 feet from any occupied structure to set them off.

Even though the law says you have to be 150 feet from any occupied structure to set them off and that's next to impossible in Allentown, it has not stopped residents from setting them off in neighborhoods throughout the city.

Municipal fire officials say they worry about the increased calls for fire or injury because of the use of fireworks.

Currently the violation of current firework laws is punishable by a fine of up to \$100.

Not only are fireworks a quality of life concern and a fire risk, they are also terrifying and overwhelming for pets ☐—and possibly hazardous.

Also individuals with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), explosions and noisy displays can raise anxiety levels and bring back traumatic memories of gunfire, bomb detonations and terrifying conditions.

I am petitioning Pennsylvania state officials to strengthen the firework laws and give local police departments the ability to confiscate fireworks used illegally to prevent injuries and fires as well as increase the quality of life for residents and their pets.

I am asking city council to look into anything that could be done on the local level to address these concerns."

Kenneth P. Heffentrager
Seidersville Rd.
Bethlehem (Temporary)

Good evening, the issue of the Juvenile Community Service Program has been brought to you several times. Last year, and the last two City Council meetings, with emails being sent to all members of Council as well as the Mayor. My

question is, When will anyone reply to Julian Kern or even start talking about this. It becomes very frustrating when it seems like this issue is being ignored.

Joan and Donato Giaquinto
29 S 13th St, Allentown, PA 18102

LAST NIGHT AFTER FIREWORKS STARTED,I WALKED FROM MY HOUSE EAST ON MAPLE TO THE 1100 BLOCK OF MAPLE. IT LOOKED LIKE THE FOURTH OF JULY AT DORNEY PARK. THE ROW HOMES (1132 TO 1138) WERE ALL ON THEIR FRONT PORCHES WATCHING THE UNBELIEVABLE DISPLAY OF FIREWORKS ,HIGH ROCKETS AND WHAT LOOKED LIKE GIANT WATERFALLS, ALL BEING SHOT OFF FROM ACROSS THE STREET IN THE PARKING LOT OF THE SOMACH BUILDING. THE SOMACH BUILDING'S FRONT ENTRANCE IS ON HAMILTON STREET. I APPROACHED THE RESIDENTS AND LET THEM KNOW HOW ANNOYING THIS ACTIVITY WAS. THEIR RESPONSE WAS "EVERYONE IS DOING IT."I THEN TOLD THEM I WAS RETURNING HOME TO INFORM THE POLICE. SPEAKING WITH THE COM. CENTER I REQUESTED OFFICERS COME OVER TO MY HOUSE SO THAT I COULD DETAIL FOR THEM WHAT HAPPENED. WE HAD A LENGTHLY DISCUSSION.I HAVE A CALL INTO CAPTAIN ROCA.

ALSO, AS I WAS LEAVING , AN INDIVIDUAL FROM 25 OR 27 SOUTH 12TH /SECOND FLOOR, THREW TWO M 80'S INTO THE INTERSECTION OF SOUTH 12TH AND MAPLE, ALMOST DIRECTLY IN MY PATH.

Ms. Gelb, Schnecksville

I read in the Morning Call about police reform recommendations initiated by Joshua Siegal, Mark Pinsley, and the Allentown Black Lives Matter group. I support these recommendations. I am happy that some of these recommendations such as de-escalation method training and a ban on chokeholds and strangleholds have already been implemented. I look forward to the increased transparency that the police department will provide when Chief Granitz releases their use of force policy this year.

I support action towards each of the recommendations that are not already being implemented such as: Developing a Lehigh Valley-wide interdepartmental database of ethics complaints, disciplinary reviews and reasons for dismissals of

officers, and developing protocols so that lethal use-of-force cases are always referred to the attorney general's office to remove potential bias. I look forward to hearing more about progress on these or similar actions.

Justan:

My name is Justan Parker, founder of Black Lives Matter to Lehigh Valley. In these recent weeks, I have been working hand in hand with great community leaders such as Yamelisa Tavares, Darian and Yolanda Colbert, Rodney BE, and April Riddick.

I have 2 items I wanted to touch on:

I recently discussed 8 initiatives to reduce police brutality to be implemented into the Use of Force policy within the Allentown Police Department. I understand that the Allentown Human Relations Commission proposed 8 "Can't Wait" rules to be heard by City Council. I am at a loss in understanding why this is not a topic in the agenda tonight. Given the recent and ongoing turn of events, one would think this would be at the forefront of our issues discussed.

This leads me to my second item.

There is a resolution to recognize Juneteenth Freedom Day as a Day of Remembrance. While we do appreciate in the black community the city recognizing this, we have been informed that it comes with stipulations. A flag raising ceremony should be allowed for the residents of Allentown led by community leaders. This is a time for city council and the mayor to listen and educate themselves on our struggle and what Juneteenth means to African Americans. If there is going to be any real effort to recognize we are equals in the city, then the correct action needs to be taken.

Hello,

My name is Melissa Bailey and I own a home, residing at 2047 West Walnut Street, Allentown, Pa 18104.

I am hearing firework explosions, large fireworks every single night. I love fireworks, but this is insane. My neighborhood used to be quiet and relaxing.

Now this is all we hear every day, all week and weekend. It it's making it difficult to sleep or even just relax after a day working as a nurse.

My animals are petrified and wife, an Iraq war veteran, does not need to constantly hear this. She lived under constant mortar fire while in Iraq.

My other concern is fire hazards. They are lighting these things off within 100 feet of hinges and buildings at times. This is not safe. We should all feel safe at home.

I hope this will be taken seriously and something changes. I just can't take it anymore.

Vernon C. Scandola
1115 N. Saint Lucas Street

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have made several attempts to reach both Mayor O'Connell and City Council requesting their help in stopping the unwanted fireworks noise that is heard almost nightly in our city. The legality of fireworks is not in question. It was a dark day in Harrisburg when fireworks were legalized. Now we must find a way to live with the unintended consequences. I have read the Allentown ordinance regarding fireworks, firearms, explosives and similar devices. Part Seven General Offenses Code Article 710 Noise Control is very specific on the disturbing the peace noise generated from them. My neighbors and I are asking the Mayor and City Council to listen to the people. Fireworks noise is not supposed to be nearly every night all summer long. Please do not ignore our request.

Allentown, PA 18104

Lubna Lundy
1131 West Turner Street
Allentown PA, 18101
Lubna.lundy@yahoo.com

I purchased a home in the Allentown Historic district almost 2 years ago. I absolutely loved the charm and history of the house. Unfortunately, the surrounding neighborhood continues to get worse and my family (my husband

and infant daughter) are seriously considering just selling the place for some peace.

1. Cars speed up and down the streets all day long (no speed bumps anywhere). There are so many kids on the block that I am shocked speed bumps aren't installed.
2. Fireworks go off EVERY SINGLE NIGHT into the wee hours of the morning. For months this has occurred. I understand we are close to July 4th and have been quarantined for months but the excessive fireworks every night are not only a nuisance for parents with infant children (like me) that they don't want to wake up every night or dogs terrified by the sounds but they are also a safety hazard. This needs to STOP.
3. On more than 3 occasions people have dumped furniture and all types of trash in front of our home without penalty. Most of the time it sat in front for days before being picked up.

I don't want to just complain but be part of the change so anything you can suggest to facilitate better community relations is appreciated. At the same time, I would like to know how city council is addressing the issues I outlined above.

Daniel Wang:

I hope you are well. I'm writing to express my support for police reform in our city. I'm a long time resident of Allentown, born and raised here. I've heard numerous anecdotes about our local police which concern me, particularly the 2017 incident where an officer attacked a man unprovoked and it was caught on a security camera.

I'm looking forward to seeing what action the Allentown city council takes on this issue. I've heard about the proposal by Joshua Siegel to implement various reforms, and I hope to see these (and more) happen! I understand that some of these are already happening, but I believe the city council should do as much as they can, within their power, to make sure all of these happen.

Thank you so much for your service during these trying times, and I wish you the best.