June 8, 2020

We appreciate you reaching out with your concerns. We are happy to address them.

In regard to items 1 and 2:
The City Council President and full City Council, City Manager, Police Chief, Police Department and all City staff immediately provided public statements denouncing the killing of George Floyd by police officers in Minneapolis. Further, the City of Beloit values inclusion of all people and embraces our community’s diversity. We do not tolerate racist ideals, excessive or inappropriate use of force, or abuses of power. The Beloit Police Chief joined a protest march recently held and supports peaceful protests where residents exercise their constitutional rights to assembly.

In regard to item 3:
Over the past five years, the City of Beloit and the Beloit Police Department have engaged in active community and relationship building through a series of listening sessions and educational opportunities held in a variety of locations throughout the City designed to be accessible to all. We will continue these efforts and encourage discussion and enhanced community engagement. Further, the Police Chief has an advisory group of local clergy that is broadly representative of the Beloit Community at-large.

The Beloit Police Department has a number of policies in place that prohibit biased-based policing and racial profiling. The City of Beloit complies with all policy recommendations by ACLU’s 8cantwait.org.

Additionally, our patrol officers are actively engaging with the public on a daily basis. They are building relationships with our community members, including children. Our officers will take time out of their days to build relationships on playground, on the basketball court, and in the neighborhoods. Many of our officers have built mentoring relationships with our community’s youth.

In regard to item 4:
Wisconsin law requires any fatal use of force involving law enforcement be investigated by an independent third party. For example, the Wisconsin Department of Justice investigates officer involved deaths for many agencies
throughout the state, including the City of Beloit, and then forwards the investigation materials to a prosecutor to review. This is designed to have checks and balances in the process to ensure any officer involved death is thoroughly investigated.

While we are in favor of an independent investigation, this sometimes creates a delay in providing information to the public - information that can often clear up rumors. For example, it may take several months for video footage to be released by the independent investigators. The agency under investigation is legally prohibited from sharing that video footage until after the investigation has concluded.

The City of Beloit Police Department is also required by state law to have an internal investigation process to address citizen complaints; that process is available online at www.beloitwi.gov/police. The use of force and personnel investigation polices are available online.

**In regard to item 5:**
Beyond the requirements of the State of Wisconsin, the Beloit Police Department provides the de-escalation training and follows a national model, the ICAT (Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics) method, to diffuse critical incidents. We have two officers that are certified as trainers so we can continue to provide that training to new officers.

Our use of force data is also available on our website at www.beloitwi.gov/police.

**In regard to item 6:**
Implicit bias training was provided to all staff in 2017 and will be provided again in 2021. Dr. Bryant Marks, of Morehouse College, provided the training in 2017. Dr. Marks served as a Commissioner with the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for African Americans and the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities with the Obama Administration. He is also a minister, research, trainer, and award-winning educator who provides implicit bias training to police departments throughout the nation.

This crucial training is a significant and worthwhile investment in the continued education and development of our guardians.

**In regard to item 7:**
The City of Beloit has no control over the judicial process. While we can certainly agree with those statements, we have no authority in this manner. Judges are elected officials; we encourage individuals to exercise their right to vote.
In regard to item 8:
The City of Beloit already decriminalized first offense possession of marijuana under 25 grams with individuals facing a forfeiture rather than criminal prosecution.

In regard to item 9: While we agree that what happened to George Floyd was unjust, there are circumstances where lethal use of force may be required for the protection of the public and our officers. While officers seek to diffuse situations with the least amount of force required, not every officer-involved death is excessive or unjust.

We would be open to partnering with local individuals or groups to provide public art, perhaps exemplifying positive interactions between our local police officers and youth.

Sincerely,
Lori Curtis Luther, Beloit City Manager
David B. Zibolsk, Chief of Police