



NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Akron City Council – Reimagining Public Safety

“The continued trust between law enforcement and communities requires constantly improving our systems of recruitment, training, use of force, technology, and accountability,” said Margo Sommerville, President of Akron City Council.

Police are a critical part of public safety, according to Sommerville. “This is a moment to think about what else makes our community safe – from strong neighborhood ties and block watches to mental health intervention specialists, to parks and recreation programs, and so much more.”

All members of the community, citizens, law enforcement, and elected officials, have a role to play in creating safe communities. As legislators, we have a duty to put forward a process of fact-finding and community engagement that will lead to our shared goal – meaningful change.

Akron City Council is convening a Special Committee on Reimagining Public Safety. Each member of City Council will participate in the work of the committee through the following four working groups:

1. Personnel and culture – addressing police hiring, training, equity, and more
 - Tara Samples (Chair), Brad McKittrick (Co-Chair), and Jeff Fusco
2. Accountability and transparency – addressing APD policies and procedures, the role of the police auditor, and accessibility of policing-related data and more
 - Ginger Baylor (Chair), Shammias Malik (Co-Chair), and Phil Lombardo
3. Prevention – addressing community policing, collaborations with mental health services, and new approaches to neighborhood safety and more
 - Rich Swirsky (Chair), Linda Omobien (Co-chair), and Mike Freeman

4. Technology and equipment – addressing use of data, body camera policies and procedures, and military-style supplies

- Donnie Kammer (Chair), Sharon Connor (Co-chair), and Russel Neal

Over the next several months, these working groups will conduct research, learn alongside members of the Akron Police Department, and conduct community engagement. Each working group will contribute to a report of concrete recommendations to be released on Monday, December 7, 2020. City Council will then work towards implementing these actions in collaboration with Mayor Horrigan, Police Chief Ball, the Akron Police Department, and all members of our Akron community.

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