



CITY OF UTICA

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
1 KENNEDY PLAZA
UTICA, NEW YORK 13502
PHONE: (315) 792-0100

ROBERT M. PALMIERI
MAYOR

For Immediate Release: February 17th, 2021

MAYOR PALMIERI UNVEILS CITY OF UTICA'S POLICE REFORM REPORT

Mayor Robert Palmieri today unveiled the City of Utica's Police Reform Report, in accordance with Governor Andrew Cuomo's Executive Order last summer.

The report was developed by an advisory committee comprised of 17 individuals in our community with diverse backgrounds and experiences. The committee explored and discussed key topic categories including use of force related issues, crime prevention and engagement, justice administration and officer accountability.

After 12 meetings and careful deliberation, the committee recommended a total of 12 reforms, some key reforms include:

- Establishing a Crisis Intervention Team
- Making adherence to Procedural Justice part of body camera performance reviews
- Enhancing and increasing implicit bias training
- Improving mental health resources available to officers
- Creating a Civilian Public Safety Board and Auditor

In addition, the committee's reform report puts a strong emphasis on Procedural Justice policing which includes the following principles:

- Giving residents a voice
- Transparency in police actions
- Treating people fairly and with dignity and respect
- Impartiality and refraining from acting on prejudices and biases

The Utica Police Department (UPD) is an accredited agency through the New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services, and these reforms are designed to enhance the ongoing progressive efforts of UPD such as implementation of body-worn cameras, making

personnel records public and forming a Police Athletic League to facilitate positive interaction between law enforcement and youth.

The report is posted on the City of Utica's website, <http://www.cityofutica.com/>. The advisory committee welcomes and encourages feedback from the community. Any input from the public regarding the report can be sent to policereform@cityofutica.com.

In the coming weeks, the advisory committee will attend three meetings hosted by local partners to receive feedback on the report and its findings. All the meetings will be conducted via Zoom and will be held on the following dates and times;

- Black Leadership Coalition- February 25th, 6:00pm-7:30pm
- Mohawk Valley Community College- March 1st, 7:00pm-8:30pm
- Resource Center for Independent Living- March 8th, 1:30pm-3:00pm

Please contact these respective agencies/organizations for participation details. Once all the community feedback is received, the report will be presented to the Common Council.

Mayor Palmieri stated, "I want to thank each member of the advisory committee as their insight, knowledge, experience and passion is reflected in this report. We addressed difficult issues with a mission to improve relations between UPD and the community we serve, as well as provide a forum to address the bias and disenfranchisement that is felt by members of our Utica family. I'm proud of the reform plan and what the advisory committee accomplished."

Advisory Committee Co-Chair Dr. Reverend Mary Webster stated, "It was an honor to have been selected to serve as co-chair to the City of Utica Police Reform Advisory Committee. Fortunately, every individual who was on the committee, were committed, dedicated and expressed a love of community. I offered some words of wisdom when it was necessary to do so. We spent several hours together working on the recommended reforms for the Utica Police Department."

Dr. Reverend Webster continued, "Hopefully, the results will have a lasting impact on this generation and many to follow. I believe that our honest hard work will manifest itself in the lives of our citizens. It was a pleasure to work alongside Mayor Palmieri, Utica Police Chief Williams, Deputy Chief Noonan, Sergeant Curly and other personnel from the city. Marques and I had constant communication with each other on a weekly basis. I am proud of the masterpiece that has been crafted. And hope it will make a significant difference in the lives of all of Utica's residence."

Utica Councilman & Advisory Committee Member Delvin Moody stated, "I applaud the Mayor, Chairpersons Marquis Phillips & Rev. Dr. Mary Webster, and the entire committee for their work. This plan shows a commitment toward equity while providing a comprehensive approach toward justice and community policing. It is a historic leap in the

right direction! I look forward to supporting it on the common council and working with law-enforcement/community to implement its recommendations."

Oneida County Legislator & Advisory Committee Member Evon Ervin stated, "I know that there are still problems that we must solve, but the good news is we have dedicated people working towards a solution for more transparency and consistency. I thank the dedicated Committee members, Mayor Palmieri, Reverend Webster and Marques Phillips."

Oneida County District Attorney Representative & Advisory Committee Member Patrick Johnson stated, "From my perspective, this has been a remarkable process. The Mayor along with Marques Phillips selected a committee that truly reflects the City of Utica. The work that we have done over the past several months will hopefully build more trust and transparency between the community and law enforcement. It is imperative that every individual in the city of Utica feel they can trust their police officers and will be treated with respect and dignity. At the same time, this is an opportunity for residents to equally show respect to law enforcement."

Utica Police Chief Mark Williams stated, "Working in conjunction with police reform advisory committee members, the reform plan will build on the progressive services provided by the Utica Police Department for our city residents. Procedural justice policing is an important aspect of the plan as it will help strengthen the department's relationship with the community. Under Mayor Palmieri's leadership, we look forward to enhancing our police department's services, training and community policing programs."

Hamilton College Professor & Convener of the College-Community Partnership for Racial Justice Frank Anechiarico stated, "The College-Community Partnership for Racial Justice has worked closely with the Utica Police Reform Committee during the formulation of its proposal to the public and the Common Council. The Governor's executive order of last June set a high standard. Each law enforcement policy and procedure now in place is to be reconsidered to ensure racial equity and community involvement. Several parts of the Utica proposal in draft form promise to meet that standard, including procedural justice evaluations of patrol officers and the creation of a dedicated law enforcement auditor. Criminal justice reform does not end with the plans submitted to Albany by April 1st, but Utica's plan makes a good start."