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An Opportunity for the City of Milwaukee to Move Forward with Community Needs in Focus

Dear Mayor Tom Barrett and the Fire and Police Commission,

With Monday's announcement regarding Police Chief Edward Flynn's retirement, we immediately set our eyes on the future of Milwaukee and the new opportunities this change will present for our city. As representatives of the communities you serve, we write to urge you to consider the following qualifications and commitments as you appoint an interim and hire a new police chief for the city of Milwaukee:

- Commitment to the completion of the Community Committee's process, which includes the implementation of policies based on community recommendations regarding DOJ draft report
- Commitment to transparency when officers are involved in shootings and major incidents to provide community with timely information including information about the officer, their name and disciplinary records
- Commitment to changing the climate and culture by supporting a proactive orientation that values systematic problem solving and partnerships with the community
- Commitment to lead and serve as a role model for taking risks and constantly emphasizing and building collaborative relationships to implement community policing and they use their position to influence and educate others about it.
- Commitment to monthly meetings between district representation and community groups (grassroot and resident-based) on strategies for improving public safety
- Commitment to creating an accountability system and tracking system of implementation of the strategic plan
- Commitment to proactive engagement with the community instead of only being present in times of crises that vilify our community
- Commitment to having an open door policy to improve community relations with advocates, leaders, and residents

- Commitment to working with the sheriff as an advocate for increased access of mental health services, revamped training and access to resources for officers to properly approach and work with people who suffer from mental health crisis and illnesses
- Commitment to ensuring police officers undergo regular psych evaluations
- Commitment to and a proven track record of residential and community policing
- Commitment to hiring those who live within the City of Milwaukee to improve the community policing model
- Commitment to working with community organizations, advocates, and residents on implementation of new policies and revamping the community policing model within the department
- Commitment to specialized trainings for new hires and annual trainings for all staff and officers in subjects ranging from restorative justice, diversity issues, racial profiling and bias-based policing to hate crimes and the use of force
- Commitment to eliminating abandoning, misguided, and unconstitutional policies that encourage baseless stops of drivers and pedestrians

We ask that the recommendations collected from recent community town halls regarding the Department of Justice Draft also be taken into serious consideration.

According to a Journal Sentinel article, under Flynn's leadership the City of Milwaukee has paid over \$21 million in settlements related to police misconduct since 2015; and according to data we've been tracking, over \$30 million since 2008. It is also important to note that the Milwaukee Police Department's budget has been greater than the city's tax levy over the past few years. In addition, over 47% of the city's general fund is allocated to the police department that takes away from housing and other community needs.

The Fire and Police Commission is responsible for setting employment standards, testing candidates for positions, and appointing the police chief. FPC stated in a media release that they wish to assure the Milwaukee community that they are committed to serving the community's best interests as they begin the important task of selecting a successor. As members of that community, we remind the FPC that to act in our best interests and make Milwaukee a great city, you need to respect and act on what our residents say they need. According to the FPC website, the commission determines qualifications, solicits applications, and appoints a new chief, but at what point during this process will the community's voice be heard and acted on?

This is a new day in our city and the community also looks forward to being a part of that important task.

Sincerely,
 African American Roundtable
 BLOC
 Coalition for Justice
 ComForce
 Debra Huntley
 ITAV - Community Empowerment & Solutions Center
 Nancy Yarbrough - Fresh Start Learning Inc
 Peace Garden Project
 People's Progressive Organizing Committee
 Planned Parenthood Advocates of WI
 Program The Parks MKE

Sherman Park Community Association
The Freedom Fighters
UBLAC
UniteMKE
#WeAllWeGot MKE
YWCA
9to5 Wisconsin

The African American Roundtable (AART) is a coalition of community leaders and organizations that are led by, or primarily do their work, in the African American community. AART's mission is to improve the quality of life for Wisconsin's African American community through issue based civic engagement.

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