

Pilon, Janet

Subject: Addressing Safety and Security Concerns of Hamilton Community Members

From: Brigitte Evering

Sent: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 3:13 PM

To: clerk@hamilton.ca; Office of the Mayor; Farr, Jason

Cc: hwdsbkidsneedhelp@gmail.com

Subject: Addressing Safety and Security Concerns of Hamilton Community Members

My name is Brigitte Evering and I live in Hamilton's Ward 2. Last week, Black organizers released the following demands in light of police brutality happening in Canada and in the United States. In Hamilton, a 2018 carding consultation highlighted that Black youth in our city are being carded at their schools, in the streets, and being kicked out of Hamilton libraries without just cause by Hamilton police and security services.

Even during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, police have continued to unjustly target people for existing in the streets. Police have issued expensive fines (upwards of \$800) to houseless people, many of whom cannot afford to pay them off. These tickets have been issued under the guise of enforcing social distancing, but have only served to further entrench people in poverty and target those who cannot access housing.

The many kinds of violent acts perpetrated as a result of federal, provincial, and municipal oppression must end. It is time for the institutions that have oversight of the police and residents to ask why we spend far more on policing than on social services. Specifically, in 2020 the Hamilton Police (on a city approved budget) will spend \$78K ammunition, \$95K on surveillance, and \$61K on tasers, but only \$28K on food for prisoners.

We are spending millions of dollars on a police service that terrorizes and murders Black and Indigenous people in our streets, schools, places of education, and homes. This is unacceptable.

I support the following demands based on those that have been articulated by Black organizers in Hamilton. As part of a community of citizens concerned with how policing, education, and social services are connected and affect the lives of Black and Indigenous people in our shared city:

- We call on the city of Hamilton to address the way and the degree to which Hamilton police are funded.
- We call on the city of Hamilton to invest the tax dollars that would have otherwise gone to the police instead towards initiatives fighting against food insecurity and racism, and towards more affordable housing.
- We call on the City of Hamilton to ensure that HPS are not ticketing houseless people for existing in public.
- We demand that the Hamilton Police Services cease the ticketing and surveilling of homeless and disabled people in Hamilton, and that there be a moratorium on the hiring of police constables in Hamilton given the documented over-surveilling of homeless people during the pandemic.
- We demand that the Hamilton Police Services stop surveilling communities, and that they halt the expenditure of tax dollars on high tech surveillance equipment.
- We demand that the Hamilton Police Services stop targeting and criminalizing activists and communities pushing back against Yellow Vesters and other forms of white supremacy.
- We call on McMaster University (President & Board of Governors) to immediately terminate Glenn DeCaire's contract. DeCaire was forced to resign from Hamilton police after he was caught saying racist things

to other police officers. DeCaire also has a history of violent policing that targets houseless people as well as Black people.

- In line with the demands of the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board Kids Need Help Coalition, we demand that the HWDSB immediately remove School Resource Officers (SROs) out of all schools and fully fund a public review of police violence that occurred in their schools.
- We demand that the school board refrain from calling the cops on kids.
- We demand that the school board collect and release data that documents the disciplinary action against students by race and gender.
- We demand that the school board implement a community run alternative to disciplinary action based on the principles of restorative justice.
- We demand that the provincial police act be rewritten to give municipalities full control over police boards. In Hamilton, the Hamilton Police Services currently operates as an autonomous body, giving municipalities little to no oversight in terms of what they invest in and the ways that they militarize themselves.
- We demand that the province of Ontario work with grassroots groups to re-invest taxpayer money across the Province from an overinvestment in inappropriate policing and towards community initiatives with the goal of moving completely toward transformative justice practices.
- We demand that the Special Investigations Unit, which has a provincial mandate, needs to be 100% composed of people living in the city with which the investigation is being conducted.
- We demand that the Special Investigations Unit needs to be composed completely of Black, racialized, and Indigenous peoples with no current or former ties to the policing sector.
- The SIU must begin collecting and publicly releasing race-based statistics on all encounters between police officers and civilians that result in a death. No more inquiries--direct action needs to be taken as a result of the investigation into anti-Black racism that occurred in the 90's and again in 2014 with the establishment and subsequent defunding of the Anti-Racism Directorate.

I understand that there are other demands that I have not specifically included here. Once I have educated myself on these other demands, I may email again.

Please respond to me directly detailing the actions you are taking to address these demands along with keeping me apprised of progress you are making.

Dr. Brigitte Evering

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