

Flores, Valerie

From: Anthony Manousos [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 11:00 AM
To: Flores, Valerie
Subject: Letter to Public Safety Committee regarding funding for capital improvement of police building

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Dear members of the Public Safety Committee,

I'm writing to urge you not to allocate millions of dollars for "capital improvement" of the police department building and the mobile unit. These funds are needed and would be better spent on social services, like affordable housing and rental assistance for those facing eviction. I am including this "Open Letter to the City Council," which was published yesterday in the Pasadena Now, which explain why I feel strongly that this is not the time to increase the police budget at the expense of those in need.

Open Letter to the Mayor and City Council members,

I was taken aback by the decision to cancel the planned City Council meeting "out of an abundance of caution." Was this done because it was felt that the staff would be unsafe? Many of you attended the Black Lives Matter demonstrators last spring and you know it was peaceful, even in the midst of intense world-wide outrage at the killing of George Floyd, so why would anyone want to create the impression that BLM has become so dangerous that City Hall must be closed down?

I attended this peaceful rally and it was a profound experience. I heard the powerful message of Benjamin Crump, the attorney for George Floyd and now Anthony McClain. I was deeply moved to hear George Floyd's brother, as well as Melina Abdullah, call us to action. It was a joy to see so many of my neighbors, along with our city's leaders and activists, including my Council member Tyron Hampton. I am proud that he represents me and my community in Northwest Pasadena and showed his support for his constituents. He stayed until the very end and listened. Listening is so important during times like these when our nation and our community is deeply divided.

I wondered: Where were the rest of the City Council members? Since you had the evening off, why didn't you come and listen to the speeches and get to know your African American neighbors a little better? You missed a wonderful opportunity. If you'd taken the time to go to this rally, you would have learned something and had a great time. I stayed till the very end, heard a variety of eloquent speeches, connected with my neighbors, and was blown away by the legendary jazz and blues vocalist Barbara Morrison. As the event was winding down, she sang from her wheelchair "A Change is Gonna Come." My soul was touched to see her so strong and so committed and so beautiful at her age. (Actually, she and I were born in the same year, 1949.)

When she and I were teenagers fifty years ago, Sam Cooke composed "A Change is Gonna Come" at the height of the Civil Rights movement, inspired by Bob Dylan. Blacks and whites singing and working and taking risks together for justice is what made it possible to pass the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act, Fair Housing, and much more. The times were a'changin' because people had the courage to stand up and speak their truth to power and risk the consequences.

I feel that a change, a big change, needs to come here to our city and to our country right now. We need to take seriously calls to reimagine policing and transfer funds from the bloated police budget to much needed services, like housing and education and health care. A change needs to come, and it needs to come now.

A change needs to come to our police departments. Police need to be held accountable for their misdeeds just like the rest of us. The Police Chief of Minneapolis had the moral courage to say that what police did to George Floyd was not in keeping with police ethics or protocols, or with the law. When will our Chief of Police have similar courage and speak out about the savage beating of Christopher Ballew and the killing of Anthony McClain, not to mention Reginald Thomas and Kendrec McDade? How much longer will our city leaders make excuses for inexcusable behavior by police?

I write this with due respect because I know you care deeply about our city and racial justice. I believe that in your hearts you want to do the right thing, but out of an "abundance of caution" you sometimes keep quiet to avoid controversy. I think you are probably aware that this is not the time to redecorate the police building or provide a fancier helicopter. This is a time when

we need to allocate resources where they are urgently needed. Please consider the city budget as a moral document. Please consider the most vulnerable in our city. Black lives really do matter.

Anthony Manousos

Resident of Northwest Pasadena

Flores, Valerie

Subject: FW: PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING PPD MOBILE UNIT

From: Stephen Lipira [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 3:33 PM
To: Flores, Valerie <vflores@cityofpasadena.net>
Subject: Re: PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING PPD MOBILE UNIT

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I remember when the Mobile Unit was originally unveiled – it was shiny, new and Lt. Sandoval was so proud of it. We would see it as a “substation” in our neighborhoods and truly felt a police presence. But when you ask my fellow “old timers”, no one recalls having seen it for some time now, nor have we been told how it has been used over the years. Use as a mobile library is a creative and generous one. I am not certain we currently have a bookmobile and question the need for it as a bookmobile reaches out to those users that don’t have access to a branch. Pasadena is very pro library and its ten locations follow the World War II model of making branches easily accessible. Has a study been done as to the need and usage of a mobile library or is this casting an operational expense onto the library? I believe the old mobile unit would better serve us as a substation in our neighborhoods. Since we no longer see the mobile unit and its use, one would question its purpose. Is this another toy like the battering ram which no one claims to have ever seen? I could favor the restoration/replacement of the mobile unit as it is justified and once our safety needs have been secured.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak,

Stephen C. Lipira
[REDACTED]
Pasadena, CA 91103

Flores, Valerie

From: Daniel James [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 9:54 AM
To: Flores, Valerie
Cc: Rivas, Jessica; Morales, Margo
Subject: Public comment in response to Public Safety Committee 5/19 meeting

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Ms. Flores,
[CC, Councilmember Rivas, Ms. Morales]

I would like the following be submitted as public comment in response to the Public Safety Committee 5/19 meeting:

The Mobile Community Center (MCC) project is not something I want to see our city's money spent on. The justifications for this project provided in the slide deck are flimsy. This is a request for a truck outfitted with a bunch of surveillance-ready equipment being touted as a disaster response tool.

A few specific claims I find dubious are:

- "There will be NO surveillance [...] equipment," but the "Advanced Video Downlink System" is touted as a way to transmit real-time video from helicopters to the MCC, and the vehicle is outfitted with a "CCTV system for perimeter safety."
- The current MCC is "over 20 years old," "unreliable," with "repair parts becoming unavailable," and doesn't meet emissions standards; yet the vehicle is "projected to be repurposed for use as a city mobile library." – Does the library have the money to maintain such a problematic vehicle?
- The new truck "could be deployed" roughly twice as often, but without explanation of why it would be deployed.
- "Deployments may include command post operations, Rose Parade, Rose Bowl, car shows, coffee-with-a-cop, neighbor meetings, vaccination site support[,]" and "the new MCC can also be activated to support separating/isolating employees in order to reduce the possibility of the spread of viruses." – This is a request for a multimillion dollar RV; these are poor justifications for this capital outlay.

If there are legitimate concerns for our city's disaster preparedness, I would like to know what other options have been considered.

--

Daniel James (he/him)

[REDACTED]