

The People's Revolution Statement on abuses and escalation of the Wauwatosa Police Dept.

Posted on Monday, Sep 14, 2020

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The actions of the Wauwatosa Police Department on the evening of Saturday, September 5th were unequivocally unacceptable, and highlight the ongoing problems with policing in Wauwatosa. Shayne Piering and Alana Kubicki were held at gunpoint by Wauwatosa police officers, officers smashed car windows for absolutely no reason, and they were unlawfully detained. All of this occurred because the Wauwatosa Police thought these individuals were protesters. These actions by police are illegal and unacceptable treatment for any citizen. Had Mr. Piering and Ms. Kubicki been engaged in a protest, these actions would still be unacceptable.

This type of policing is not an anomaly. It is part of a pattern of abusive behavior in recent months, ordered by Chief Barry Weber and carried out by Lt. Jeffrey Farina, Captain Vetter, and their subordinates in the Wauwatosa Police Department. They have willfully decided to engage in harassment, violate their own standard operating procedures, ignore internal departmental policies, infringe on First and Fourth Amendment rights, inflict damage upon property, and commit acts of violence against people with no justification.

In addition to the abuses inflicted upon Ms. Kubicki and Mr. Piering, of which there are numerous witness accounts, on the evening of September 5th officers used tire deflation devices (ie: spike strips) against protesters' vehicles, smashed protesters' car windows, and drew their weapons against unarmed and compliant protesters. Police beat a black woman who was already on the ground and compliant, with such force that she was taken to the ER, diagnosed with a concussion, and kept overnight. This occurred mostly at the hands of Captain Vetter and his

subordinates. An officer commented “we thought she was a man”, even though they knew her name prior to the abuse. Regardless of gender that behavior should still face the same scrutiny; per the Wauwatosa Police Department logic beating a black man is somehow more acceptable. Despite the Wauwatosa Police Department’s public claims, this use of force and excessive policing was used only to issue frivolous municipal citations. Those arrested were released. No criminal charges were issued to anyone

The abuses of the Wauwatosa Police Department have become a dangerous trend, an unfortunate new normal in the Wauwatosa community. While these policies may not be in writing, it is clear that Chief Barry Weber has ordered his officers to use any and all force against protesters in the City of Wauwatosa.

-On Wednesday, September 2nd, at a protest outside Mayor Dennis McBride’s house, Wauwatosa Detective Warren shielded in riot gear, maced an unprotected seventeen year old black protestor, for shining a flashlight. According to

Lt. Jeffrey Farina, mace is an appropriate and acceptable response to a flashlight.

-On Thursday, August 27th, the Wauwatosa Police Department blocked all entrances to Mayfair Mall and racially profiled occupants of cars to determine who would be allowed into the parking lot. Those that were black or “looked like protesters” were not allowed in. In some cases officers deployed spike strips against the vehicles of people who fit their ‘profile’ even though they were just driving by on Mayfair Road.

-On Friday, August 14th, at the intersection of 70th and Aetna, three Wauwatosa police officers violently tackled a man on a bicycle. Other officers punched protesters in the face. Lt. Jeffrey Farina personally put his hands on multiple women, violently shoving them.

Over the last three months there have been countless other instances of Wauwatosa police officers deploying spike strips against slow moving vehicles, blocking off entire roadways which runs contrary to their own standard operating procedure, frivolously arresting protesters just to immediately release them, and issuing hundreds of frivolous citations to try to intimidate protesters and suppress the exercise of their First Amendment rights.

The message is clear: police abuse and violence is tolerated by the City of Wauwatosa and its leadership. It is not protesters who have been escalating, violent, damaged property, or harmed individuals; it is the Wauwatosa Police Department. The time for Mayor Dennis McBride to publicly condemn the actions of the Wauwatosa Police Department is now. His silence has allowed for this to go on too long. His silence has created a leadership vacuum enabling Chief of Police Barry Weber and his officers to step in and wield force unrestrained and unchecked.

To the citizens of Wauwatosa: we call on you to make your voices heard to Mayor McBride, the Common Council, and the Wauwatosa Police Department. Let them know this type of policing is not tolerated in Wauwatosa. We are fighting in solidarity with the families of Alvin Cole, Jay Anderson Jr., and Antonio Gonzales. We are fighting for justice. The actions of police against protesters, their attempt to silence that call for justice, must be condemned. We are counting on you to take that stand.

Dennis McBride, Speak Up!

Barry Weber, Stand Down!