

FW: City council meeting - agenda item number 4.1 - police reform

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Mon 8/21/2023 12:14 PM

To: Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Belinda Hoose <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, August 21, 2023 11:51 AM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: City council meeting - agenda item number 4.1 - police reform

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My name is Belinda Stow and I live in District 9. I am also a member of SURJ at Sacred Heart.

I am very disappointed by the fact that the city has entirely ignored and in some cases directly undermined the community led Re-Imagining Public Safety recommendations that community members spent a year developing through a robust democratic process. And now the police themselves are in charge of some of the recommendations that were specifically designed to move public safety efforts out of policing and into the hands of the community, as documented in the Spotlight article about San Jose watering down police reforms.

You can't put the police in charge of reform. The council needs to show leadership if we are going to re-imagine public safety in a meaningful way.

Thank you for your time.

Belinda

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FW: Public safety needs

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Mon 8/21/2023 3:32 PM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Julene Pansarasa [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, August 21, 2023 2:44 PM

To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: Public safety needs

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Hello,

I am a resident of district 6 who is concerned about how it seems that the city is undermining some of the community led Re-Imagining Public Safety recommendations that members spent a year developing. I feel it is important that the police are not in charge of reforms needed, as their approach is often done without much regard to community needs, such as low income and mental health issues. Groups such as RIPS and SURJ lend a great hand to those areas of our community that need such awareness and care.

Sincerely,

Julene Pansarasa

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FW: Agenda Item 4.1

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Tue 8/22/2023 7:46 AM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Kathryn Hedges <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Tuesday, August 22, 2023 2:25 AM

To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: Agenda Item 4.1

[External Email]

I am Kathryn Hedges, a member of Showing Up for Racial Justice at Sacred Heart. I live in District 3 and I am very familiar with the types of behavioral challenges, emergencies, and non-emergencies downtown. But I have stopped calling 911 or the non-emergency number as a bystander (unless there's a fire-related issue or a clearly medical emergency) because I am afraid of what can happen to people in crisis when police do a welfare check: that call can be their death sentence. We need non-police responses to "social work" public safety issues, yet the police want to be in charge of the non-police alternatives. The Council needs to reject these suggestions and keep the new programs independent of SJPd. The Council needs to expand TRUST with a second team for San Jose, and help pressure the County of Santa Clara to provide a direct public phone number for TRUST.

The community worked on alternative approaches to public safety through the ReImagining Public Safety committee's recommendations. This effort began in the summer of 2020 and the official report was released in April 2022. We all know why the community finally demanded public safety reform, especially after the police violence against peaceful protesters on national TV in the summer of 2020.

I have seen what "nonlethal projectiles" do to the body panels of a car and can barely imagine what they would do to human flesh. I have met the grieving family members of SV DeBug whose relatives were shot dead by police who were called to prevent a suicide. I have worked with formerly unhoused people whose encampments or vehicles were swept by SJPd so that they lost all their belongings. If SJPd can't handle these situations using police tactics without traumatizing victims, bystanders, and families, why are we delegating the design of non-police alternatives to SJPd? This is the mice saying they trust the cat to put the bell on its own collar and stop hunting them and the birds.

Training the police isn't helping much when they panic and revert to their original "war on crime" training where any "civilian" who doesn't make appropriate eye contact is considered a threat. As an Autistic person, I may not make "appropriate" eye contact with someone if I'm in crisis (or a crime/accident victim) and they're making everything worse with lights, sirens, and shouted commands. I could be shot under the assumption that I am the perpetrator instead of the victim just because I seem "different" and an officer "feels threatened" so they can deny me due process and just execute me on the spot. This has happened to too many people in our city already even if they decide to give me a second chance because I'm a middle aged white lady.

I have heard police officers, including my previous Councilmember Raul Peralez, talking about how they know they are not the right people to respond to calls about behavioral health crises, domestic abuse, or encampments. Sending police to "help" a distressed person can frighten them further and escalate the situation. I have also heard that we need to hire and train more sworn officers because SJPd is short-staffed because they spend so much time dealing with these "social work" calls. As it takes six officers to respond to every welfare check or crank call from my building, I can see why they're not available for real emergencies too.

Yet instead of welcoming efforts in RIPS to offload these unwanted duties, SJPD wants to administer the alternative public safety programs. Councilmember Batra told members of SURJ that the Chief of Police and the SJPOA oppose the Trusted Response Urgent Safety Team (TRUST) despite almost a year of this peer-led program successfully handling behavioral health crises and only two calls for backup. Former Councilmember Pierluigi Oliviero screamed at our members at National Night Out that TRUST "would never work" based on his family's experience. I hope Mr. Oliviero gets the support he needs to be less triggered by people suggesting that a violent police response to mental health crises is inappropriate. In any case, I am baffled at any government agency that would balk at "turking off" work that doesn't belong in their job description.

The Council needs to reject the recommendations by SJPD to manage alternative public safety programs and expand TRUST without police involvement unless specifically requested for a particular call.

Please do the right thing and reject SJPD's attempt to take over public safety recommendations that were specifically designed to be outside the jurisdiction of SJPD.

Kind regards,

Kathryn Hedges
Member, Showing Up for Racial Justice at Sacred Heart



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FW: City Council Meeting - Agenda Item 4.1 - police reform

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Tue 8/22/2023 8:00 AM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Deborah St. Julien [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, August 22, 2023 7:55 AM

To: District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; district10@sanjoseca.gov; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: City Council Meeting - Agenda Item 4.1 - police reform

[External Email]

Dear Council Member Jimenez, City Council Members, and Mayor Mahan,

I have lived in San Jose for 38 years. I was recently redistricted into District 2. I am a member of Showing up for Racial Justice and the Urban Sanctuary faith community.

I was excited when the city of San Jose created the Reimagining Public Safety Committee. Now I am disappointed that city leadership has not robustly embraced their recommendations.

The title – “Reimagining Public Safety” - is not a fantasy, it is a report with concrete, proven solutions that can make our neighborhoods and communities safer. These ideas go beyond armed police response to all public safety needs. We all agree, as evidenced by the SJPCD’s own use of the TRUST response teams, that many public safety situations do not require police response. [TRUST: Trusted Response Urgent Support Team – includes a team that includes a mental health professional, a first aid responder and a peer with lived experience of mental illness or addiction.] This is just one example of many offered in the RIPS report.

Unfortunately, we know SJPd, like all institutions, suffers from the effects of systemic racism, as evidenced by the over-representation of black and Latinx folks that are confronted by police [Quote from SJ Mercury News 9/20/20 :Recent data shows that Black adults are 6.6 times more likely and Latinx adults are 2.2 times more likely to be given a local infraction by SJPd than white adults.] This disparity shows up in our jail populations as well.

The problems of system racism and the over-reliance on armed police response for all public safety needs are not problems unique to San Jose, but they are **problems that San Jose could and should emerge as a leader in addressing.**

You already have the RIPS report full of the stark realities and thoughtful recommendations:

<https://sanjose.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=10860951&GUID=67148606-483F-4E54-B28F-3492A9FD7886>

Some of the other ideas in the report: “Among its many recommendations, the committee asked San Jose officials to set up a trauma relief fund for survivors of police violence, create a ballot initiative to form an independent office to investigate police misconduct and drug test officers involved in use of force cases.

Councilmember Sergio Jimenez said the recommendations and comments about police interactions resonated with him due to his experiences growing up in East San Jose.

“Unfortunately, some of those same concerns and same interactions continue to take place—I’m certainly not blind to that,” Jimenez said. [From SJ Spotlight, 5/12/22]

San Jose still has the opportunity to support real innovation in the area of public safety.

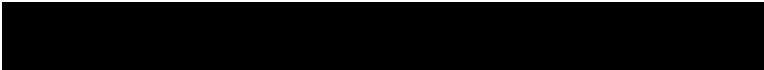
Council Member Jimenez, all San Jose Council Members and Mayor Mahan - utilize and actualize the findings and recommendations in the thoughtful RIPS report. Embrace real reform as put forward in the RIPS report. **Take the reins of leadership around this critical issue.** Do not put police in charge of their own reform process.

For our communities, for our neighbors, and for our children, you can act with “out of the box” courage. Seize this opportunity to lead and innovate real, lifesaving changes in how we approach public safety.

You can’t put the police in charge of reform. The council needs to show leadership if we are going to re-imagine public safety in a meaningful way.

Sincerely,

Deborah St. Julien



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FW: listen to the community on police reform

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Tue 8/22/2023 10:13 AM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Nora Larson [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, August 22, 2023 9:50 AM

To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: listen to the community on police reform

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Dear Mayor Mahan and Councilmembers,

Hi my name is Nora Larson from District 3 and I am a member of SURJ at Sacred Heart, speaking in solidarity with all of the community members who spent many many hours developing the Re-Imagining Public Safety recommendations throughout 2021 and 2022.

I am a teacher. I have loved ones- friends, family members, and students- experiencing mental health crises and homelessness. I want to make sure our most vulnerable friends and neighbors have opportunities to find safety that *don't* involve the police, given SJPd's unfortunate track record of responding to mental health calls and ending up harming or killing those in crisis.

Additionally, myself and fellow organizers at Sacred Heart have now heard from multiple police officers that they support the TRUST program and other alternatives to policing that can take some of their overburdened load.

When receiving the report on police reforms today, please make sure reforms follow the original intent recommended by the folks with expertise and lived experience that served on the RIPS committee. We know best how to keep ourselves safe.

You can't put the police in charge of reform. The council needs to show leadership if we are going to re-imagine public safety in a meaningful way.

Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,
Nora Larson

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