

Public Safety Committee

October 3, 2016

Statement of the Felmers O. Chaney Advocacy Board A Member of the Community Coalition for Quality Policing

GOOD MORNING. My name is R.L. McNeely. I am chair of the Felmers O. Chaney Advocacy Board, a voluntary association of metropolitan Milwaukeeans who are committed to advocacy in behalf of reducing recidivism, enhancing ex-offender re-integration, and to lowering state budget costs due to incarceration. We are a member of the Community Coalition for Quality Policing because we are focused also on enhancing police morale, reducing crime, and improving police-community relations.

And, in that regard, I must tell you that increasing the 1,868 sworn MPD officers¹ by a marginal amount of about 15 percent, isn't likely to reduce crime. Indeed, in 2010, we already were the 83rd highest, of 100 major cities, in terms of police officers per capita at 32 officers per 10,000 population.² So, why do I say that increasing the size of the police force will not deter crime? Well, I'm not the one saying it. Researchers who reviewed 229 findings from 1971 to 2013 are saying it. Their conclusion is the overall effect of a marginally increased police force on crime is negative, small, and not statistically significant.³

Specifically, the researchers said that "changing police strategy is likely to have a greater impact on crime than (will) adding more police." In fact, they say that "modest planned reductions in police force size are unlikely to have a consequential (i.e., negative) impact with regard to overall crime." This is good news for cost-cutting mayors and city councils.

But the Public Safety Committee is recommending an increase of 280 police officers, an increase of 50 sheriff's deputies, and increased jail time for offenders.⁴ Haven't we learned, here in Wisconsin, the state that has had the second highest per capita incarceration of African Americans in the entire country,⁵ that we can't incarcerate ourselves out of crime?

So, what about changing police strategy, which is the only thing current research suggests will curb crime? On that note, we applaud MPD for the first class of 14 community service officers who were graduated from a five-week training course at the police academy. They are an unarmed auxiliary of MPD that will help those armed officers deployed to low priority calls like theft, traffic accidents, and vandalism. I would imagine that some of the community service officers will be equipped with pocket-sized community resource guides to direct those in distress to pertinent community-based services. These community service officers have a different role than MPD's community liaison officers. The liaison officers work with local community organizations and with crime watch block clubs, sometimes helping to establish the clubs. (*See reverse side for examples of substantive police-community cooperation.*)

Here's the problem. Neither of these initiatives address the fundamental fault line in policing distrustful neighborhoods. Simply put, the police need to maintain a "guardian" mentality most of the time and transition to a "warrior" mentality only when needed. In order to substantively improve police-community relations, reduce crime, AND improve the morale of police officers, you must give the police, all of them, an opportunity to work with neighborhood residents in solving some of the reasons for crime in those neighborhoods. And "no," this does not mean that police officers will seek to be all things to all people. Community Oriented Problem-Solving Policing was invented right here in Wisconsin and, where implemented, the police enjoy their jobs more, police-community relations are markedly improved, and crime is dramatically reduced, both felonies and misdemeanors.⁶ THANK YOU.

¹ <https://www.google.com/search?q=size+of+Milwaukee+police+department&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8>

² <http://www.governing.com/gov-data/safety-justice/law-enforcement-police-department-employee-totals-for-cities.html>

³ YongJei Lee, John Eck and Nicholas Corsaro, "Conclusions from the History of Research into the Effects of Police Force Size on Crime – 1968 Through 2013: A Historical Systematic Review," *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, V. 12, 2016: 431-451.

⁴ <http://www.wisn.com/news/common-council-to-unveil-public-safety-plan/41330732>

⁵ R.L. McNeely, David Pate, and Lisa Ann Johnson, *Milwaukee Today: An Occasional Report of the NAACP* (monograph), National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Milwaukee Branch, 2011: 40 pp.

⁶ Alana Semuels, "How to Fix a Broken Police Department," *The Atlantic*, May 28 2015: 15 pp.

Examples of Community Oriented Problem-Solving Policing

One example of collaborative problem-solving policing, reported in the May, 2015 issue of *The Atlantic*, involved a neighborhood where copper piping was increasingly being stolen. The police didn't focus on arresting the perpetrators as much as they focused on working with residents of the community to solve the problem. What they came up with was for homeowners to paint their piping green accompanied by posting signs stating that the pipes had been painted green. The police also informed scrap yards about the piping being painted, thereby putting scrapyards on notice not to purchase such piping, which led to a reduction in copper theft. Hence, a victory for the police and for the community, working together. Another example involved a commercial establishment where it was common for disputes outside the establishment to end in homicides. The police intervened, not by arresting supposedly suspect people standing outside the establishment but, instead, by decreasing the number of people at the establishment. They did this by moving a bus stop further away and by moving a phone booth further away. All told, this city's problem-solving policing was associated with a reduction in 2008 from 6,367 felony arrests to 3,735 such arrests in 2014 (about a 43% reduction). Misdemeanor arrests also dropped dramatically from 41,708 to 17,913 (about a 57% reduction).⁷ Fewer arrests means fewer people in jail, fewer crimes, and greatly improved police-community relations.

⁷ Alana Semuels, "How to Fix a Broken Police Department," *The Atlantic*, May 28 2015: 15 pp.

Good morning. I am Joseph Ellwanger, a retired Lutheran pastor, currently serving as a volunteer pastor at Hephatha Lutheran Church, N. 18th St. and Locust. I represent MICAH, an interfaith justice organization comprised of 40 congregations, and the 53206 Initiative of MICAH. I must add that MICAH is part of the Community Coalition for Quality Policing, the organization that R. L. McNeely referenced earlier.

MICAH agrees with the basic position of the Coalition for Quality Policing—that the answer to the unrest in Milwaukee in August of this year, and to the violence in Milwaukee in general, is not more police. MICAH also agrees with the Coalition for Quality Policing that we need a change in police strategy. Or put another way, our Milwaukee Police Department needs to do more of what they have begun to do, and that is to work with the community to solve the many problems that vex and, yes, traumatize children, youth, and adults. No, the police are not expected to solve all the problems experienced daily by people living with low-income jobs, or with no jobs, and with mass incarceration and with drug addiction and with the underground economy. All of us, all the segments of our community—schools, congregations, community organizations and agencies, governmental entities, businesses, and the police—are to work together as partners, for the common good of all.

Milwaukee cannot arrest and incarcerate its way out of the poverty and violence that negatively impact so many families in Milwaukee today. In fact, a heavy handed, stop-every-vehicle-with-a-burned-out-tail-light approach to policing is counter productive. It deepens mistrust between police and community and adds to the trauma that underlies violence.

MICAH takes the position that the money that is projected for additional police should be allocated, instead, to real solutions to the underlying causes of violence and trauma and lawlessness. One of those causes is the scarcity of family supporting jobs and jobs for persons with barriers to employment.

The state-funded and federal-funded programs for men and women with barriers to employment and the lack of job slots in the economy and too few job slots in the economy who need the dignity of work.

If the City were to double the number of jobs to 500 jobs—and if the city were to double the number of jobs and if the city were to double the number of jobs to fill the job slots, then the number of jobs adversely affecting our community.

More police is not the answer and more accessible mental health services would be sending an important message to the streets, and to all the sectors of the economy in real solutions to the real underlying causes of our real problems.

PS 11/10/55
Copy
Bob Ferry
Carol

amazingly effective in lifting men out of a no-man's land of unemployment. So many eligibility restrictions in the economy reach the number of persons in the above-ground economy.

Additional jobs—\$5 million and more. If a person is physically able to work, through private/public sector jobs, they are fully getting at the problems.

drug treatment programs, addressing the root problems. And we need to get the unemployed, to those in the

... that the City of Milwaukee is ready to invest in real solutions to the real underlying causes of our real problems. =

