



Charlotte-Mecklenburg Fraternal Order of Police, Lodge #9

1201 Hawthorne Lane, Charlotte, NC 28205 • Tel. 704-376-3838

April 30, 2021

Braxton Winston, Councilman
City of Charlotte, North Carolina
600 East 4th Street
Charlotte, NC 28202

RE: Police Reform, Disarming CMPD

Councilman Winston,

In response to your idea to disarm CMPD officers, we ask what is your exact plan? Violence plagues Charlotte daily, but none of that violence is the result of actions taken by officers. Charlotte is seeing record homicides and families destroyed by gun violence. You are more likely to be victimized in Charlotte by someone who is not an officer. With this violence, your solution is to disarm cops? Politicians embellish and sensationalize a small percentage of wrongdoing by police nationwide yet provide few substantial solutions. Let's work together and change that mentality while working on stopping the true offenders in Charlotte.

In response to this section of a recent FOX46 article:

FOX 46 asked councilman Braxton Winston whether or not he thinks police officers should carry weapons. He didn't answer yes or no.

However, when asking if police should respond to a violent 911 call without guns. He referenced multiple SWAT situations where they talked through it, to resolve the conflict with words, rather than force.

"So, I think if you look right now, most of those, those potentially violent situations already right now, resolve using interpersonal skills, as in talking and being present." ^[1]

Most hostile situations are resolved without the need to use a firearm. Your own words prove that officers are not blood-thirsty and entirely contradict your statement that municipal governments are in the business of killing people ^[2]. Officers are highly trained professionals, masters of conflict resolution, and only resort to using their firearm as a last resort.

Suggestions have been made nationwide asking officers to fire warning shots; this creates so much danger that it is not a logical solution. This practice is not authorized at CMPD for a reason. If a warning shot ricochets and kills an innocent bystander, what will you say then? Disarming police is yet another unsound answer.

Your rhetoric is dangerous and serves to further disenfranchise the community from law enforcement. We will agree with you that we do need to find other resources where cops aren't the solution to every problem. The sad reality is we are the current solution that engages the



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most with the public. Officers want to make their communities safer, so mothers don't have to bury their children because of gun violence or see their 15- year-old son incarcerated for murder.

We extend an invitation to sit down with you and have an open discussion on productive reform. We support a joint effort with you and the rest of the City Council members. Furthermore, we expect to hear from you if a change is truly on your agenda.

I ask that you share this with your fellow council members and work with us to make Charlotte safer for all.

Respectfully,

Daniel Redford
Vice President, NC FOP Lodge #9



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Reply, 5/3/2021:



Officer Redford,

I was encouraged to receive your letter last week. I am certainly open to finding a way to have constructive conversations. 2017 was the first time I was able to interface directly with the FOP. I was able to have a constructive conversation with the committee. We agreed that, while there are certainly uncompromising areas of our interests, there are clear intersections in our values and desired outcomes.

It is also clear that, due to the complexities of NC General Statutes and our Council-Manager form of government, we have to be able to work together as one Team Charlotte to come up with creative solutions to truly affect change.

I would accept your offer to have a conversation on one condition: you (or the appropriate person from your organization) and I structure an agenda that provides a framework to have a constructive conversation. We should not go into this thinking we will convince each other of the things we disagree on nor should this be an effort to make political arguments.

With that in mind, I agree that my colleagues need to be part of this conversation if we want our efforts to lead to any change. If they have interest in participating, that may trigger NC Open Meeting laws. I think that is a good thing as there is sufficient public interest in seeing real work done by their government on community safety issues. I think this highlights the importance of forming an agenda that we can follow in hopes of having a productive conversation.

I look forward to your response.

Council Member Braxton Winston
At-Large