
OPEN LETTER TO THE MILWAUKEE FIRE AND POLICE COMMISSION: 12-7-20

Dear Commissioners,

We, the undersigned, write to you, our representatives on the Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission in strong support of Malik Aziz for the position of Chief of the Milwaukee Police Department. As activists and supporters who have been committed to improving police-community relations, we have been watching the interview process proceed. We have researched each candidate, watched and participated in the town hall meetings; we have met virtually or in person with both of the final candidates and asked each question that are important to the people of Milwaukee. It is our strong opinion that Mr. Aziz is the candidate who has most consistently demonstrated an in-depth knowledge of and commitment to implementing community-oriented policing.

Our position is not driven by personal relationships based upon the long-ago ties one candidate has to Milwaukee but by the other candidate's stated adherence to the spirit of community-oriented policing and to the corresponding SOP that is being developed currently. Mr. Aziz appeared to be steadfast both in his understanding of and commitment to community-oriented policing whereas the other candidate repeatedly referred to community-oriented policing as "community relations" and "public relations." This demonstrated a lack of awareness as to the dynamics and nature of community-oriented policing and the manner in which they relate to the urgent needs of our city.

It is understandable that some prominent business owners and civic leaders have indicated support for the other candidate who has some past ties with the city. While we understand that relationships are important, we are focused on the goal of strengthening police-community relations via community-oriented policing and improving public safety throughout our city.

We urge you, our representatives of the Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission to consider our strong recommendation of Malik Aziz for our next chief. This recommendation derives from our years of effort seeking to improve police-community relations and hence improve public safety throughout Milwaukee. Our motives are to ensure that Milwaukee has a chief who is and has been both receptive and experienced working with and in communities. We feel Mr. Aziz is that person.

Rebecca Burrell
Revolution Ready

Christina Neuman Ortiz
Voces de la Frontera

R.L. McNeely
Felmers O. Chaney Advocacy Board

Darryl Morin
Forward Latino

George Hinton
Social Development Commission

Fred Royal
NAACP Milwaukee Branch

Pamela J. Holmes
National Black Police Association

Willie Lee
National Black Police Association
Wisconsin Chapter

Horace Craft
National Black Police Association
Wisconsin Chapter

Ricky Burems
National Black Police Association
Wisconsin Chapter

Tory Lowe
Justice Wisconsin

Elizabeth Brown
Justice Wisconsin

Tracey Dent
Peace for Change Alliance

Abra Fortson
Community Member

Chandra L. Staples
Community Member

Myron Duckworth
Community Member

Annette Veasey
Smile Inc.

Elder Joshua Taylor
Community Member