



WATERTOWN POLICE DEPARTMENT
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John C. Gavallas
Chief of Police

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Deputy Chief

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A letter to the Watertown/Oakville community from the Acting Chief of Police,

I write this letter in response to the tragic and unnecessary death of Mr. George Floyd last week in Minneapolis, and to the ensuing protests occurring across our country as a result. Please be assured that every member of the Watertown Police Department condemns the heinous actions of the Minneapolis police officer who knelt on Mr. Floyd's neck, and further condemns the lack of intervention by the other officers on the scene. The police actions shown in this incident fall outside of any police training provided in the State of Connecticut, and well outside the core values and moral principles of the men and women of the Watertown Police Department. On behalf of the good men and women of the Watertown Police Department, we extend our condolences to the family of Mr. Floyd.

Protests have proliferated across our State and Country which have generally been peaceful in nature. A peaceful protest has been planned for Monday, June 8th, at 1:00 pm on the Watertown Town Green. The organizer of this event has met with the Watertown Police Department command staff and is working cooperatively to ensure this demonstration is successful and remains peaceful. This protest intends on promoting a positive message of equal justice for all persons and the denouncing of police brutality. The Watertown Police Department subscribes to these principles and acknowledges citizens' constitutional right for lawful assembly. It will be the mission of the Watertown Police Department to provide security during this event to aid in the event's success and ensure the safety of all persons and property. It should be noted that there may be temporary closures of DeForest Street (Rte. 6) during the time of assembly.

While we collectively grieve the death of Mr. George Floyd and attempt to recognize the failures that led to it, please know the Watertown Police Department is not afraid of self-reflection and is dedicated to constant improvement. We look forward to open and honest conversations in the days to come, and will work hard to achieve positive change. Thank you, Watertown and Oakville, for your support and continued partnership. Stay well.

With sincerity,

Joshua Bernegger
Acting Chief of Police
Watertown Police Department