



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable President and Members of the City Council
FROM: Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone and Police Chief David Fallon
DATE: November 14, 2019
RE: Next steps following submission of the after-action report on the August 31st, 2019, “Boston Straight Pride parade” and counter-protest

While the after-action report is a critical component of the review of events and the response to our community’s concerns, it is not the only component. The multifaceted nature of the concerns that have been raised require a multi-pronged approach to address them. As such, we are moving forward with the following four initiatives. It is our hope that the City Council will join us in this these efforts.

1. Resolution supporting full implementation of body-worn cameras

These circumstances have highlighted the importance of body cameras for police officers. In the aftermath of a highly charged event where both the police and the public are trying to determine the truth of what happened, body camera footage provides a critical source of information and transparency. For this reason, we ask that the City Council join the Administration in putting forth a joint resolution in support of body cameras for all Somerville Police officers. As a reminder, in accordance with City ordinance, any body cameras used by Somerville Police Department would not include facial recognition capability, but would serve solely to document actions.

2. Community dialogue

As the Administration stated in the October 24th, 2019, memorandum to the City Council, engaging the community in a dialogue will be our next step in moving this process forward. The importance of creating a space where the voices of all those who have been impacted by this

event can be heard – and can hear each other – is critical. Such a dialogue can be a powerful tool in allowing us to learn from differing experiences of these events so that we can best serve our community; it can provide an opportunity for shared development of resolutions that will strengthen and inform our goals to keep all community members safe and reduce the risk that this experience leaves any member of our community in fear. For this reason, we will be working with an outside consultant, the Consensus Building Institute, to plan and facilitate a community dialogue on this issue.

3. Police Advisory Committee

History teaches us that even when we learn from experiences like this, communities are never immune to the possibility of future events causing tensions between and among the residents and the police. We will therefore establish, with the help of the City Council and the community, a Police Advisory Committee with community representation. The Police Advisory Committee will serve both as a standing forum where these types of issues can be addressed and as an open and recurring community meeting where residents' concerns and questions can be discussed. We look forward to working with the City Council and our residents to plan and launch this committee.

4. Asset Forfeiture

A number of community members raised concerns over the receipt and use of asset forfeiture funds for the Somerville Police Fund. We have identified concerns as well and have begun the process of reviewing this matter with the Middlesex County District Attorney. We will provide updates to the City Council as they become available.