

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM31.6	ACTION			Ward:All
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Affirming Council Support for the Toronto Police Service - by Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti, seconded by Councillor Jim Karygiannis

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti, seconded by Councillor Jim Karygiannis, recommends that:

1. City Council express its full support for the Toronto Police Service and its dedicated officers, and that the Command Officers and all divisions of the Toronto Police Service be so advised.

Summary

Over the past several months, Black Lives Matter has vilified and demonized Toronto Police officers, notwithstanding the Police Service's importance in serving our communities and protecting public safety.

Black Lives Matter staged a sit-in at last year's Toronto Pride Parade to protest the presence of the Toronto Police Service and orchestrated a ban on uniformed officers from marching in the parade. Pride Toronto's Executive Director, Olivia Nuamah, has said that the organization should be open to all voices, and create an event that reflects all members of the LGBTQ2S+ community. Unfortunately, the demands placed by Black Lives Matter inherently contradicts with such comments as it has led to the isolation and exclusion of people solely based on their uniform.

It is disappointing that uniformed officers, many of which are proud of both representing the LGBTQ2S+ community and serving as police, are being excluded from Pride. For a City that proudly states "Diversity Our Strength" as its motto, it is unacceptable that people are being pitted against each other.

In June 2017, the Toronto Police Services Board held a meeting to discuss the fate of the School Resource Officer program. Since 2008, more than 30 uniformed officers have been stationed at 75 high schools, which include both the Toronto District School Board and the Toronto Catholic District School Board, across the City.

Again, Black Lives Matter's active disruption of the meeting was disrespectful to the Toronto Police Service and should not have been tolerated. All registered deputants had an opportunity to have a seat at the table and contribute to the dialogue. Unfortunately, Black Lives Matter bullied and intimidated those who wanted to share positive experiences in regard to the School Resource Officer program, and others who wanted to speak positively of police in general.

Suspending the School Resource Officer program will jeopardize the progress of community policing, and may further stigmatize the role of the police. Integrating an essential agency of public safety into the City's educational institutions is a critical way of developing and reinforcing better relations between law enforcement and the broader community. Last month, I brought forward letter in support of the School Resource Officer program, and it had the unanimous support of the Etobicoke York Community Council.

Black Lives Matter continues to actively demonize the police beyond the Pride Parade. The divisive tactics employed by Black Lives Matter to pit one group against another are deplorable and dangerous as they are designed to foster anger and resentment that will certainly lead to conflict.

The officers in uniform should be regarded as people – people who serve with tact and sensitivity. The Toronto Police Service manages a host of public safety issues without praise or special recognition. Therefore, in light of recent circumstances, it is critical that Toronto City Council officially affirm its full support for the officers across the City.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM31.6