



## City of Rochester

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**Adam C. McFadden**  
Councilmember  
South District

June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2011

To: Mayor Thomas S. Richards  
Police Chief James Sheppard  
City Council President Lovely A. Warren

Dear Mayor, Police Chief and Council President of The City of Rochester:

The City of Rochester has lost control of its police force.

From my first day in office almost eight years ago and long before I became Chair of City Council's Public Safety Committee, an overwhelming number of calls to my office were the complaints of private citizens about their treatment by the Rochester Police Department. The overwhelming majority of these complaints were made by people of color; and overwhelmingly, these complaints were ignored by various administrations and police chiefs.

Within the first few years of my being elected, I held community policing meetings which attempted to identify citizen problems with the police in order to find a path to communicate citizen concerns. These meetings were seen as antagonistic to both the police and to the administrations. The voices of hundreds of citizens raised in complaint about our policing practices were ignored. Nothing was changed.

We are now suffering the consequences of years of neglect. Our policing system is broken. Emily Good's arrest and the subsequent public outcry clearly show that the public will no longer abide by a broken system. This Administration and this Council need to fix the inequities in the Rochester Police Department at all costs. Our policing needs to be overhauled, re-considered and repaired immediately. We do not have time for studies, white papers or committees. We are on the verge of a public safety disaster.



We need to fix the hiring practices of The Rochester Police Department. We need more minority police and more police who grew up inside the City of Rochester. We are still not in compliance with the federal consent decree issued in the 1970s that mandated police force integration. Over a third of a century later, we have done very little to improve our minority hiring practices. This is shameful.

We need to stop racial profiling immediately. HUNDREDS of African-American and Latino residents of Rochester are arbitrarily stopped by police without due cause every year. The profiling is not limited to the Rochester Police Department, but is engaged in by the Monroe County Sheriff's Department and the New York State Police as well. Arbitrary stops result in arbitrary detentions and arrests that wreck our citizens' lives emotionally and financially and criminalize our minority populations with subjective and often unprovable charges. Arrests of minority citizens for governmental interference, disorderly conduct and resisting arrest without any substantiating proof of a probable felony ARE RACIAL PROFILING. PERIOD.

We need to restore community policing. We eliminated police stations and sections for budget relief and for union strategy. The disassembling of a policing system in which police knew their neighborhoods and residents has been a disaster. We need to re-train all police officers in proper community engagement. This should be done both at the recruitment level and through an on-going civilian interaction training program.

The Police Department's Code of Conduct needs to be revised and publicized. The rules of citizen/police engagement must be widely distributed to our residents. Residents do not know their rights when stopped by the police and it is quite evident that the police are largely unaware of citizen rights. Our community is in the grip of a fear of our police force because even harmless questioning is often met with detention or arrest.

The Police Department must aggressively pursue disciplinary procedures against officers who are insubordinate and do not show proper respect to City residents.

The Office of Professional Standards is badly damaged and has no credibility in the community. It needs a complete overhaul and somehow transparency must be introduced into the system. Of the hundreds and

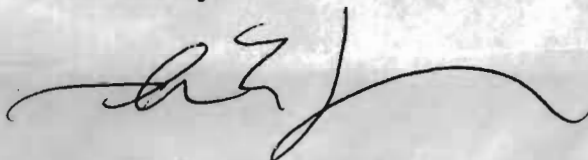
hundreds of phone calls I have received regarding police complaints, I have never been informed by the Rochester Police Department of any disciplinary procedure brought against a police officer for any of these complaints that have come to my office. And I am the Public Safety Chair. Neither the Citizen Review Board, the Center for Dispute Settlement or Professional Standards provides any degree of transparency regarding the findings of citizen complaints.

As Chair of The Public Safety Committee, I am asking for specific actions and solutions:

- The creation of a Public Safety Strategic Plan (such as exist in Phoenix, Miami, Hanover, Va.) within 90 days of the date of this letter.
- The formation of a community-led group to review all arrests quarterly to be implemented within 30 days.
- The revamping of the Citizen Review Board within 30 days.
- The revision and publication of Codes of Conduct for the Rochester Police Department to be released to the public within 30 days.
- The creation of a Chain of Command Chart that includes the Administration, the Rochester Police Department, City Council and Citizens of the City of Rochester to be publicized within 30 days.

I regret that this Administration and my current colleagues are left to deal with the truly frightening results of years of neglect. But we must act and we must act at once.

Sincerely,



Adam C. McFadden, South District

xc: Carolee A. Conklin, Councilmember-At-Large  
Matt Haag, Councilmember-At-Large  
Dana K. Miller, Councilmember-At-Large  
Jacklyn Ortiz, Councilmember-At-Large  
Carla M. Palumbo, Esq. Councilmember, Northwest District  
Loretta C. Scott, Councilmember-At-Large  
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