

Who is actually running our city?

In the last year alone we have seen City Hall, for which we pay all salaries of those who work for us, isolate themselves and selectively decide who is and is not worthy of having information about the city where we live and work.

We have seen multiple false reports put out by MPD; the communication for which has not improved since eliminating the role of Chief Information Officer (previously held by John Elder) and moving this work into the City Coordinators office under Communications. We have seen paid influencers control the narrative about what is happening in our city. We have had the Black community treated as a monolith, with certain people chosen to speak for all of us, as if they are the official representative for us. We have seen guns taken from evidence lockers and planted on residents to justify the murders. We have had information withheld, such as the report that the city requested on the level of staffing needs; which is finally being shared and shows that more officers were, in fact, not needed and not the solution to the problem. We have seen press releases go out that makes us question journalistic integrity; and when rumors around critical incidents are dispelled, that information is not sent out with the same frequency and fervor as the lies. We have seen elected leaders cry at the caskets of those who were killed due to these leaders' ineptitude and inaction.

It becomes an election integrity question when we are not given necessary information to act as informed voters and allow for business, philanthropy, and people with money to pour millions into our city to maintain the status quo. Regardless of how you feel about policing and the direction we should take, there is no question that the leadership is rogue and refuses to follow any policy, procedure, or ordinance that is put in place. The Mayor has repeatedly made sure that we know he is the one who is solely responsible. So, why did he run from a press conference and refuse to answer our questions?

Our elected officials have left us in the position where we are not safe physically, environmentally, economically, or in our educational system. It is our tax dollars paying for the bloodshed. We are not the personal piggy bank of our city. This is not just a Black issue, this is an everybody issue and no matter what Ward we live in, it should concern us all. When we lock our doors and windows at night, we should not fear that someone will obtain a key to our property, enter without announcing themselves, and shoot us as we wake from our slumber. We should

not persecute the victims of these state sanctioned murders and take anyone's word for anything. They perpetuate the narrative that serves their interests; and then when asked questions, they run out of their own press conferences before proclaiming not to know anything. It cannot be both ways. If you do not know anything, why put out speculation as fact? All of this is happening while both our city and county are under racial equity emergencies. Emergencies require response, planning, timelines, and action to be taken. Since when do we call an emergency and then do nothing? Little has been done to address the state-sanctioned violence in our city. This is cowardly and most certainly not indicative of leadership - something our city desperately needs. Our own Lt. Governor stated over the summer that (in summation), "Black people are not safe here," after Mr. Winston Smith was murdered. We create policies that we cannot enforce. Mayor Frey told us last year that he eliminated no knock warrants. This, in fact, is not true. Police have a duty to act if one of their fellow officers is committing a crime yet they did not arrest Officer Hanneman.

We have a different set of rules that apply to some but not all. We are not supposed to have high speed chases, yet we do in excess of speeds of 100 mph. Our own Hennepin County Sheriff was drunk well over the legal limit, with alcohol in the car, Delta 8 gummies, and a loaded weapon. All while driving a county vehicle. We have no word if he had drugs in his system. He was ordered to pay a fine (much less than is typical), undergo an assessment for treatment, pay back the cost of the totaled vehicle, and undergo regular drug and alcohol testing. However, he can still drive, police, and enforce the law that clearly does not apply to him. The audacity for him to continue to lie and still not be arrested for blaming a phantom cab driver is abhorrent. In fact, he actually called a cab company to ask if bars were still open so he could continue to drink. Lying on an official police report is a felony and an obstruction of justice. He wasted time and tax dollars by forcing a judge to issue a warrant for a urine or a blood test. He was then given a choice as to which one he preferred. After stalling for several hours, he opted for the less accurate urine sample.

So, I ask all of you, my neighbors, who is in charge here? We heard from our last iteration of City Council that they were not given any information about the multi-jurisdictional task force called Operation Safety Net until December, yet it was formed in the spring. We have spent millions on military response, but to protect who? Not us, the residents and taxpayers, but to protect buildings and

private property; prioritizing private interests over the sanctity of life. As US Army veterans, we know how to follow rules of engagement. I served in the Afghan war and spent 14 months in Afghanistan. We had rules of engagement and they should too. We take an oath to serve and protect against enemies foreign and domestic. When did the residents of this city become the enemy?

We cannot allow this to continue any longer. If you have been on the sidelines, now is the time to get involved. Rattle all the cages, call your elected officials, vote, ask the hard questions, march, talk to your neighbors, attend your community meetings, use whatever power, passion, and influence you have so they know Minneapolis is not a hunting ground. We have seen enough of our loved ones and relatives taken by state-sanctioned violence. We will not allow them to keep paying these families off and disregarding our needs as residents and human beings. We opened Black History Month not celebrating ourselves and accomplishments; or planning for our collective liberation and future, but spent it investigating the execution of a young Black man who was asleep on a couch in a family member's apartment. He was killed while not even listed on the warrant. Now they want us to believe he is dead because he reached for a weapon. He was a licensed and registered gun owner and he had a right to have that weapon, and even if he wasn't, he didn't deserve this. No parent should have to get this call. None of us should fear going to bed in our own homes. No one should be given a key to execute a no knock warrant. We had no business getting involved with SPPD business when we cannot even take care of our own needs in Minneapolis. Because we have no moral compass, we allowed ourselves to vote last November driven by fear. Because we have no collective backbone or intestinal fortitude, another resident is dead. Not just any man, but a Black man who deserves to be here with us today.

Two of the officers who were part of the SWAT team that entered the apartment with a no knock warrant and executed Amir Locke, were also in the van shooting at random people during the unrest where another Black man, Jaleel Stallings, took up arms to defend himself. Why are they still policing our city in the first place? We are failing our communities day in and day out.

Mayor Frey should not be leading our City and should resign. As voters, we need to hold ourselves accountable to make sure that we vote justly for leadership and hold them responsible for leading in a way that demonstrates they understand

our humanity. We have seen everything but leadership, and their silence should no longer be tolerated. Minneapolis is my home and I am with you. I will be here to weather this storm and make sure the cloud that has hovered over this city parts so the sun can, once again, shine brightly on all of our faces - not just the ones who can pay-to-play. Black people suffer from some of the worst disparities in Minnesota and the nation. That is not by accident, but from years of inaction, division, divestment, and erasing our humanity within the Black Community.

Please consider the following as you work with colleagues and neighbors to move us through the execution that just happened in our city. These are things that the council can actually do that are meaningful.

1. Raise a motion to remove Mayor Frey from office. You can take a vote and pass this by a 2/3 vote. Nine of you need to say yes, but we should expect 13 because that is what is required. The lying, hiding, arrogance, and lack of respect from police who continue to defy him at every turn, no matter who the Chief is, demonstrates that he is not an effective Mayor for Minneapolis. This is not new, and it is inexcusable that he is refusing to work with us to keep residents of this city safe.

For those who say Council President Jenkins would be worse, why is it that Black people always have to answer first when we give everyone else a pass? When we lead, they reject everything we do or suggest anyway. Our non-melanated leaders should speak first since they are the ones who keep voting “no” against life-saving measures in the first place. Secondly, it’s anti-Black and anti-Trans to even suggest that sticking with “what we have” might be better than President Jenkins temporarily leading while we wait for a special election. She is capable and more than qualified.

2. Please move ahead with a Department of Public Safety. Police wouldn’t roll in but everyone else can. We don’t have to have an all-or-nothing approach here. We have the opportunity to do this now and can circle back later should that be the move you decide to make as a council.
3. Should you all approve item 2 as listed above, the budget committee, led by Council Member Emily Koski - Minneapolis Ward 11, can call a special meeting to discuss amending the budget and reallocating a portion of the

inflated budget to said Department of Public Safety. We know more resources were given than possible to spend in the budget, and we also know that we have a report saying we don't need more enforcement.

4. For those who vote, again, please use whatever influence you have with your elected officials, loved ones, and community members to have conversations about the above action steps. Let them know how it makes you feel as a resident of the Minneapolis ward you live in to know you and your neighbors are unsafe. Contact information is listed below.

I'll end with this, "By any means necessary" is not a threat of violence. It is a commitment to ensuring liberation for our people and securing our collective future. Economic justice is part of safety; and, so long as we remain on this trajectory, I will be voting "no" to approve the general operating fund levy and encouraging my colleagues on the Board of Estimate and Taxation to do the same, until I see a budget that funds prosperity and peace rather than death, division, and inequity. I will also be leading the work to bring reparations to our city from a financial perspective, and I expect elected city leaders who write policy to work with me and make it happen. This is not charity, it is owed to us. These families deserve to be seen, heard, and valued. We are better than this and we deserve better than this. In the words of Mel Reeves, "when we fight, we win." I am a mother to three brilliant Black young men and the wife of a Black man. I should not have to fear that when I kiss them good morning, it will be the last time. None of us should, no matter who we are or what we look like. This has to stop and it has to stop now. I ask you again to think about who is actually running this city; because from what I can see, no one is - bottom line. We deserve courageous leadership. Mayor Frey needs to resign and let someone who actually knows what they are doing and has the integrity and fortitude lead our city through these unprecedented times.

Love, respect, and peace to the family of Mr. Locke and to all families. With revolutionary love and respect for all of Minneapolis.

#JusticeforAmirLocke
#JusticeForAllStolenLives
#BlackHistoryMonth

Samantha L. Pree-Stinson
Board of Estimate and Taxation, President
Ward 1 Resident and Homeowner

Minneapolis Elected Officials Contact Information:

Mayor Jacob Frey

- 612-673-2100
- Contact Mayor Frey through the online portal [here](#)

Find your ward and council member [here](#).

Your council member

- Elliot Payne, Council Member, Ward 1
 - 612-673-2201
 - Ward1@minneapolismn.gov
- Robin Wonsley Worlobah, Council Member, Ward 2
 - 612-673-2202
 - Ward2@minneapolismn.gov
- Michael Rainville, Council Member, Ward 3
 - 612-673-2203
 - Ward3@minneapolismn.gov
- LaTrisha Vetaw, Council Member, Ward 4
 - 612-673-2204
 - ward4@minneapolismn.gov
- Jeremiah Ellison, Council member, Ward 5
 - 612-673-2205
 - ward5@minneapolismn.gov
- Jamal Osman, Council Member, Ward 6
 - 612-673-2206
 - ward6@minneapolismn.gov
- Lisa Goodman, Council Member, Ward 7
 - 612-673-2207
 - ward7@minneapolismn.gov
- Andrea Jenkins, Council President, Ward 8
 - 612-673-2208
 - ward8@minneapolismn.gov
- Jason Chavez, Council Member, Ward 9
 - 612-673-2209
 - ward9@minneapolismn.gov
- Aisha Chughtai, Council Member, Ward 10
 - 612-673-2210
 - ward10@minneapolismn.gov

- Emily Koski, Council Member, Ward 11
 - 612-673-2211
 - ward11@minneapolismn.gov
- Andrew Johnson, Council Member, Ward 12
 - 612-673-2212
 - ward12@minneapolismn.gov
- Linea Palmisano, Council Vice President, Ward 13
 - 612-673-2213
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