

Taber, Toni

From: Anya Harkness <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, June 9, 2020 11:51 AM
To: CouncilMeeting
Subject: Agenda item 6.3

[External Email]

Hello,

My name is Anya Harkness and I am a resident of San Jose. I am writing to demand that funding is reallocated from SJPD to social and public programming that takes place in our communities.

We need to focus on funding programs that allows the community to receive help before they commit a crime. Crime is not random. It happens when an individual is unable to meet their basic needs. We need to fund programs that meet the community needs. It is unacceptable that a San Jose police officer makes more money than an SJUSD teacher. This highlights that the city's priorities are clearly messed up.

It is unethical to cut budget towards education, libraries, parks, housing, and transportation while funneling \$5M into improving the San Jose golf courses. It is also an outrage that over 30% of city funding goes towards the police department. The system in place is broken-at the expense of your citizens' safety and well being. We need a new criminal justice structure, inclusive of a robust task force of mental health professionals and social works.

We stand with the calls of those across the country and demand that the City Council defund and disband the SJPD similarly to Minneapolis. We demand a budget that adequately and effectively meets the needs of at-risk San Jose residents during this trying and uncertain time when livelihoods are on the line. We demand a budget that supports community wellbeing, rather than empowers police.

In the meantime, it is important to ban the use of rubber bullets, tear gas, and other means of excessive force as a method of crowd control. The city must recognize that protestors are exercising their first amendment right and should not be met with police violence. People's lives should matter more than property. The police should be working on creating spaces to protest, not attacking the protestors.

I see that the city council hopes to create a process that includes the community and it starts here, by listening to your community. It is your duty to represent your constituents. I am urging you to completely revise the San Jose city budget for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. Public opinion is with me.

I am embarrassed by the police department. The actions they have taken against protestors has made me ashamed of the city. I want to be proud of my city and proud to be from San Jose. It is completely inappropriate to respond to a protest against police brutality with police brutality.

The power imbalance between police and the public is unacceptable. That comes from the entire system not just specific individuals in the police department. Having that authority over people leads to the power going to people's heads as seen in the Stanford prison experiment.

Please consider using police funding for other social services and housing that would actually benefit the community. Be better, Do better. Use your power and privilege to influence and create change because the current system is not working.

Thank you for your time.

A. Harkness

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From: Matt Casey

Sent: Tuesday, June 09, 2020 8:44 AM

To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: Letter From the Public - City Council Meeting 6/9 Agenda Item 6.3

Hello, my name is Matt Casey and I'm a San Jose resident. I'm writing to demand that San Jose Mayor Liccardo and City Council redirect money away from the San Jose Police Department and invest into community resources. To spend over 440 million on the police department, while the environmental services, housing and other city services receive scraps is disgusting and embarrassing.

How can you look at cutting back funds for the library system while allowing SJPD to buy tear gas to be used on its own citizens?

In San José I have never seen the police de-escalate or solve a problem. When I've had neighbors commit domestic violence, the police would show up the next day and did nothing for months. When I saw someone being chased around an apartment complex by someone with a knife, the police showed up hours later. When I was pulled over for a light being off, SJPD was determined to prove that I was drunk but would refuse to give me a breathalyzer test. While one gave it to me the other continually made advances on my friends who were trapped in the car.

SJPD has actively sabotaged itself, telling its own police trainees to go to other cities, and then complained that we don't have enough police. Let them all go. Defund SJPD and redistribute the money to our parks, libraries, education, public transportation, anywhere from a department that lets its employees hit citizens with bullets, military grade equipment, and motorcycles.

Matt Casey