



Village of Mount Prospect Press Release

COMMUNITY MESSAGE FROM THE VILLAGE OF MOUNT PROSPECT

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On Monday, June 8th, a peaceful demonstration was held in the Village on the Centennial Green. The participants mourned the murder of George Floyd, shared first-hand experiences of racial inequity and called for a reexamination of policing policies. Village leadership is listening to the community's concerns. We want to share with you what we are doing and will continue to do to assure our community of equitable treatment and opportunity.

The Village of Mount Prospect completed a comprehensive review of its policing policies in 2018. That review included the Police Department's use of force, de-escalation training, a duty to intercede and comprehensive reporting. A summary of this review is posted as mountprospect.org/CulturalClimate. This portal is a work in process, but will soon include relevant policing policies, recent presentations from Village leadership, community surveys and other information related to the Village's efforts to honor our diverse heritage and diversity.

Addressing racial bias and social inequity involves more than one department in the Village – the greater exercise should examine diversity, equity and inclusion of both Village staff and residents throughout our community. When striving to be a more diverse, equitable and inclusionary community, we know there is always room for improvement. But to know where we want to be, we must first evaluate where we are.

What we are doing as an organization

We Plan. Each year since 2015, staff and Village Board work together to complete a Strategic Plan, to ensure we are working toward consistent and measurable goals. The planning process is public and transparent, with goals and actions specifically identified and prioritized. Our managers and individual contributors are held to those goals in their annual reviews. One of the six goals listed in the Strategic Plan, since its inception, is Cultural Climate: honoring history, heritage and diversity. High profile initiatives in support of this goal are the Celebration of Cultures, Police Department community engagement events such as the Kickin' it with the Cops soccer event, National Night Out, and the Five-O 5K event – which help residents become familiar with their beat officers. Additional initiatives include multi-cultural programming for both youth and adults at the Community Connections Center in South Mount Prospect. Aside from being enjoyable or educational, these programs help to break down socio-economic or cultural barriers, giving our residents an opportunity to meet their neighbors, understand their local government, and perhaps propel them into to a career in local government or public safety.

We Engage. Citizen engagement has been a high priority of our current Mayor and Village Board of Trustees. The Village has hosted neighborhood Committee of the Whole discussions, most recently this year in our northeast neighborhood to discuss significant flood control projects and the Chicago Executive Airport. The Village hosts regular Coffee with Council to allow residents the opportunity to ask questions and express concerns to our Board and staff. In 2019, the Village created a Community Engagement Committee, whose mission is to bring people in the Village together to embrace and celebrate diversity, serve as a community voice and provide opportunities to connect by empowering residents, businesses, and all members of the community to come together. Consisting of Village residents and business owners, this committee assists in the Celebration of Cultures event and provides suggestions to staff on how Mount Prospect can become a stronger more connected community.

We Hire, Train and Document. The Village has and will continue to support a policy of non-discrimination and equal employment opportunity in all personnel related activities. We consider all qualified candidates for employment regardless of race or any other protected class. We are focused on diversifying our employee population and have expanded our avenues for recruiting and public service education in an effort to do so. All Police Department sworn personnel participate in implicit bias, racial profiling and cultural competency training. Our Police collective bargaining agreements are reviewed on a regular basis and include a progressive discipline policy and information on investigations concerning officers. Police collective bargaining agreements are available on the Village's website.

We Provide Support. The Village Human Services Department provides services that are not offered at all municipalities. The department offers priceless resources for both our residents and our employees. We employ social workers, many of whom are bi-lingual, and host staff both at Village Hall and the Community Connections Center. We are able to provide crisis counseling and provide referrals for those experiencing a wide range of difficulties, from mental health to domestic abuse. The partnership between Human Services and our Police and Fire Departments is strong, valued, and greatly appreciated by our residents.

We Value Transparency. The Village has a Board of Fire and Police Commission (BOFPC) whose purpose is to prepare and conduct competitive examinations for the appointment of Police Officers and Firefighter/Paramedics, as well as promotions within those departments. The Board also conducts hearings relative to disciplinary matters. The Board currently consists of five members who must be residents of the Village. The meetings are open to the public, and occur on the first Monday of the month, as needed and scheduled by the BOFPC. This group of independent Village residents ensure a highly competitive recruitment process is in place to seek the most qualified candidates to be Police Officers and Firefighters. Hiring good people with honesty and integrity is critical to keeping our community members safe.

Looking Toward the Future. The mission of the Mount Prospect Village Government is to advance the community's collective quality of life and potential through adaptive leadership and leading-edge service delivery. The Village has put our mission into action. We seek to continually improve our organization. The Village is in the process of programming diversity and inclusion training for all Village full and part time employees. This training is in high demand, but we expect it to take place in the next few months.

We will continue to engage our residents through various open meetings and platforms, and always welcome feedback. We encourage all residents to stay informed of Village business by subscribing to our e-newsletters, follow our social media accounts or visit our website – or even attend a meeting in person once it's safe to do so. If there's a topic you would like to discuss with us directly, reach us at vmo@mountprospect.org.

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