

June 3, 2020

A letter to the Middletown Township community.

Middletown Township is a community comprised of individuals from many different cultures, religions, and human experiences. We are extremely proud of this diversity. The Township actively works to cultivate unity and support our differences. A diverse Middletown is one that is inclusive of all persons, races, ethnicities, religions, beliefs, and abilities. Diversity is what makes this community *our community*.

The horrific violence that has transpired in the City of Minneapolis and elsewhere in the United States has understandably brought calls for swift and comprehensive changes to the institutions that enable egregious abuses of power to be exercised. The story of George Floyd's killing is not the first of its kind. His story like many others brings an immense amount of pain. It is our obligation to channel this pain into growth.

The systems and institutions enabling brutality of this nature in our nation are out of the Township's control. However, safety in Middletown Township is in our control. The Middletown Township Police Department prioritizes the principle of community policing, where neighbors are transformed into allies. Police officers become familiar faces, friends, and most importantly, human. The Middletown Township Police Department has strong support from residents and businesses through the relationships they have cultivated for many years.

Many in the United States, including in Middletown Township, are gathering to protest recent events on the shoulders of centuries of institutional injustice. As Americans, the First Amendment provides us the right to assemble and speak freely, including against our own government. One of our most important obligations to our community is to preserve the constitutional rights of every person in our community. On Sunday, May 31, members of several communities assembled to peacefully protest with the protection of the Middletown Township Police Department and other emergency responders standing by.

Others have taken advantage of those peacefully protesting and have rioted and looted businesses throughout the Greater Philadelphia Area and around the United States. The Middletown Township Police Department has been working diligently to protect area businesses from criminal activity. We are fortunate that small attempts to loot in our community have been peacefully addressed. Our police department has also supported larger response efforts in neighboring communities and the City of Philadelphia.

To the protestors: we stand with you and our police and emergency responders stand ready to protect your right to peaceably assemble and be heard, and we promise to listen as you speak.

To our police officers: we stand with you and thank you for putting yourselves at risk to keep our community safe and protect our neighbors.

To the looters and those who seek to take advantage of this unrest to commit crimes: we will protect our community. Your actions are unwelcome here.

Please stay safe, stay involved, and stay informed.

Sincerely,

Middletown Township Board of Supervisors

Mike Ksiazek, Chairperson
Amy Strouse, Vice Chairperson
Tom Tosti, Secretary
Anna Payne
Dawn Quirple