



COUNCIL MEMBER  
**DELVIN J. MOODY**

## **OPEN LETTER TO THE CITY OF UTICA AND PROTESTORS**

#JusticeForGeorgeFloyd

June 2, 2020

Utica:

Let me first begin by saying thank you! To everyone that joined me and others in condemning the Murder of George Floyd and calling for justice in the Minneapolis Police Department, I am still in awe of how powerful that moment was. You came to express your concern about the state of police relations in this country and the City of Utica, New York. Not only did you speak truth to power in protest but your presence sent a strong message to government, that now is the time act on improving community/police relations. We must move beyond conversation and dialogue!

Sunday, with less than 24 hours notice, close to 1,000 people showed up from Utica and around the Mohawk Valley. While this is a small city, we held a protest on the level of Syracuse, Rochester, and Buffalo. We showed that a community can come together, protest, and do so without violence. Even in the most unfortunate of circumstances, you all came together for a much needed community reunion. After months of isolation, it was a tremendous site to see so many of you there in solidarity. We all felt the pain! We all shared that moment and we are all ready for action! It was tough but we worked through our pain peacefully and with no violence. That is Utica!

I also want to speak about our intentions and motives. The rally and protest was organized and led mainly by Yadana Oo. I want to commend her for her work in bringing this rally together! With close to 1,000 people in attendance it is always a challenge to provide a platform whereby every voice can be heard. In any rally, that is always the struggle and hurdle. While, everyone may not have been able to speak I can assure you that your collective voice was clearly heard. As I mentioned at the rally, your greatest voice is not only in protest but also in participating in government. That does not only mean voting. Get active, stay engaged, and continue to speak and demand that others listen. **"If they don't give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair." - Shirley Chisholm**

However, It is important that we understand that the work needed, does not stop at Oneida Square or Kemble Park. There is so much work to be done. I need you and your support to make change in our community. Below this letter I am also sharing a few of my thoughts on ways we can improve community-police relations. It won't be easy but I'm assured that together we will make this city strong!

**The Marathon Continues,**

Councilman Delvin J. Moody

[www.delvinmoody.com](http://www.delvinmoody.com)

## Public Safety Proposals

These are a few proposals that I believe will fundamentally:

### 1. Police Accountability

On May 31, NY Governor Andrew Cuomo echoed an Idea championed by many across the country and state. He called for a **standardized police misconduct policies** and that police complaints should not be **conducted by local prosecutors**. I could not agree more! Our local police department should:

- Institute a **Civilian Review Board** in partnership with Public Safety Commissioner and Inclusion Committee
  - Receive all complaints of Police Department by city residents
  - Coordinate an independent review of such complaints
  - Review complaints and make recommendations to the Police Department
  - Be a liaison between Police Department and city residents
  - Educate Residents of review process and ensure transparency
- Improve on **policies** to ensure that Officers with **disciplinary records** are asked to **resign** from the local police force.

### 2. Community-Police Relations

Key to having a safe community and a collaborative police force is community relationships with city residents. Nothing beats not only knowing the streets but also the knowing the community. When an officer knows the people they form bonds which increases community policing.

- Develop a **PAL (Police Activities League) Program** which will provide greater opportunity for youth to engage with police officers in less formal setting.
- Expand the **Civilian Police Academy** and make it an annually funded municipal budget item.
- Include active community members in the **hiring and interview process** to ask question of police candidates

### **3. Diversify our Police Force**

Having a police force that is representative of the community is important and necessary. The goal of a diverse police department is not easy but yet is a possible mission.

- **Hold an informational session** for community leaders and members to learn the Police Recruitment process and hiring standards.
- Use outreach officers to collaborate with community organizations and local higher educational institutions to actively recruit city residents
- Provide a **report of trends and barriers** in the minority communities with the hiring process and work with community agencies to address those needs.

This can include things like:

- Working with local gym to provide free membership for candidates that need to train but can't afford gym memberships
- Offering civil service study sessions for those who might be desire additional help