



**Mayor Terry Weppler's Statement as Read During
the June 9, 2020 Village Board Meeting**

I would first like to say thank you to the people who kept the two protests in Libertyville over the past weekend peaceful. Peaceful protest by our citizens is a right given to us by our founding fathers and the many men and women who have served in the military over the years. The people who organized the protests did it properly, requesting permits and asking that people who attended wear masks and practice social distancing. We did not issue permits for the protests due to the governor's guidelines under the COVID crisis. However, we did not try to stop those protesting from exercising their constitutional rights.

I have received hundreds of emails during the past two weeks. I have received requests for all sorts of things from people on both sides of the aisle. Neither side is completely right in this issue facing our country today. Some people insist on the phrase Black Lives Matter due to what has gone on over the years to black people in this country. Others insist on saying all lives matter. Both are correct. What happened to George Floyd was a travesty of justice and should never have happened in our free country. My condolences go out to his family. Our police are here to protect citizens, not harm them. However, police officers have also been killed during the past two weeks attempting to quell the riots that occurred over the murder of George Floyd. George Floyd's family is grieving. So are the families of those officers killed during the past two weeks. Attacking police is no better than black people being treated differently due to the color of their skin.

One of the issues that has been addressed in many of the emails I received has been concerning retraining our police officers. It seems that all police officers in the country are in the cross hairs at this time. I have heard calls to defund the police department and statements that the majority of officers are bad officers. I am disappointed by those statements, many of them made by people who have no knowledge of the training or character of the members of our department. I am proud of our police department. Since I became Mayor I do not believe that we have had any complaints about excessive use of force. Our officers all receive 8 hours of de-escalation training each year and I believe our officers treat all individuals, regardless of race, religion, or sexuality equally and with the respect we would expect for ourselves and our families.

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Since I became Mayor, I have attempted to keep National issues out of local politics. However, that does not mean turning our heads and ignoring an issue that affects our residents. Libertyville residents on both sides of this issue have very strong feelings. This is not a Republican or Democrat issue. It is an issue about the way people are treated in the Village of Libertyville. I will leave it to our State and Federal officials to discuss how we move forward in Illinois and the nation but I do want our residents and visitors to always feel that they are part of and are welcome in the Village. I know that is the feeling of our Board and I hope it is the feeling of all of our residents.

I do not think any white person can completely understand what black people have gone through over the years in our country. During my lifetime there were still covenants on many Libertyville homes that prohibited a non-Caucasian from living in a home except as a servant of the homeowner. Those covenants became unenforceable as a result of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 but were still there.

As a gay person who only came out later in life, I can understand a little about what Black America has gone through. I heard many anti-gay comments and slurs by friends who had no idea I was gay before I came out. I am sure blacks have lived with this and more their whole lives. No one should be treated differently due to their race.

The Village of Libertyville has a Human Relations Commission. That commission is charged with insuring fair housing practices in the Village of Libertyville. For the past year they have been working on an affordable housing ordinance, something the Village has discussed for the past 20 years and never approved. That ordinance will be presented to the Plan Commission and Village Board in the next several months. I would like the Human Relations Commission to begin discussions on insuring that all citizens are treated equally in Libertyville once they have completed work on the Affordable Housing Ordinance.

I am asking that the Human Relations Commission begin having small group discussions with people of all races, religions, and beliefs to discuss ways to make Libertyville a better community. I have always believed Libertyville is a great community to live and raise a family. That does not mean we cannot make it better. I invite all interested residents to participate in these small group discussions.

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