



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
DISTRICT 4
File #: 20-394

Board Meeting Date: 6/23/2020

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors
From: Supervisor Warren Slocum, District 4
Supervisor Don Horsley, District 3
Subject: Resolution Supporting the Black Lives Matter Movement

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution supporting the Black Lives Matter movement and reaffirming the County of San Mateo's commitment to racial equity.

BACKGROUND:

On May 25, 2020, George Floyd, a 46-year-old Black man, was killed during an arrest in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Shortly after George Floyd's death, a video of the arrest was released showing Derek Chauvin, a white police officer, kneeling on Floyd's neck for almost nine minutes while Floyd was handcuffed and lying face down in the street, begging for his life and repeatedly saying "I can't breathe"

George Floyd's murder was made public shortly after the murders of Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old Black woman who was fatally shot in her home after Louisville police mistakenly executed a no-knock warrant at the wrong address in the middle of the night. Similarly, Ahmaud Arbery a 25-year-old Black man who was recently shot by a former police officer while Mr. Arbery was jogging in Brunswick, Georgia. In the aftermath of these murders, there were protests in over 100 cities across all 50 states and in multiple areas of San Mateo County.

While the protests over George Floyd's death were ongoing, Rayshard Brooks was shot and killed by a police officer in Atlanta, Georgia after being pulled over for falling asleep in fast food restaurant drive-thru. This murder also sparked protests.

These protests are all part of the even larger #BlackLivesMatter movement, which began in February 2012 after the murder of Trayvon Martin and seeks to end the senseless murders of Black people at the hands of police officers. The Black Lives Matter movement advocates against systemic racism and police brutality, and promotes using anti-racist tactics to reevaluate policies, procedure, and programs which result in the deaths and disproportionate punishments of Black people.

DISCUSSION:

The recent protests have made it clear that Americans are rejecting the status quo and that we will not stand idly by as witnesses to this injustice. In addition to the horrific deaths which prompted this movement, there have also been multiple news accounts depicting the violation of people’s civil rights during these protests. It is vital that the Board of Supervisors take a stand on the right side of history during these troubling times.

The murders of George Floyd, Rayshard Brooks, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor are only the most recent instances of a continuing history of racial violence against Black people and Black communities.

The Board of Supervisors is committed to the health, safety and equitable treatment of County residents, and strive to bolster the overall wellbeing of the County by fostering the rights of people of color who have been oppressed for generations by structural racism. It is critical that the County stand in solidarity with its Black communities, other communities of color, and protesters across the nation to send the message that Black Lives Matter.

The same racial inequity that we’re seeing across the nation remains prevalent in San Mateo County, and communities of color continue to fight for equality. Therefore, we must strive to hold our County departments and ourselves to the highest possible standards of equity and justice.

Through this resolution, the Board of Supervisors declares its support of the Black Lives Matter movement and commits itself and the county to address the root causes of racial inequity in our community through reflection, dialogue, and action while using an anti-racist lens to assess current and future policies and programs.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with the adoption of this resolution.