

Dear Webster Groves Community,

The Members of the City of Webster Groves Police Community Engagement Board (PCEB) strongly condemn excessive use of force, including what was used against George Floyd by the Minneapolis police officer that was captured on video. We condemn the action of this individual officer. We also condemn the lack of intervention by other police officers present. Even though this horrific event occurred outside of our community, it has ignited the nation in forcing change.

Webster Groves Police Department Policy strictly forbids the types of restraint methods used against Mr. Floyd. The Webster Groves Police Department Policy (Policy FOR 09-01) is severely restrictive and each use of force incident requires documentation and review. More importantly, this policy has been in effect since April, 2004 and last updated in February, 2016). This policy **prohibits the use of choke holds or any other respiratory restraint technique.** Section VI, D.4. on page nine of this policy specifically states:

"Use of "choke holds", or any other respiratory restraint technique is prohibited, and to be considered Deadly Force."

Webster Groves Police Chief, Dale Curtis, reported that in the 17 years this policy has been in effect, one complaint was received for the use of pepper spray during a resisting arrest in 2012. This complaint was investigated and was unfounded based on a witness account.

The Police Community Engagement Board members have been meeting for a little over a year and have been gathering policy information, discussing specific police actions that have occurred and have become better educated regarding the operations and programs of the Webster Groves Police Department. We have also been developing a survey to be used in the community to provide information about the Webster Groves Police Department and to enable community members to provide feedback.

Some of our members have participated in a local organization's event, including a panel discussion. We have also responded to individual inquiries, have published meeting agendas and minutes and have always welcomed guests to our meetings. Some of the members also attended the Citizens' Police Academy which is offered every couple of years and is available to anyone in the community. This program was developed and presented by leadership within the Webster Groves Police Department.

We want to prevent what happened to George Floyd and to many other Black Lives in other jurisdictions from ever occurring in Webster Groves or anywhere else in our country. As a Board, we know systemic racism shapes our experience as Americans. The Board commits to anti-racist work as it pertains to the relationship between law enforcement and the Webster Groves community.

The Covid-19 pandemic has delayed our efforts, but we remain committed to improve the engagement between the Webster Groves Police Department and the community. We welcome any suggestions from the community and from community groups on how we can accomplish this goal.

Respectfully,

Police Community Engagement Board Members