

June 15, 2020

## CALL FOR JUSTICE SYSTEM POLICY REVIEW AND OVERSIGHT

To: Scott Russell, Southold Town Supervisor  
Louisa Evans, Southold Town Board Member  
Jill Doherty, Southold Town Board Member  
James Dinizio, Jr., Southold Town Board Member  
Robert Ghosio, Southold Town Board Member  
Sarah E. Nappa, Southold Town Board Member  
Steve Wick, Executive Editor, Suffolk Times

In Southold Town, we join with people across our country in our devastation and anger at the brutal and depraved murder of George Floyd, a black man detained for a minor, non-violent offense by white Minneapolis police officers. We are devastated also by the murder of Ahmaud Arbery, a black man in Georgia, by two white men who decided to stalk and kill him while he was out jogging, compounded by the apparent cover-up undertaken by the district attorney's office in their failure to arrest the perpetrators. Because of these events and so many others, none of us can continue to deny the depth of the institutional racism in this country which has now become so evident, nor the exposure of all the inequities faced on a daily basis by people of color.

In light of this reality, the undersigned members of Southold Town call on the Town of Southold to engage in an independent proactive and comprehensive assessment of our Town's justice system, including, but not limited to, our systems of policing and the policies brought to bear to fulfill our town's efforts to protect, serve and maintain law and order.

Our town's justice system has evolved, as have all institutions across our country to inevitably retain deeply insidious and embedded remnants of racist ideology. This institutional racism certainly legitimizes the expression of racist beliefs and actions. However, as such, one does not need to be racist to enact policies that intentionally, or unintentionally, continue to perpetuate the oppression of people of color. We can no longer ignore even the possibility that our justice system does so. In undertaking a thorough critical assessment, there are proven tools to guard against these residual practices. These include, for example, the establishment of civilian oversight [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/nacole/pages/161/attachments/original/1481727974/NA\\_COLE\\_AccessingtheEvidence\\_Final.pdf](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/nacole/pages/161/attachments/original/1481727974/NA_COLE_AccessingtheEvidence_Final.pdf) which may be developed with potential funding by the DOJ. And, there is excellent research that substantiates the effectiveness of instituting of strict use of force policies (<http://useofforceproject.org/#project>). These are, of course, only two of many possible tools our Town should consider in seeking to assess and, as needed, remediate institutional racism in our justice system.

We urgently request that Southold Town consider our call for action. The time is now. We believe that the Town Board, Town Supervisor, Chief of Police, Town Justices, Town Attorney and all the associated staff in the Southold Town Justice system can only benefit from ensuring a transparent

and affirmatively and empirically-based set of policies to guide encounters and interactions with the public and in particular with people of color and other minorities in the pursuit of justice.

We are grateful for the invaluable public service provided by members of the Southold Town Justice system and know that, as both government officials and residents of our town, they are committed to doing all they can to ensure that our community is safe, our police are respected, and that in turn, they and all in our town justice system are behaving respectfully and fairly toward all members of our community.

Thank you for your diligent and passionate work on behalf of moving Southold in the direction of a more equitable community.

Sincerely

Carolyn G. Peabody, Ph.D., LCSW Co-chair, North Fork Unity Action Committee  
Sister Margaret Smyth, Co-chair, North Fork Unity Action Committee  
and

Lois Abramchik
Olivia Abramchik-Cavallo
Brett Anderson
Lillian Ball
Jim Banks, CSW
Joyce Beckenstein
Sandra Benedetto
Glynis Berry
Barbara Best
Edwin Blesch
Priscilla Bull
Barbara Lynn Cavallo
Lori Cohen
Kathryn Casey Quigley
Collette Clayton
David Collins
Rev. Margaret Ann Cowden

Joyce Culver
Lucy Cutler
Margaret de Cruz
Hector deCordova
Joyce deCordova
Susan G. Dingle LCSW
Sandra Dunn
Mary Allison Fiedler
Susan E Hallock
Pam Ferrari
Christine Flatley
William Flinter
Jane Flinter
Mary Foster Morgan
Timothy T Frost
Mary Gabriel
Emily Geiger
Stephen Geraci
Liz Gillooly
Diana Gordon
Marion Gotbetter
Carol Halliburton
Bob Hanlon
Loretta Hatzel-Geraci
Laura Held
Samantha Hokanson
Anne S. Hopkins
Cynthia Ickes, MD

Diane Johnson, PhD, LCSW
Cheryl Kaiser
Isabelle Kanz
Mike Lane
Christina Larkin
Patrick Lofthouse
Natasha Lovaas
Claire Lyons
Barbara MacLeod
Pastor Thomas MacLeod
Pat Mundus
Ellen Neff
Jerie R Newman
Nina Nickerson
Ann Nottes
Linda Ortiz
Sarah Parker
Minerva Perez
Sarah Phillips Loth
Ashley Price, MSW
Alice Quinn
Carmen Ramis
Christine Rendel
Patsy Rogers
Pam Schider
Valerie Shelby
Barbara Sheryll
Vicki Semler

Sandra Sinclair
Aiden Sky
Corine Slade
Mike Slade
Connor Smith
Marjorie Snyder
Abigail L Terry
Sherry Thirlby
Ted Thirlby
Nick Timpone
Tehmina Tirmizi
Diana Voelker
Randy Wade
Marianne Weil
Rev. Natalie R Wimberly
John Wissemann
Nancy Wissemann

CC:    Police Chief Martin Flatley                    [mflatley@town.southold.ny.us](mailto:mflatley@town.southold.ny.us)  
        Town Attorney Bill Duffy                    [bill.duffy@town.southold.ny.us](mailto:bill.duffy@town.southold.ny.us)  
        Town Justice Louisa Evans                %            [justicecourt@town.southold.ny.us](mailto:justicecourt@town.southold.ny.us)  
        Town Justice Eileen Powers            %            [justicecourt@town.southold.ny.us](mailto:justicecourt@town.southold.ny.us)  
        Town Justice Dan Ross                    %            [justicecourt@town.southold.ny.us](mailto:justicecourt@town.southold.ny.us)  
        Police Advisory Board                    %            [e.neville@town.southold.ny.us](mailto:e.neville@town.southold.ny.us)