



GARNER POLICE DEPARTMENT

900-C Seventh Avenue
Garner, North Carolina 27529
Phone: (919) 772-8810 Fax: (919) 772-8524

COMMITMENT * INTEGRITY * PROFESSIONALISM

July 17, 2015

Dear (Citizen),

As Chief of Police in the Town of Garner, I have watched with concern the reports of police misconduct across the nation and realize these incidents impact our community even though they are not occurring here. Although the number of these incidents is relatively small compared with the multitude of interactions between police and citizens in the United States on a daily basis, any police misconduct is intolerable.

We clearly understand that the actions of police officers across the nation impact our ability to effectively maintain positive relationships with those we have pledged to protect and serve. In order to maintain the positive relationships which our community has worked so diligently to build and maintain over the years, our department would like meet with you and any interested parishioners from Aversboro Baptist Church to hear from you about our policing efforts, police-citizen interactions, and community perceptions in Garner.

It is my intention to then establish on-going community focus groups to help ensure that we maintain an open dialogue and that any concerns are heard and responded to in an appropriate manner by the department. I have established a committee within our department as a means of proactively addressing the perception of policing across America and what that means for our community. Part of this committee's responsibility is ensuring that we remain focused on taking appropriate steps to maintain the trust and the support of our community. We believe that Sir Robert Peele, in his Nine Principles of Policing from 19th-century Great Britain, was absolutely correct when he said:

"...maintain at all times a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and that the public are the police, the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence."

I do not believe that there is any systemic police misconduct in the Garner Police Department. We maintain a strong Internal Affairs Division which monitors the actions of our officers, including investigating all citizen complaints, uses of force, and vehicle pursuits and reviewing officer and citizen interactions. Public information on these reviews can be found in our Annual Report which is available at www.garnerpd.org. We have included a brief summary about our department with this letter.

Again, I would welcome the opportunity for members of our staff to meet with your parishioners and to get meaningful feedback about any concerns that exist, to get their understanding and perceptions about our Police Department, and to collaborate on ways to continue successful partnerships with our community. Please contact Ms. Maria Herrera at mherrera@garnernc.gov or (919) 772-8810 to set-up a meeting. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me directly at bzuidema@garnernc.gov or (919) 772-8810.

Sincerely,

Brandon V. Zuidema
Chief of Police