



BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor

Michael S. Harrison
Police Commissioner

June 9, 2021

Dear Ms. Bullock, Ms. Holmes, Ms. Lawson and Ms. Lee,

On behalf of the City of Baltimore and the Baltimore Police Department, I would like to express our sincere regret and apology for the disruptive events that you and your family experienced as a result of the prolonged police perimeter in the Harlem Park neighborhood, from Wednesday, November 15, to Monday, November 20, 2017. The BPD acknowledges that this was a negative experience for you and other members of the Harlem Park community, and sincerely hopes that this apology will help facilitate the healing process between the BPD and Harlem Park residents.

Amid the investigation of the tragic death of Detective Sean Suiter, the BPD men and women tasked with maintaining the crime scene perimeter were not guided by adequate supervision to reinforce constitutional requirements for stops and searches. Executive decisions did not give appropriate weight to the impact of sustained law enforcement presence on the community in making decisions about where and how long to hold the crime scene. The result was a protracted police presence that was not aligned with any national best practice for investigations nor any true community policing model. Negative interactions between the BPD and members of the public like yourself are not necessary or useful to professional policing work, and in fact are detrimental to the community trust that is essential to effective crime reduction. I am deeply saddened and troubled that these events have shaken your faith and trust in the police who are sworn to serve and protect the City's residents, and that you feel a diminished sense of comfort and security, to which all Baltimore City residents are entitled.

I would like to personally assure you that we are working tirelessly to regain your trust through enhanced training of personnel, and improved policies, protocols, and practices. The Baltimore Police Department is committed to ensuring that the constitutional rights of all its residents are upheld and protected. To that end we have collaborated or, in the case of the Consent Decree process, will collaborate, with your attorneys, the ACLU-MD, the United States Department of Justice, and the Consent Decree Monitoring Team to revise the BPD's policies to reflect nationally recognized best practices. While we understand that may not fully regain your trust, we will remain steadfast toward realizing our larger goal and hope you see this as a significant step.

The City of Baltimore and the Baltimore Police Department are committed to maintaining the highest ethical standards and ensuring that all of its members, starting with the very top, are committed to protecting the health, safety, and civil rights of all people living in Baltimore. We look forward to building a harmonious relationship with you and the entire Harlem Park neighborhood.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael S. Harrison". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "S".

Commissioner Michael S. Harrison