

# PRESENTATION TO THE CITY OF GREENSBORO'S CRC ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

City Council Chambers  
Melvin Municipal Building  
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*An Official Statement Offered to the City of Greensboro from*



## Police Accountability, Community Safety and Healing Initiative

A PROJECT OF THE BELOVED COMMUNITY CENTER  
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Public Presentation Delivered by  
Rev. Nelson N. Johnson, Executive Director of the Beloved Community Center of Greensboro

I want to thank you, Mayor Vaughan, and the CRC Enhancement Committee for the opportunity to present our perspective, a proposed process for moving forward, and a synopsis of the ongoing work of the ***Police Accountability, Community Safety and Healing Initiative***. I am particularly appreciative of you, Mayor Vaughan, for your openness to listen afresh and to consider creative alternatives related to improving policing in the City of Greensboro. As a citizen group, we feel that we have some important and constructive contributions that will help the residents of our city, the police department, and the city as a whole.

Let me say from the outset that some of my comments will be quite critical of the Greensboro Police Department (GPD) and its operations. These critical comments are not meant to express any lack of respect and appreciation of or need for the police. We are fully aware of the demanding and stressful nature of their work. We appreciate the good work done by many officers every day. There are, however, significant defects within the Greensboro police culture that, if corrected, will not only benefit local citizens and members of the Greensboro Police Department, but will begin to heal some of the historical wounds in our city and may well set our city on a path toward significant improvements in human relations, a healthier and more inclusive culture, and economic growth that can become the envy of our state and our nation.

Inherent in any undertaking are presumptions and assumptions, stated and often unstated. I would like to set out some of the grounding presumptions and assumptions of the Beloved Community Center and the *Police Accountability, Community Safety and Healing Initiative*, which the Beloved Community Center played a significant role in creating.

1. That police are necessary and enormously helpful for a safe, orderly, and functioning society. For many, this assumption seems obvious. However, because our critical remarks have often been interpreted to mean that we do not like or that we feel that we do not need the police, we felt it important to make this assumption explicit.
2. That every person or group should be treated equally, fairly, and respectfully, in accordance with the law.
3. That the police have been granted extraordinary powers by the citizens for whom they work. These powers include arrest, restraint by force, testimony in court with the presumption of truthfulness, search and investigation, the gathering evidence that can lead to conviction or imprisonment, as well as the power to take a life in the course of carrying out their duties.
4. That because of the extraordinary powers granted to the police by citizens, citizens should require a high degree of citizen oversight – oversight that is not unduly under the influence of the police culture. **“Not unduly under the influence of police culture,”** is the sense in which we use the term **“Independent Citizens’ Police Review Board”**. This is also the basic meaning of the phrase **“the police should not police themselves.”**

5. That biases and prejudices, whether based on racial or ethnic background, gender and gender preference, economic and social standing, or citizenship status – including immigrant, undocumented, illegal alien, or other such labels, that are all so prevalent in society, also necessarily exist within the police culture and, in some cases, may be even stronger within the police culture.
6. That allegations and instances of police misconduct and abuse of power, which point to the need for better citizen oversight, have been major unresolved issues that have plagued the City of Greensboro for decades. Further, that the City has spent and continues to spend millions of hard-earned taxpayer dollars on this unresolved situation – changes in police chiefs, city managers, and mayors notwithstanding.
7. That the enduring problem of unresolved police issues is not primarily a personality problem, characterized by a bad officer here or there, but rather a cultural and structural problem that must be solved primarily on the cultural and system level.
8. That a healthy, meaningful, viable, and trusted police oversight mechanism grows best out of a democratic process where all sectors of the city's diverse population are involved in a meaningful way and all views and voices are heard.

Those are our working assumptions. After working on the police accountability issues for many years, the Board of Directors of the Beloved Community Center made a very considered and deliberate decision to produce a well researched 47-page booklet, entitled ***Our Democratic Mission***, outlining several cases of police misconduct. The document was posted online and distributed in February and March of 2013. I will return to the treatment of *Our Democratic Mission* booklet by the City a little later.

On April 4, 2013, a community meeting, convened by the Beloved Community Center that drew over 200 people, was held to discuss the issue of police misconduct and the need for a more effective oversight mechanism. On April 16 and April 27 two different police *abuse of power incidents* occurred that involved Bennett College and North Carolina A&T students, which intensified the discussion. In June Beloved began a series of meetings with city officials, including the mayor, several council members, the city manager, city attorney and the human relations commission director. Those meetings mainly resulted in an outlay of the police and city's plans, elaboration of city sponsored surveys about police performance, and inadequate responses to or discussion of public criticisms about police misconduct. On August 26, 2013, feeling that the discussions were stalled, Beloved presented a one-page document to city officials, entitled "*A Proposal to Grow a Respected Police Review Commission.*" That one page document is attached at the end of this document and on Beloved's webpage.

Our one page proposal began by attempting to frame the problem as a structural (system), cultural problem. It was not about personalities and name calling. The opening paragraph sets forth that:

*"Within the Greensboro Police Department there has been too much power concentrated in too few*

*hands with too little independent oversight for far too long. This situation has impacted poor communities and communities of color in disparate ways. It should not come as a surprise that those parts of the community most negatively impacted have raised their voices the loudest.”*

***Too much power concentrated in too few hands with too little independent oversight for a long time!***

We believe this is a way of framing the problem that allows all of us to better understand the problem we are trying to solve and to better work together towards enduring solutions. In that spirit we called for a kind of “Super Committee” in our one-page proposal. Explicitly our proposal states:

*We propose that a process be undertaken as soon as possible to bring together committed representatives from the university/college sector, the religious/faith sector, the neighborhood/community sector, and the City/Police/Human relations sectors.*

This group of some 15 or 20 people would constitute what amounts to a *Super Committee*. We further proposed that this Super Committee look back over the years of past practices to try to understand the culture and the structure, what happened, including what worked and what did not work. This would also help come to a collective understanding of what problem we are trying to solve. It would be enormously helpful in answering the questions of:

- Is the police issue merely about a few bad apples as some allege?
- Is it a question of new leadership as in a new chief or city manager?
- Or is there no real problem at all, as some suggest: just a few criminals trying to get favorable treatment and a few aging activists who won’t let the past go. Is that really the problem?
- Maybe, just maybe it is a structural problem that concentrates too much power in too few hands with too little oversight over a long period of time.

Mayor Vaughan and Enhancement Committee, we need a trusted way to come to a greater **collective understanding of what problem we are trying to solve before we hire another Police Chief, or fire another City Manager, or modify another Complaint Review Committee (CRC)**. We have gone through all these processes multiple times with questionable progress. We believe our proposed process helps move us forward in a constructive direction.

We further propose that this Super Committee be charged with developing creative ways to grow the public’s understanding of the nature of the problem and to build into its process a way to, not only grow public knowledge and understanding, but also to grow higher ethical standards in our city – that is help us appreciate each other in all of our diversity and help us to grow into our greater potential. This work cannot be done by merely conducting surveys and throwing around questionable statistical data about how high the approval rate of the police department is in the city.

We suggest in our proposal that after a broad Super Committee has done its work, looking backward into our actual history and looking forward to the best examples in the nation, the Super Committee should then develop something that actually fits the needs of Greensboro.

From our perspective, we are convinced that a relatively independent Citizens' Police Review Board is a significant part of the solution. We believe that another part of the solution is genuinely community based safety initiatives where the community plays a greater role in promoting its own safety. We also see a growing need for healing. There is a lot of trauma in our city and not just in people of color communities. In fact, we are in the process of setting up healing initiatives. As a starting point, we suggest that those charged with crimes and filing complaints, especially young people, be counseled and accompanied by someone with healing gifts when they go before the Professional Standards Division or to court.

Finally, we believe that whatever is developed by this Super Committee should be vetted back in the five districts. That might include several town hall meetings in each of the districts, during which the work of the Super Committee is discussed and wrestled with by the residents. There might be a citywide town hall meeting convened later, where folk with different perspectives, different experiences and different histories can hear and learn from each other.

All of this and more is possible in the inclusive, democratic process we proposed to the city. We do not need to fear the people; we must go to the people and allow their true, raw voices to be heard. Let me emphasize that it was always our view that we need to ***work together to democratically create something that works for all of us***. We went to great lengths in the *Our Democratic Mission* booklet to make that point. On page 31 & 32 of that booklet we state:

*"We recognize that in our best effort to offer a different perspective on the history of our city, skepticism, and fear of motives and, in some cases, authentic differences remain among a significant part of our city. Therefore, we wish to proceed with caution but also with determination to see what others see and feel. We urge those with different views to be open to what those who share the perspective of this paper see and feel.*

*With those concerns in mind, **we do not feel that we can or should put forward a developed plan to correct the problems we have identified. Rather, we want to set in motion a process that we hope grows into a plan....** This process will facilitate a broad discussion that will help all of us better understand each other."*

We are before you today to reiterate the same hope of ***working together on a collectively created plan*** as we proposed to you a year ago. And, I trust that you can see that what we set forth in our August 26<sup>th</sup> proposal is yet another effort to open up a real, grassroots democratic process.

Now, there was essentially no discussion of our August 26 proposal in the several subsequent meetings with city leadership; it was ignored and pushed to the side. Instead, there was questioning of our decision to refine the work we were already doing and to name it an ***"Interim Citizens' Police Review Committee."*** *There was a discussion of the non-workability of our interim process. In fact, we were asked not to go forward with the Interim Citizens' Police Review Committee and instead to join the "Enhancement Committee's"* work. We

readily agreed to participate in the Enhancement process but we felt it very important that we go forward with our interim process. We were concerned that without going forward with the Interim Citizens' Police Review Committee that we would be denying the limited help we could offer to the victims of the abuse of police power, which unfortunately continues.

I want to emphasize that the Interim Citizens' Police Review Committee **is not adequate to address the problems of police misconduct on its own.** It was not meant to be a long term solution. We felt then and we continue to feel that pending an adequate oversight mechanism, the Interim process can serve a much needed function. The Interim Committee, as an independent component of the overall effort of the Police Accountability, Community Safety and Healing Initiative, will help those who feel they are victims of police misconduct to frame their case instead of having it framed by the Professional Standards Division of the Greensboro Police Department. Further, we will offer whatever support we can to help reach a proper and just resolution of citizen complaints.

Additionally, the Interim Citizens' Police Review Committee will begin to more systematically record cases it reviews and their disposition. We intend to reach out to groups such as the Charlotte School of Law Civil Rights Clinic, which has already contacted us, as well as others, to help with this undertaking.

Currently, the Interim Citizens' Police Review Committee is carefully working out its own internal processes and procedures. It will soon begin to receive cases. As we said in our August 26<sup>th</sup> proposal, we will inform and coordinate with the CRC or whatever mechanism the City has in place in ways we deem helpful and in accordance with the policies and procedures now being developed by the Interim Committee.

## **Part II**

Up to this point we have talked mainly about the work of the *Police Accountability, Community Safety and Healing Initiative*, including our efforts to work with the City. We would now like to offer a critique of the Complaint Review Committee (CRC). In our eighth assumption set forth earlier we stated:

*That a healthy, meaningful, workable and trusted police oversight mechanism grows best out of a democratic process where all sectors of the city's diverse population are involved in a meaningful way and all views and voices are heard:*

As we see it, the CRC, far from growing from a democratic process, seems to be an in-house product with a dominant police culture presence at the very heart of its operation. We want to stress that the critique that follows has nothing to do with particular individuals, their strength or weaknesses, but it is primarily about the structure itself.

The Human Relations Commission is made up of 15 members, all appointed by the City Council. The Executive Director is appointed by the City Manager and under his or her supervision and control. The

Director of the Human Relations Commission (or his/her designee) serves as the Executive Secretary of the CRC. We believe this is getting started wrong. It is getting started with a kind of ***“in house, private club structure.”***

Contrast this beginning with the process that we described for the establishment of a Super Committee. The Super Committee grows out of a collective process with broad City and Citizen Participation. Read back over that section and get a sense of how we deliberately and intentionally ground our proposed process more and more within the broad citizenry.

I have heard elected officials say, “We were elected by the people to do what we are doing.” In my humble view opinion, it is the duty of elected officials to seek creative ways to expand democracy and not shrink democracy. People elected to public office are often drawn into the culture of “narrowing power and shrinking democracy.” Our state legislature took this road in 2013, holding secret meetings, limiting early voting, requiring picture IDs, all of which are deliberately calculated to shrink democracy. When of this nature are taken, people have a responsibility and a duty to oppose such actions, including their elected officials, because there is a direct correlation between democracy and dignity.

Building on what appears as a fairly non-democratic in-house process, the CRC is made up of seven members; five of them must be members of the Commission on Human Relations CHR, i.e. five of the fifteen Human Relations Commission members, all of whom were appointed by the City Council. The Human Relations Commission chairperson **picks all seven of the members of the Complaint Review Committee**, five of whom must be Human Relations Commissioners.

That leaves two more Complaint Review Committee members to be chosen. A power point from the first CRC Enhancement Committee meeting states that the composition of the Complaint Review Committee includes a Professional Standards representative. The Professional Standards Division is the internal investigative arm of the police that investigates complaints against the police.

So, if a person appeals the finding of a complaint by the Professional Standards Division, the appeal is heard by the Complaint Review Committee. This means that a Professional Standards representative, who is a party to the dispute between the GPD and the citizen complaining, is also a participant in hearing the appeal of the person whom he has already ruled against. In this capacity the Professional Standards representative would have to overturn himself. I have heard it said that the GPD can explain or justify anything. As absurd as this circular arrangement is, it seems to be justified somehow in the minds of the Greensboro Police Department, and too often City Council members bow to that absurdity.

I hope you can follow this process. Let’s say that you bring a complaint against the Police. Assume that Nelson Johnson is part of the Professional Standards Division. Nelson Johnson hears your complaint and rules against you. You appeal to the Complaint Review Committee. But when you get to the Complaint Review Committee, Nelson Johnson – the person who has already ruled against you – will be in the room hearing your appeal!

Now, I do not know if the Professional Standards Division person who also sits on the Complaint Review Committee votes or not. Let's say for the sake of argument that he does not get to vote. There is still both the appearance and the actual existence of prejudice by just permitting a Police Professional Standards Division person to be present for the full deliberation of the Complaint Review Committee. Further, the Professional Standards Division Police officer that participates in the initial investigation and issues a determination letter against the complainant is in the position to advocate and push for upholding the initial determination, of which he is a party.

The very presence of a Professional Standards Division representative will carry great weight with the CRC members and make it even more difficult for CRC members who might be disposed to be critical of police action to find that police officers complained against are wrong. Is it any wonder that victims of police abuse of power instinctively sense that this process is not likely to rule in their favor with such obvious, heavy police influence? What we have here is a circle of police influence initiating and framing the complaint and another circle of police influence that hears any appeal.

Let us move on to the training of the Complaint Review Committee members. The rules of the CRC procedures states that "training" of the CRC will be an orientation and training by staff members of the City attorney's office, the Human Relations Department, and the Police Department involving cultural competencies, police standard operating procedures, and legal and statutory considerations. The legal council's role is to "provide advice and interpretation of applicable laws, regulations, city policies, directives and standard operating procedures of the police department and these rules as necessary for the CRC to discharge its duties."

So here are the police and the city attorney guiding the training of the Complaint Review Committee. Who will train the CRC on the details of the rights of the citizen? Who will sensitize the CRC to the history of police abuse of power? Will eight or ten citizens who have had a bad experience with the police be allowed to come in and share some of the techniques police use in abuse cases? Will Nelson Johnson and a committed Civil Rights lawyer be allowed to explain the Bill of Rights and offer a different point of view from the police culture? I raise these as rhetorical questions to help draw out the structural biases built into this process. The "training and orientation" described above is quite one sided as it does not equip the CRC members with a "Civil Rights" perspective, not to speak of the perspective of those who have experienced abuse of police power, so as to have a balanced view. This training format seems to fold even deeper into the structural/cultural police influence we have been pointing out.

I believe the City Attorney or his designee will serve as legal counsel to the CRC. The legal counsel's role is to "to provide advice and interpretation of applicable laws, regulations, city policies directives and standard operating procedures of the Police Department and these rules as necessary for the CRC to discharge its duties. Clearly the interpretation of policies and law in relationship to a complaint filed goes right to the heart of the conflict between the police and the citizen. **The City Attorneys and the Police Attorneys have clients. Their clients are not complainants against the police. In fact, their clients are the City of**

**Greensboro and the Greensboro Police Department. The City and Police attorneys have an ethical duty to “interpret” the law in the light most favorable to their clients, the city and the police. If they fail to do so, they will have violated their ethical duty to represent their clients.**

We must therefore assume that the city and police attorneys will always interpret the law and policy in a way to support their clients and avoid any “liability”. They are likely to use their standing, respect and legal power to influence the CRC and the CHR, making it difficult for them to speak critically of the police, much less make a determination that the police did something wrong.

What I have pointed out here are major structural flaws. The fact that the police culture would generate a proposal like this after so much discussion about the need for citizen oversight of the police in the last couple of years is astonishing and somewhat frightening. These structural flaws operating over a period of time establishes an ingrained “police protection culture.” Greensboro is not unique in this regard; it is done by cities all over the country. ***Greensboro might be unique if it chooses to break this mode of operation and create a fresher, more healthy and effective approach to policing.*** The way the whole process is set up now invites the undue influence of the police culture at every turn. Further, it is not democratic as it resembles more of an in-house private club. Certainly Greensboro can do better than that.

Let me make several other relevant points. There is a need for any form of police oversight mechanism to have as a fundamental part of their orientation adequate training and consulting resources in the “civil rights” perspective. It would be wrong to think of the civil rights perspective as some fringe or special interest, or militant group perspective. **The civil rights perspective goes to the very heart of the Bill of Rights and the grounding premise of a self-governing constitutional democracy.**

The powers of the government, especially police powers, are extraordinary. People need to be assured that this necessary power will not be abused. The point is that, unless the government has reasonable or probable cause, a person is to be left alone. I have had members of my own staff searched with no reasonable or probable cause, unless being black and helping other people represent probable cause. The Civil Rights perspective is meant to protect against police abuse of power. Can there be any question as to whether there is a long history of police abuse of power in our nation? Does not Greensboro have it own history of abuse of police power, including racial discrimination related to who is profiled, who is watched, who is stopped, and who is searched? Is there not a record of the excessive show of force, use of excessive force that belittles and devalues the very dignity of personhood?

There are several cases in the last year where false and unfounded charges were brought against residents. Once these charges are made and public efforts are undertaken to secure a modicum of justice, the process of “making deals” ensues. People are told if you sign a statement acknowledging that you did something you did not do, you will get a reduced charge or do community service or possibly get the charges dropped all together. Such deals usually include a “gag” order. So many young people get caught in this trap and just plead out. I am raising these things because they are not isolated; they are not rare occurrences; they happen more often than most citizens realize.

Officers will destroy and/or withhold information that is harmful to them or their case, as in the case of LaMonte Armstrong who was released in 2012 after spending 17 years in prison because of a flawed GPD investigation, that, among other things, withheld documents and recordings that likely would have prevented Mr. Armstrong from spending 17 years in prison. He was finally released after the Duke University School of Law Wrongful Conviction Clinic proved his innocence (see page 9 of *Our Democratic Mission*).

People often say if you feel wronged you should go to court. Legal remedies for people victimized by the police are out of reach for most people, especially the poor. Lawsuits take a lot of time and money. Experienced and courageous civil rights lawyers are hard to find. So the legal remedy is not readily available and is often not effective for most people.

On a personal note I spent over five years of my life (1979-85) raising money for a law suit, refuting a massive campaign of distortions, slander, and lies against me, anchored in the culture of the Greensboro Police Department. (Incidentally, misinformation regarding that tragic situation is why many people will still find it difficult to give what I have set forth in this paper a fair reading.) We had to raise well over a million dollars to put together a team of 10 lawyers and investigators to win a liability verdict in which the Klan, Nazis and Greensboro Police were found jointly liable for one wrongful death in 1985 by a Federal Court. After all that legal work the police took essentially no corrective actions. To my knowledge, no one was fired, no one was suspended, no one was reprimanded, and to this day the police have never acknowledged any wrongdoing. In fact, they maintain that they did nothing wrong. They were able to do this because there was no structurally viable accountability mechanism in place.

Police often make false claims (lie) while providing depositions about their own actions and the actions of colleagues. The culture to which I refer often involves a code of silence that does not report the violation of other officers. The case of Former Police Officer A. J. Blake is one of the clearest cases that I know about (see page 17 of *Our Democratic Mission*). Also, we saw the pattern of officers making false and slanderous charges that other officers refused to contradict in the case of the Bennett College Students Incident in April of 2013. One of the four graduating Bennett College students who were criminally charged said that she was simply not going to begin her post college life by lying on herself to protect the police. She was asked to sign a statement admitting that she was guilty of the charge of slapping a police officer after officers over reacted to a noise complaint and physically abused several young black women. She refused to sign the statement. Instead, she took her chances going to court. Her mother, father, and grandfather traveled from New York to stand with her. Further, she had a legal team, the organizing support of the Beloved Community Center, a former Bennett College President, nine witnesses, virtually the whole college campus, and the support of people attending the Greensboro Moral Monday, which was held the day before the trial. She won the case! But what poor person can routinely garner this kind of support? This is not the rule; it is a rare exception to the rule. It took all of that to overcome the lies told against her by a police officer.

In the June 13, 2013 edition of the *News and Record* Chief Miller is quoted as saying that he found no violation of the law related to the Bennett incident. Most people will probably read that as nothing was done

wrong. That would be a major mistake. That same article stated that one officer was fired for “lack of truthfulness;” another officer was suspended for one day for “not reporting the use of force” and reprimanded for “using inappropriate language;” a third officer was “given counseling for his judgment” during the incident. Let me point out that the language used by the students in their official complaint against the police, they used terminology that said essentially that the officers lied on me, they cursed and disrespected me, they over reacted by yelling and screaming and creating panic in the whole situation. That is the way the students tended to tell the story.

Now here is the deeply troubling aspect of that June 13<sup>th</sup> newspaper article. The article says “The three officers who faced disciplinary action were disciplined mostly for things the department review board discovered during the investigation, NOT FOR WHAT THE STUDENTS ALLEGED THEY DID WRONG, MILLER SAID [emphasis added].” What a statement! The students, the victims of lying, cursing and yelling and making wrong decisions (bad judgment) were all deemed to have said nothing valid. Does this not reflect an outlook, a state of mind even when the spotlight is on the chief spokesman for the Department? This is a little of what we mean by an ingrained culture that grows over a period of time from the habit of concentrated power and the habit of getting one’s way because of the history of inadequate oversight. What I have drawn out here is more of a public relations process and we must never allow public relations to replace substance, in matters involving a possible prison record that will follow one for a lifetime and in some cases matters of life and death.

My deepest conviction related to the Bennett situation is that without the “objective” oversight provided by citizens of the city including Bennett College students, Bennett Alumni, the organizing of the Beloved Community Center and others, it is not likely that the young lady would have won her court case, nor would the limited disciplinary action of the police department have occurred.

All of the parties above acted properly as citizens. None of this was under the influence of the police culture and we, therefore, made just a little progress. The participatory role of citizens ought not to be viewed as a bother or a problem but as an absolute necessity to insure adequate accountability and just treatment of the residents and citizens of our city.

I want to end my comments by asking the CRC Enhancement Committee and the City Council to sincerely join together with us, using the one page document attached as an initial framework around which to develop a plan to move our city towards a new and more constructive direction. Thank you very much.

## ***Post Script:***

There has been a lot of discussion about the positive role that police body cameras can play. In the case of the recent shooting death of Chieu-di Thi Vo, a 47 year old woman, the officer who shot her was wearing a body camera, and it was on. News reports say that Ms. Chieu was approaching the police officer with a knife and when she did not drop the knife when ordered to do so, the officer shot her. We wonder if this could have or should have been handled differently. We make no claim at this point as to the appropriateness or inappropriateness of the officer's actions. It seems to me, however, that this is exactly the kind of incident that the public would benefit from seeing via the police body cameras. While it has been reported that the footage is being used in the official investigation, there is both a need and a right for the public to know. Please consider this as a formal request to make that video related to Ms. Chieu's death available to the public.

# The Police Professionalism and Accountability Coordinating Committee

August 26, 2013

## **A Proposal to Grow a Respected Citizen's Police Review Board**

*"Power Corrupts. Absolute Power Corrupts Absolutely"*

Within the Greensboro Police Department there has been too much power concentrated in too few hands, with too little independent oversight, for far too long. This situation has impacted poor communities and communities of color in disproportionate ways. It should not come as a surprise that those parts of the community most negatively impacted by this weakness in public accountability have raised their voices the loudest.

Greensboro should not go on year after year with lawsuits accumulating, with embittering and embarrassing incidents, reflected in the Bennett College episode, and with hundreds of cases of police misconduct not being reported to the city's current process because of the lack of trust by citizens. We believe the time is ripe for Greensboro to make bold changes in this area that will move our city forward and perhaps model for others an effective approach to quality solutions. To that end, we put forward an initial set of ideas that we hope can be developed into a preliminary plan/proposal.

1. The Beloved Community Center, other groups, and individual citizens have been meeting and carrying out work as an ad hoc *Police Professionalism and Accountability Committee*. We have essentially been undertaking some of the functions of a citizen's police review board. We intend to refine our process and to declare ourselves as an ***Interim Citizen's Police Review Committee***. In our capacity as citizens:
  - We would continue doing the work we have been doing, i.e. receiving complaints and providing guidance that we deem proper, necessary, and legal.
  - Further, we would inform and coordinate with whatever mechanism the City/Human Relations Commission has in ways we deem helpful to the persons with whom we are working.
  - Moreover, as an Interim Citizen's Police Review Committee, we would continue to function until we democratically grow a permanent Citizen's Police Review Board.
2. We propose that a process be undertaken as soon as possible to bring together committed, quality representatives from the university/college sector, the religious/faith sector, the neighborhood/community sector and the City/Police/Human Relations sector. This group would work together to explore past practices in Greensboro (what worked/what did not) and best practices from around the nation to develop an initial draft of what apparatus might best serve us in Greensboro.
3. After a period of work, this representative group could develop a creative process to grow the knowledge and ethical base necessary for a review board to function well. That process might include holding several open meetings in each district to receive, share, and discuss information and ideas.
4. At some point there might be a town hall meeting to bring together the five districts to build understanding, grow knowledge, and forge trust.
5. Each district then might be equipped to select or elect a couple of representatives to sit on a citywide Citizen's Police Review Board.

*This is an initial draft of Ideas for discussion only.*