



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Mayor O'Leary Announces Series of Town Hall Forums to Listen to Residents**

Since the tragic killing of George Floyd our city, state, and nation have been forcefully reminded of the inequities that exist within our minority communities. Groups of inspired individuals, many of them young people, have expressed their pain, anger, and concerns by protesting, convening prayer services, and engaging in conversation with leaders in government about the changes they would like to see occur.

Forthright conversation regarding systemic racism, implicit bias, and the role of police in our community must take place with our city's most valuable asset, our residents. Prior to the protests that took place in Waterbury on Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>, a Zoom forum was scheduled for June 1<sup>st</sup>, and was subsequently attended by scores of community stakeholders, faith leaders, and elected officials from every level of government. Since this forum was convened, the city has received feedback, and we acknowledge the feelings of disappointment held by the broader community who did not have an opportunity to speak and express themselves.

The City of Waterbury and Mayor Neil M. O'Leary are committed to using the tragic killing of George Floyd as an opportunity to amplify the ongoing dialogue about racial justice that has fallen on deaf ears for centuries. In order for lasting change to take place, the City of Waterbury will be establishing a Diversity Council, but first we must hear the honest and candid feedback of our residents.

In an effort to ensure strong, two-way communication between residents and city government, Mayor O'Leary will be holding the first of a series of subject-based Town Hall forums next Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup>. The purpose of this town hall, and those that follow, will be to listen to our residents.

### **Town Hall Schedule**

1. **What:** Town Hall with Mayor O'Leary  
**When:** Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup>; 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM  
**Subject:** The Role of Local Government in Combating Systemic Racism and Implicit Bias
2. **What:** Town Hall with Waterbury Police Chief Fernando Spagnolo  
**When:** Tuesday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>; 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM  
**Subject:** Race and the Role of Policing in Waterbury

3. **What:** Town Hall with Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Verna Ruffin  
**When:** Tuesday, June 30<sup>th</sup>; 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM  
**Subject:** The Critical Importance of Diversity and Social Justice in Waterbury Public Schools
  
4. **What:** Town Hall with States Attorney Maureen Platt, Judicial District of Waterbury  
**When:** Tuesday, July 7<sup>th</sup>; 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM  
**Subject:** Race and the Role of the Judicial System

In an effort to adhere to social distancing guidelines, and to ensure that residents have the ability to safely listen and participate in the Mayor's Town Hall, and those to follow, a number of measures have been put in place:

1. The Town Hall series will be broadcast live from WATR 1320-AM Radio.
  
2. Individuals interested in calling in to share their thoughts and comments on live radio are invited to call (203) 757-1320. There will be a time limit of 3 minutes per speaker.
  - a. Beginning at 12:00 PM, residents are invited to call into WATR to share their thoughts and comments.
  - b. Depending on call-in volume, residents calling in may be put on hold before going live.

We hope that you will be able to call-in and attend the scheduled Town Hall forums. If individuals have additional comments or questions, please contact Mayor O'Leary's Chief of Staff, Mack Demac, at [mdemac@waterburyct.org](mailto:mdemac@waterburyct.org) or (203) 574-6712.