

Town of Orangetown

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April 26, 2018

RE: Nyack Village Board Statement on the April 7th Protest in Memorial Park

We read with disappointment the statement posted by the Nyack Village Board as regards the Orangetown Police Department's handling of the "Black Women's March" and subsequent rally on April 7th.

This group planned to march across the Tappan Zee Bridge from Tarrytown to Nyack without permits, and was expected to, based on all available evidence from social media and public statements, draw as many as 1,000 protestors.

As a result of this potential substantial disruption and risk to the safety of both protestors and residents, the Orangetown Police Department, which is responsible for policing within the Village of Nyack, developed a detailed plan for crowd control and area safety, to include resources from the Clarkstown Police Department, Rockland County Sheriff's Office, and New York State Police.

This plan was briefed in advance to both the Nyack Mayor and Orangetown Supervisor. Nyack itself instituted other controls, to include preventing vehicular access to Nyack Memorial Park, where the march was expected to conclude with a rally, in order to protect pedestrians participating in it.

As it turned out, on the day of the event the New York State Police barred the march from proceeding on foot across the bridge, and after crossing by other means the crowd at the park was substantially smaller than expected, approximately 50-100 people.

At this point, police preparations had gone on for hours on site and days beforehand. Substantial resources were already deployed based on all available intelligence and the statements of the very people organizing the march as to possible attendance. These resources were deployed primarily to protect those protestors, and there was not a single conflict between the protestors and the Orangetown Police Department, nor was there a single arrest.

The results of that day – no conflicts, no injuries, no arrests, and a peaceful exercise of free speech – should have been lauded by the Nyack Village Board, and that was the original sense our police department got from village officials.

Instead, facing pressure from political radicals, the Village Board has attempted to pander to those who somehow want to claim that there was a police overreaction or, more absurdly, a "police state."

The Village Board is well aware of the monetary and operational expense that went into the preparation for this unpermitted protest, and is well aware that the main purpose of the police presence was to keep those protestors safe. It is further aware of the incredible risk to the safety of officers, protestors, and residents that would have been associated with "pulling back" or withdrawing visible police resources while the event was going on. And finally, the Village Board is completely aware that the costs of the

day, in overtime and otherwise, would not have been reduced by any significant amount had the police presence been withdrawn once they were already deployed.

So, therefore, the Village Board then joining the chorus of extremists in criticizing the Orangetown Police Department for their level of response is both the height of hypocrisy and political opportunism, and a slap in the face to our police administration and officers on scene.

We as a Town Board, therefore, offer our strenuous rebuttal of the allegations in that letter and insist that the Village Board issue an immediate apology to our officers and department for the unreasonable and dishonest attacks contained within it.

Further, we believe that given this obvious inability to trust in, and stand behind, operational preparation between our police department and the Village, it is time to revisit the policing agreement between Orangetown and the Village of Nyack. At this point, the Village of Nyack makes use of a disproportionate share of our policing resources, and if the Village Board is expecting these excess resources to be continued while insulting and undermining those who provide them, it is sorely mistaken.

We look forward to the Village Board's immediate response.

Sincerely,

Chris Day, Supervisor

Gerald Bottari, Councilman

Tom Diviny, Councilman

Denis Troy, Councilman

Paul Valentine, Councilman