

TIMELINE OF POLICE MISCONDUCT & COMMUNITY RESPONSE

EARLY 1900S-2005

SPRINGFIELD, MA HAD A CIVILIAN POLICE COMMISSION WITH OVERSIGHT IN MATTERS OF HIRING, PROMOTION AND DISCIPLINE.

2005

CIVILIAN POLICE COMMISSION DISMANTLED BY THE THEN STATE APPOINTED FINANCE CONTROL BOARD IN FAVOR OF A SINGLE POLICE COMMISSIONER SYSTEM. A COMMUNITY POLICE HEARING BOARD, MADE UP OF CITIZEN ADVISORS) WAS ESTABLISHED BY THE MAYOR TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ABOUT OFFICER DISCIPLINE, WITHOUT ACTUAL POWER TO DISCIPLINE, WHICH RESTED SOLELY WITH THE POLICE COMMISSIONER.

**THE POLICE ALONE HAVE BEEN
POLICING THE POLICE IN
SPRINGFIELD SINCE 2005.**

2016

SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL VOTED TO RESTORE THE POLICE COMMISSION BY PASSING AN ORDINANCE. MAYOR DOMENIC SARNO VETOED THE ORDINANCE. THE CITY COUNCIL OVERRODE THE VETO.

2018

THE CITY COUNCIL PASSED AN ORDINANCE AGAIN. MAYOR SARNO REFUSED TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO THE COMMISSION.

2018

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE OPENED AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE SPRINGFIELD P.D. NARCOTICS DIVISION RELATED TO ACCUSATIONS OF ROUTINE EXCESSIVE USE OF FORCE AND THE USE OF VIOLENT TACTICS AGAINST RESIDENTS.

2020

THE SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL SECURED PRO BONO LEGAL REPRESENTATION AND FILED A LAWSUIT AGAINST MAYOR SARNO FOR FAILING TO ESTABLISH THE POLICE COMMISSION ORDERED BY THE CITY COUNCIL ORDINANCES IN 2016 AND 2018. MAYOR SARNO GOT HIS OWN LAWYER, FINANCED BY TAXPAYER MONEY, AND THE LAWSUIT WENT ALL THE WAY TO THE MASSACHUSETTS SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT.

SPRING 2020

THE SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT REINSTATED FIVE CRIMINALLY INDICTED OFFICERS WHO WERE ACCUSED OF VIOLENTLY ASSAULTING THREE BLACK MEN WHILE OFF DUTY AT NATHAN BILL'S RESTAURANT.

JUNE 6, 2020

PVP CO-ORGANIZED A DIGITAL TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY, JUNE 4TH WITH THE NAACP, INVITING MAYOR SARNO AND COMMISSIONER CLAPPROOD TO ATTEND, BUT THEY REFUSED. PVP THEN WENT FORWARD WITH A PUBLIC ACTION AT NATHAN BILL'S, THE SITE OF AN ASSAULT OF FOUR AFRICAN AMERICAN MEN, CALLING FOR POLICE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE RE-SUSPENSION OF THE CRIMINALLY-INDICTED OFFICERS. DOZENS OF NATIONAL GUARD VEHICLES RALLIED IN A PARKING LOT DOWN THE STREET FROM THE SITE OF THE ACTION ALONG WITH A SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT BUS. ALL OF THE BUSINESSES IN THE PLAZA WHERE THE ACTION TOOK PLACE BOARDED UP THE DAY BEFORE AND A CAMERA WAS INSTALLED ON THE ROOF OF ONE OF THE BUSINESSES.

JUNE 12, 2020

PVP YOUTH VOICES UNITED HELD PUBLIC ACTION CALLING FOR THE REMOVAL OF SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS (SROS) FROM SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS, STARTING AT COMMERCE HIGH SCHOOL, THE SITE OF AN ASSAULT ON A STUDENT BY AN SPD OFFICER, WHO SUBSEQUENTLY LIED ON THE POLICE REPORT.

JUNE 16, 2020

MAYOR SARNO APOLOGIZES, AGAIN SUSPENDS POLICE OFFICERS CHARGED WITH PERJURY.

JUNE 26, 2020

PVP YOUTH VOICES UNITED HELD A DIGITAL TOWN HALL ON SROS IN SCHOOLS AS A FOLLOW-UP TO THE PUBLIC ACTION WITH MAYOR SARNO AND SUPERINTENDENT WARWICK IN ATTENDANCE. YOUTH LEADERS MADE THE DEMAND TO REMOVE SROS AND SARNO AND WARWICK REFUSED.

JULY 2020

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE RELEASED ITS INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS DETAILING THAT THE SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT NARCOTICS DIVISION HAS A PROVEN PATTERN AND PRACTICE OF USE OF EXCESSIVE FORCE AND VIOLATION OF RESIDENTS' 4TH AMENDMENT RIGHTS.

OCTOBER 29, 2020

PVP/NAACP CALLED FOR THE COMMISSIONER CLAPPROOD'S REMOVAL FOLLOWING THE RELEASE OF THE DOJ'S INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS IN JULY 2020. THE COMMISSIONER AND MAYOR MADE REPEATED PUBLIC STATEMENTS CLAIMING REFORMS RELATIVE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS WERE IN PROCESS OR ALREADY COMPLETED, WITHOUT OFFERING ANY SPECIFICS AND WITHOUT RESPONDING TO REPEATED REQUESTS TO MEET WITH RESIDENTS AT DIGITAL TOWN HALLS PVP ORGANIZED.

NOVEMBER 9, 2020

ON THE STEPS OF CITY HALL, PVP LEADERS HELD A PUBLIC READING OF THE COMPLETE 28-PAGE DOJ REPORT, RELEASED IN JULY 2020, TO REMIND THE PUBLIC OF BOTH ITS EXISTENCE AND THE SPECIFIC REFORM RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE DOJ, TO COUNTER THE ONGOING CLAIMS MADE BY MAYOR SARNO AND COMMISSIONER CLAPPROOD THAT REFORMS WERE ALREADY BEING IMPLEMENTED BY SPD.

NOVEMBER 16, 2020

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUEST FILED BY PVP TO SEE REFORMS THE POLICE DEPARTMENT CLAIMED THEY WERE MAKING.

NOVEMBER 21, 2020

JOINED BY ABOUT 50 CARS, THIS ACTION WENT TO MAYOR SARNO'S HOUSE IN SPRINGFIELD AND COMMISSIONER CLAPPROOD'S HOUSE IN WILBRAHAM. BRIEF STOPS AT EACH LOCATION INCLUDED HONKING HORNS AND LEADERS' AMPLIFIED VOICES SPEAKING TO THE ISSUE OF A LACK OF TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO RESIDENTS REGARDING VAGUE CLAIMS OF REFORMS IN RESPONSE TO THE JULY DOJ REPORT.

DECEMBER 6, 2020

SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT ISSUED NOTES WITH IMPLEMENTATION DATES FOLLOWING FOIA REQUEST DATES. THE REFORMS NOTED WEREN'T CONNECTED TO THE ACTUAL CONCERNS.

JANUARY 28, 2021

THIS ACTION WAS THE FIRST PUBLIC CALL FOR A CONSENT DECREE BY PVP AND THE NAACP AS A WAY TO INFORM THE PUBLIC REGARDING WHAT WE KNEW TO BE THE NECESSARY LEVEL OF ACCOUNTABILITY THAT MAYOR SARNO AND COMMISSIONER CLAPPROOD NEEDED IN ORDER TO BE FORCED TO REFORM THE SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT VIS A VIS THE FINDINGS OF THE DOJ REPORT. PVP ALSO SIMULTANEOUSLY HELD MEETINGS WITH CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS ASKING THAT THEY JOIN PUBLICLY IN THE CALL FOR A CONSENT DECREE.

FEBRUARY 2, 2021

CITY COUNCILORS CALL FOR CONSENT DECREE (PROMPTED TO DO THIS BY PVP/NAACP CALL FOR CD)

FEBRUARY 25, 2021

PVP/NAACP MET WITH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE. DOJ STAFF ASKED PVP/NAACP LEADERS TO COME UP WITH A LIST OF REFORMS.

MARCH 18, 2021

PVP/NAACP HOLD SECOND MEETING WITH DOJ FOCUSED ON THEIR LIST OF PROPOSED REFORMS WHICH THEIR LEADERSHIP TEAM PUT TOGETHER BY DOJ REQUEST.

JUNE 11, 2021

PVP/NAACP HOLD THIRD MEETING WITH DOJ AND ARE JOINED BY THE MASSACHUSETTS SENIOR ACTION COUNCIL. MSAC JOINED THE PARTNERSHIP AFTER THEIR INDEPENDENT MEETING WITH COMMISSIONER CLAPPROOD IN WHICH SHE WAS OVERTLY RACIST.

JUNE 18, 2021

PVP CALLED ON THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD TO FUND UNARMED CRISIS RESPONSE MODEL AS A MECHANISM TO ADDRESS THE VAST INCREASE IN MENTAL HEALTH-RELATED CALLS AS CITED BY COMMISSIONER CLAPPROOD AND THE SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT'S DEMONSTRATED LACK OF ABILITY TO DE-ESCALATE IN ITS INTERACTIONS WITH RESIDENTS, EVEN IN NON-VIOLENT AND NON-CRIMINAL SITUATIONS.

NOVEMBER 2021

THE CITY COUNCIL WAS ASKED BY THE SPRINGFIELD CITY SOLICITOR TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER OF \$5 MILLION TO THE LAW DEPARTMENT IN ANTICIPATION OF THE COST TO SETTLE SEVERAL UPCOMING POLICE MISCONDUCT CASES.

FEBRUARY 2022

MASSACHUSETTS SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT RULED THAT THE SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL HAD THE AUTHORITY TO RESTORE THE CIVILIAN POLICE COMMISSION (NOW CALLED THE BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS - BOPC) AND THAT MAYOR SARNO WAS REQUIRED TO APPOINT COMMISSIONERS WITH AUTHORITY IN MATTERS OF OFFICER DISCIPLINE. .

MARCH 2022

THE FIVE-MEMBER BOPC IS APPOINTED BY MAYOR SARNO.

FOUR OF THE FIVE COME DIRECTLY FROM THE COMMUNITY POLICE HEARING BOARD ALONG WITH ONE ADDITIONAL MEMBER. THERE WAS NO PUBLIC PROCESS NOR PUBLIC INPUT IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THIS BOARD.

MEMBERS OF THE BOPC ARE ASKED TO SIGN A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING STATING THAT THEY DO NOT HAVE POLICE HIRING AND PROMOTION AUTHORITY, UNLIKE THE COMMISSION PRIOR TO 2005.

APRIL 2022

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, IN A JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE WITH THE MAYOR AND POLICE SUPERINTENDENT, ANNOUNCED THAT THEY HAVE SIGNED A CONSENT DECREE, THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF ACCOUNTABILITY THAT CAN BE FACED BY A LOCAL POLICE DEPARTMENT. CONSENT DECREES ARE PUT IN PLACE WHEN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS NOT CONFIDENT THAT A POLICE DEPARTMENT WILL MAKE REFORMS ON THEIR OWN. A CONSENT DECREE IS A MULTI-YEAR PROCESS, OVERSEEN BY A FEDERAL JUDGE AND MONITORED BY A COMPLIANCE EVALUATION TEAM FOR WHICH TAXPAYERS ARE HAVING TO PAY APPROXIMATELY \$1.6 MILLION OVER FOUR YEARS.

THE BOPC BEGAN MEETING, BUT NO NOTES OF THOSE MEETINGS EXIST FOR THE PUBLIC NOR IS THE PUBLIC ABLE TO ACCESS INFORMATION ABOUT DECISIONS REGARDING OFFICER DISCIPLINE.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS NOW REQUIRING THE SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT TO MAKE REFORMS THAT THEY REFUSED TO MAKE ON THEIR OWN.

APRIL 13, 2022

CONSENT DECREE ANNOUNCED

APRIL 28, 2022

PVP/NAACP/MSAC MET WITH U.S. ATTORNEY RACHAEL ROLLINS REGARDING CONSENT DECREE

NOVEMBER 2022

THE BOPC VOTED TO REINSTATE TWO OFFICERS CONVICTED OF ASSAULT AND BATTERY IN THE NATHAN BILL'S CASE.

IN SPRINGFIELD, POLICE OFFICERS WHO ARE CONVICTED OF ASSAULT AND BATTERY HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO REMAIN ON THE JOB.

NOVEMBER 3, 2022

VIRTUAL TOWN HALL TO FOSTER A SPIRIT OF TRANSPARENCY - PVP HOSTED FIRST COMMUNITY MEETING WITH CONSENT DECREE COMPLIANCE EVALUATION TEAM WITH CONSENT DECREE

FEBRUARY 2, 2023

VIRTUAL TOWN HALL - PVP HOSTED SECOND MEETING WITH COMPLIANCE TEAM AND THE U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE AND DOJ SO THAT COMMUNITY MEMBERS COULD UNDERSTAND WHAT THE CONSENT DECREE INCLUDES AND HOW THEY CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE REFORMS