

The Westerville Partnership hosted “Chaos or Community: Where do we go from here” on Friday, August 28 via Zoom. In that session, community representatives from the City of Westerville, Westerville City Schools, Otterbein University, Westerville Area Chamber of Commerce and Westerville Public Library answered questions from participants about programs and services for diversity and inclusion in Westerville. The full event may be accessed online at <https://westerville.tv/videos/community-relations/mlk2020/>. NOTE: questions from participants were not edited, and appear as they were written and submitted. Answers are in bold text.

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From Kyle Forrester to All panelists: (12:19 PM)

The social unrest and black lives matter protests are focused primarily on unjust police violence. How are you engaging and partnering with Westerville Police as part of the solution?

**This question was addressed. Please see the video HERE:**

<https://westerville.tv/videos/community-relations/mlk2020/>

From Shannon Flanders to All panelists: (12:19 PM)

City manager Dave, you mentioned a relevant ordinance the city council passed in 2019. Can you give a summary of it?

**WESTERVILLE CITY MANAGER DAVID COLLINSWORTH: Ordinance 2019-18 passed by City Council in November 2019 provided protections to members of the LGBTQ community that were lacking under federal and state law. Specifically, the ordinance prohibited discrimination based on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression in the areas of employment, housing, and public accommodations. In addition, Ordinance 2019-19, an Ethnic Non-Intimidation action extends “hate crime” protections on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.**

Dr. Kellogg, what are the specifics of the disparate discipline statistics you mentioned the district is analyzing?

**This question was addressed. Please see the video HERE:**

<https://westerville.tv/videos/community-relations/mlk2020/>

From Shannon Flanders to All panelists: (12:28 PM)

Thank each of our panelists and moderator for holding this community webinar. I have several questions: what is the Chamber of Commerce doing to make sure that all banks in Westerville truly practice treating ALL customers equally, in terms of giving people of color the same loan rates of interest as they give their white clients?

**This question was addressed. Please see the video HERE:**

<https://westerville.tv/videos/community-relations/mlk2020/>

From Shannon Flanders to All panelists: (12:31 PM)

Secondly, what steps are Westerville City Schools taking to reduce the "school to prison pipeline," that too often unfairly punishes students of color? I am a white woman in her 50s, a resident of Westerville for 27 years. Thank you.

**This question was addressed. Please see the video HERE:**

<https://westerville.tv/videos/community-relations/mlk2020/>

From Stephanie to All panelists: (12:31 PM)

Listening to Dave, it is good to have the civil and peaceful nature of the demonstrations acknowledged. I attended the Vigil for Elijah McClain and experienced a drive-by interruption using both car horns to drown out the speakers and firecrackers being thrown out of the cars. While this got no reaction from the gathering, it was disrespectful and the fire crackers seem unsafe. Comments on this on State Street?

**WESTERVILLE CITY MANAGER DAVID COLLINSWORTH:** The firecrackers would have been illegal and if an officer would have witnessed this and had the means to pull the vehicle over, the occupants could have been cited. The honking of horns would not be a violation of any local ordinance. In many cases (although perhaps not in this particular one), the honking of horns is a measure of support and I witnessed this in several instances during marches/demonstrations back in early June in front of City Hall.

From Jordan Valentine to All panelists and attendees: (12:32 PM)

Demographics of Westerville Police traffic stops ought to mirror Westerville demographics, not Franklin county, right?

**WESTERVILLE CITY MANAGER DAVID COLLINSWORTH:** Not necessarily. As you may know, Westerville is a hub of commercial, educational and recreational activity for the entire northeast area of our region. People from throughout the area come here to shop, go to school, obtain healthcare services and work. Because of our road network, we also facilitate a significant amount of thru-traffic as people use our main arterials to get to and from their home, office, etc. In fact, one of the greatest demonstrations of this dynamic is the Westerville City School District, which includes a population base of more than 90,000 people in Westerville, Blendon & Genoa Townships, Minerva Park and parts of Northland in Columbus. The City of Westerville's population is 40,000, but most of those schools are in the City.

So, the Westerville Division of Police must serve all who come into our City - not just those who live here - and that population is more reflective of the region as a whole than it is of our resident population. The City's minority population is in the 7 - 8% range per the 2010 Census. We expect new data shortly from the 2020 Census.

From Colleen Linhart to All panelists: (12:37 PM)

what % of local officers and local teachers and local city administrators are currently black or a minority to show representation?

**WESTERVILLE CITY MANAGER DAVID COLLINSWORTH:** WPD has made a significant effort to recruit officers who best represent the community it serves. The agency has increased diversity through hiring initiatives and expanded minority recruitment through a national testing program. The City of Westerville has also regularly invited minorities in leadership positions in the community to participate on hiring boards and committees. The police hiring process is lengthy and thorough. Candidates must successfully complete a CVSA (voice stress test), physical fitness test, psychological examination and

**background investigation. These recruitment efforts are ongoing and have resulted in the hiring of 13 individuals who identify as persons of color joining the division in the last 10 years.**

Erika

What training was added for the police department officers after officer Shellie Patrick was placed on paid leave for her controversial comments? What came out as the result of the investigation?

**WESTERVILLE CITY MANAGER DAVID COLLINSWORTH: This investigation is nearly complete. Once it is, the Chief will make the determination as to the appropriateness of discipline. Please see this document from the Westerville Division of Police on training protocols: <https://www.westerville.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=35970>**

12:46:22 From Shannon Flanders to All panelists : Richard Rothstein's groundbreaking book, "The Color of Law," is full of examples of the practice of red-lining all over this country. While it may be illegal by law, this discriminatory practice still goes on. What is Westerville doing to make sure red=lining does not happen?

**ANSWER: The City of Westerville would refer fair housing complaints to agencies with the legal authority to investigate fair housing violations and to take action against owners in violation of the Fair Housing Act.**

**United States Department of Housing & Urban Development — Office of Fair Housing & Opportunity: <https://www.hud.gov/fairhousing>**

**Ohio Civil Rights Commission: <http://crc.ohio.gov/FilingCharge/Housing.aspx>**