



Jennifer Paster  
Acting Chief of Police

## BROOKLINE POLICE DEPARTMENT

*Brookline, Massachusetts*

January 27, 2023

### Statement of Acting Chief Jennifer Paster re Tyre Nichols Homicide

I was saddened and disturbed to learn of the events in Memphis, Tennessee from January 7th of this year that eventually led to the death of Mr. Tyre Nichols. Saddened because the loss of a 29-year-old man's life is always tragic, but disturbed to learn that this loss of life came at the hands of police officers who beat him to death. I can't begin to imagine what the friends and family of Tyre Nichols are going through today, as they try to comprehend that law enforcement officers who are charged with keeping their community safe are responsible for their loss. It is devastating, and I extend my condolences to them on behalf of our entire Department.

I stand with fellow local Chiefs and condemn the murder of Tyre Nichols in the strongest possible terms. Principles of justice and fairness are paramount for anyone who works in law enforcement. Wearing a uniform does not give a license to act outside of the law, and the authority vested in a law enforcement officer comes with the extraordinary responsibility to treat all people justly and with respect. The actions of these former officers do not represent what it means to be a police officer in Brookline or anywhere else. They are a disgrace to the profession and tarnish the badge for all of us.

Over the past several years, communities all around the country have grappled with hard questions and engaged in difficult conversations about public safety and trust in our police departments. Like many cities and towns, members of our department have worked WITH our residents to reevaluate the way in which our department protects and serves our community, and we have endeavored to ensure trust in the work that we do. I entered this profession because it is my firm belief that police officers are in a unique position to work with the communities they serve to effect positive change. We bear the privilege and responsibility of protecting people from harm, and to help them when they are not able to help themselves. This work cannot be done in isolation; it only works when law enforcement acts as a partner in a comprehensive public safety mission. A partnership like this requires trust, which is why it is so damaging to all of us when members of law enforcement violate the trust that has been placed in them. Even when those law enforcement officers are 1,300 miles away.

To those who have expressed outrage at what happened to Mr. Nichols, I hear you and I join you in this outrage. There are many in the community who will be exercising their first amendment right to speak out and demonstrate against what happened to Mr. Nichols. We support your right to do this and believe that your voices need to be heard. We ask that any demonstrations be peaceful and that they show respect for the cause and the legacy of Mr. Nichols. Neither violence or vandalism will bring Mr. Nichols back, nor will it provide comfort to his family. Our department remains committed to providing safety and security to all members of our community while also protecting the first amendment right of those who wish to participate in peaceful demonstrations. I believe this is possible, and I believe Brookline can be a model community in this call to action.

With sincere hope for justice, with sympathy for those who loved Mr. Nichols, and with prayers for peace for our community.

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