From:	Hermina Jean Harold
To:	Grp. City Council and City Web Site
Subject:	Today"s Ad Hoc Committee Meeting
Date:	Wednesday, July 1, 2020 2:48:21 PM

Dear Councilmembers,

I'm white, and I didn't want to take up space from any BIPOC that still wanted to speak during today's ad hoc meeting.
I have a direct question, first off: Would this ad hoc committee be willing to draft a report that shows the public how much funding from MPD is not strictly earmarked for policing and would be able to be spent on other forms of public safety support?

As national trends are moving towards a more preventive, holistic approach to public safety to replace a system that has become increasingly militarized, the ad hoc committee could put some resources into finding out how much funding from policing could become available for things like housing, unarmed mental health crisis support, and more effective domestic violence intervention. Police are responding to calls they aren't really trained for, and I know that part of the reason is that mental health funding was cut at the state level. In too many cases, when a person is in danger there seems to be nothing the police can do until that person has actually been harmed. I'm thinking of the horrible event that took place on Mount Sentinel a few months ago, where everyone in the violent offender's life knew he was going to hurt someone and tried to warn everyone including the offender's parole officer and the MPD, and no one responded. Someone ended up in the hospital. How could that have gone differently if we had real safety systems for the public? I have had multiple friends request protection from stalkers and violent offenders and never get the support they need. I called the police a few weeks ago because I watched a woman get taken away by a man in car, screaming for me to call the police. The police had the license plate number but when I called to see if they found the person, they just said no. There are big gaps in public safety and I think we need to look at how we assume the police are there to prevent harm. Police are a danger to BIPOC, and that is a fact. My friends and family members who are black have been profiled and stopped by police for just walking down the street here in Missoula. I think the feedback that was provided by BIPOC today was valuable education for those of us who are white. Let's find the places in the budget that will enable the City to send fewer armed people out into the world, and look at alternative services that can provide harm prevention. I hope this is part of your plan for research.

Thank you,

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