

Theresa Appelboom  
5577 Pinebrook Lane  
Winston-Salem, NC 27105

Dear Council Members,

As of this writing, I do not have the particulars of this special meeting other than that residents are invited to submit questions and comments about the Winston-Salem Police Department budget. While I am not aware of any intention to decrease that budget, current events across the nation raise that concern which prompts me to comment.

I have only lived in Winston-Salem for a little over two years, but expect to be here permanently. In the many places I have lived, I have had need to call on the police for various reasons. Their assistance has always been appreciated.

Several years ago I enjoyed the amazing opportunity to attend a Citizen's Police Academy and volunteer with its local police department. I learned firsthand what goes on inside police stations and patrol cars to keep law abiding citizens safe. I met multiple staff members from administrative office personnel to district command officers to the chief of police. Each one was dedicated to his or her duty in serving the public through their role with the police department.

High levels of training, professionalism, and community interaction/awareness develop "good cops". That, in turn, is made possible by community support from citizens and city officials alike. As in any relationship, it is two-way.

Police departments are public servants, not errant children to be scolded and punished. Many officers carry that role over into their private lives, serving their communities through various ways by volunteering their time and talents to worthy causes. The hearts and attitudes of such police officers represent the majority of police.

If problems are determined within any department, then address them. Don't just penalize them. Provide what is needed to fix the problem. Don't add to the problem by limiting their resources.

Please do not diminish the ability of our frontline defenders against crime who serve and protect our community by either decreasing their budget or, worse, defunding them.

Thank you.