

**From:** [David Kurz](#)  
**To:** [DOJ: Commission on Law Enforcement Accountability](#)  
**Subject:** Durham Police Department's Commitment to the Durham community  
**Date:** Monday, June 22, 2020 3:30:24 PM  
**Attachments:** [2019-Response to Resistance Report.docx](#)  
[Annual Bias Review 2019.doc](#)

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Dear Committee Members:

Each year commencing in the immediate aftermath of the events in Ferguson, MO it was determined that the community needed to hear from its police department with the impetus being that if we did not fill the void created by silence, then someone not so committed to professional policing in Durham would! Consequently I have conveyed annually the following statement to the residents of Durham via "Friday Updates", which is a community newsletter from the Town Administrator.

*With an ongoing national dialog about policing I thought it may be important to reaffirm to the community how the Durham Police Department views our role as part of the Durham community. In Plato's "Republic", Plato viewed a perfect democracy giving the greatest amount of power to those called the Guardians who would protect the democracy and focus upon ethics, integrity and virtue. Sir Robert Peel, who some refer to as the father of modern policing, stated that the "police are the people and the people are the police".*

*In the aftermath of Ferguson and the display of horrendous policing that we saw nightly on the national news, the concept of Warrior versus Guardian delivery of policing services has emerged as the "new topic" for police managers! As we can see, it is not new and the guardian role has been the philosophy of the Durham Police for the past 20-years. We believe that creating strong connections and community engagement will lead to improved public safety and more effective delivery of policing services. As guardians we are committed to function as part of the community, demonstrating compassion and employing consistency in the way we do things. While that does not eliminate mistakes or misunderstandings, we are committed to doing the right thing at the right time and continuously trying to do it better!*

*The Durham Town Code authorizes and bestows the use of police powers upon the Durham Police Department, which is why we work diligently to be as transparent as possible. By providing the community our annual "response to resistance" report which highlights in great detail when force was used by officers and under what circumstances, serves to ensure that the public trust bestowed upon us is warranted.*

*It is my hope that this brief statement, combined with this year's analysis of the Department's "Response to Resistance" has not been too tedious or preachy. But I felt it was important to convey the department's philosophy to the Durham community in light of what we are all seeing on the nightly news reaffirming to you that we understand our role as guardians in our service to Durham.*

When combined with our two annual reports analyzing the power entrusted to the Department by the citizens of Durham, it demonstrates we are worthy of the trust bestowed to us as well as the transparency we have committed to function with.

This is not an unusual trait for New Hampshire police agencies as I believe that we all recognize who employs us and who ultimately we are responsible to!

Good luck with your important work.....

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