City Manager Outlines Action Steps for Department of Public Safety

Actions will include independent review of policies and response to May 30 – June 2 protests

Kalamazoo, Mich., June 12, 2020 – At the June 15 City Commission meeting Kalamazoo City Manager Jim Ritsema will discuss a series of action steps that the City Administration and the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety will begin immediately in response to the events which occurred in Kalamazoo May 30 through June 2. The complete plan is attached.

“We recognize that many in the community had concerns about the events of the last couple of weeks and in order to openly and fairly address these concerns we are taking concrete steps,” said City Manager Jim Ritsema.

Aided by Kalamazoo’s recently appointed Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, the City will hire an independent, outside investigator to review the events surrounding the protests and the City’s actions in response. The Community Public Safety Review & Advisory Board (CPSRAB) will assist in the selection of the investigator. The outside investigator will review if Public Safety’s procedures were followed, if existing procedures are appropriate, and if there are recommendations for changes. The city will also examine other existing KDPS procedures through the viewpoint of equity.

Other steps will include an update to the traffic stop study which was last completed in 2013, a review of the role of CPSRAB, increased equity training for KDPS officers and city staff, and opportunities for community members to share their experiences that they have had with Public Safety. The public will be kept informed throughout this process with the addition of a Public Information Officer, which was approved in the 2020 budget.

“As we move forward together on this important and necessary work with the community, we know this is just the beginning and that there is much more to do,” said City Manager Jim Ritsema. “We will continue to strive for greater diversity, equity and inclusion not only in our Public Safety endeavors, but everything we do to serve the community.”

# # #
THE CITY OF
KALAMAZOO

COMMITMENT TO AN EQUITABLE AND RESPONSIVE PUBLIC SAFETY
DEPARTMENT AND CITY GOVERNMENT

VISION
The City of Kalamazoo and Kalamazoo Public Safety are equitable organizations that
are responsive to community voices

PRESENT – SIX MONTHS:

1. Independent investigations related to protests of May 30 – June 2:
   a. Review of police response to answer the following questions:
      i. Did Public Safety follow procedures?
      ii. Are Public Safety’s procedures appropriate?
      iii. What recommendations could improve future response?
   b. Review of Public Safety policies, through an equity lens, directly related to events
      surrounding and leading up to protests.
   c. Community Public Safety Review and Appeals Board (CPSRAB) will be involved in
      selection of outside investigator.
   d. Addition of a Public Information Officer to improve public communication

2. Updated Traffic Stop Study:
   a. Review actions taken since 2013 Traffic Stop Study
   b. Begin updated Traffic Stop Study

3. Internal review and role of CPSRAB:
   a. Begin analysis of how to strengthen Public Safety internal review process and review
      roles and responsibility of CPSRAB

ONGOING:

1. Increased training for Public Safety and City of Kalamazoo staff, including:
   a. History of racism in the United States
   b. History of racism and protest in Kalamazoo
   c. Implicit biases

2. Strengthen relationships within community:
   a. Create opportunities for community to share their experiences with Public Safety
   b. Community healing conversations
   c. Learn from communities that have strong relationships between law enforcement and
      community