



City of San Marcos

630 E. Hopkins
San Marcos, Texas 78666

NEWS

June 3, 2020

Contact:

Kristy Stark, Director of Communications & IGR, 512.393.8105 kstark@sanmarcostx.gov
Rebecca Beahan, Communications Specialist, 512.393.8243 rbeahan@sanmarcostx.gov

A Message From Mayor Jane Hughson

Like so many of you, I was outraged as I witnessed the horrific killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis. To be a police officer in America is to assume responsibility for the safety of one's community, and to abuse the power of the badge to endanger, and in this case kill, a resident is inexcusable. I'm still shaken, and frankly, I'm angry.

Many of you are participating in various types of peaceful protests here in San Marcos to make your voices heard. To those of you speaking, kneeling, and marching, I am listening, and I hear you. You are demanding justice, reform, and dignity for all American lives, both in Minneapolis and in towns across America. We are in a pivotal moment of our nation's history, and we have an opportunity to begin a real dialogue and foster a better, more secure future for all San Marcos residents. I am grateful that our peaceful demonstrations have been just that, peaceful.

When I learned about the details of this appalling event, my thoughts naturally turned to the fine men and women that serve in the San Marcos Police Department and who choose to put on the uniform in order to protect our residents. These brave officers have my respect and support, and they are part of a system of accountability and transparency to ensure that bad actors are never allowed to fly under the radar.

I spoke with Interim Police Chief Bob Klett to learn more about training and policies dedicated to use of force, and I was very pleased with what I confirmed. First and foremost, the use of a knee to neck during an arrest is never taught nor tolerated. All restraints that our officers are trained to use ensure that a suspect is able to breathe freely. Officers are trained to deescalate a situation and provide a person with any recovery methods they may require, such as water, medical attention, or a mental health officer for support.

Our Police Department has adopted a standard for use of force that is more restrictive than the average department requirements and provides that an officer use only the force that is reasonably necessary to effectively bring an incident under control while protecting the lives of the officer and civilians. Furthermore, the SMPD has a publicly manned Chief's Advisory Board that serves as a liaison between the police and the public (in addition to other outreach efforts), reviews summary information on citizen complaints, and gives feedback on certain policies affecting the community under consideration by the police department.

I know as well as anyone that, despite our best efforts, no system is foolproof, and we must continually review our policies to ensure they continue to serve our community. That is why as Mayor, I am committed to maintaining common sense policies that preserve the right to dignity, freedom, and safety for all San Marcos residents.

I know many of you are hurting, angry, feeling helpless and may be worried about safety. Please rest assured that your concerns are valid, you are being heard, and you are essential to the fabric of this community. I am proud to serve as your mayor. Thank you for continuing to make San Marcos Stronger Together.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jane Hugheson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

###