



THE ATLANTA PRIDE COMMITTEE, INC.
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EMBARGOED UNTIL 06.25.2020 10a

ATLANTA PRIDE COMMITTEE PUBLISHES RESOLUTION AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY AND LETTER TO ATLANTA MAYOR KEISHA LANCE BOTTOMS

Atlanta, Georgia. – The Atlanta Pride Committee (APC) released a resolution today condemning police brutality and authorizing the creation of a complete Strategic Plan for the organization to focus on social and racial justice, human rights and equity.

The resolution, co-written and introduced by Executive Director, Jamie Ferguson and Board Chair, Wil Bryant, was unanimously agreed upon by the entire APC board during their virtual meeting held on Sunday.

Simultaneously, the board approved an open letter to Atlanta Mayor, Keisha Lance Bottoms, calling for reformation and transformation of policing and support of a laundry list of policies contained within the letter. The letter, signed by the entire APC Board and Executive Director, also requested a face-to-face meeting between Mayor Bottoms and Jamie Ferguson, to discuss the letter's content in further detail.

Both the resolution and letter can be found in their entirety below and attached for review.

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About Atlanta Pride: The mission of the Atlanta Pride Committee is to advance unity, visibility, and wellness among persons with widely diverse gender and sexual identities through cultural, social, political, and educational programs and activities.

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June 21st, 2020

The Honorable Keisha Lance Bottoms
Mayor of the City of Atlanta
55 Trinity Avenue SW
Atlanta, GA 30303

Mayor Bottoms:

Over the last several years, it has been a priority for The Atlanta Pride Committee, Inc. to move towards positive change in our relationship with the Atlanta Police Department as we have centered our work around social justice and racial equity. We understand that partnerships take investments, and we are grateful for the changes we have been able to make regarding our Annual Festival and Parade including working with our Coordinator to hand select Officers who are a good fit for our event, demilitarizing Officers on the Festival grounds, creating a welcoming atmosphere to attendees and prioritizing violent crime and safety concerns over minor offenses, being a safe space for undocumented members of the community, minimizing unnecessary contact with attendees, and engaging with attendees in respectful and culturally appropriate interactions.

We value the commitments made to centering LGBTQ+ voices by the creation of the Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board, the LGBTQ Pride Receptions, the continued support for the Atlanta Police Department LGBTQ Liaisons, and non-discrimination ordinances that have been enacted to protect the citizens of the City of Atlanta.

We are grateful for the relationships that we have built and developed with you, the City Council, and various City Officials as well as the Atlanta Police Department. This access and privilege demands that we speak up for change as we fight for social justice.

We view your recent Administrative Orders as another step in the direction towards ending injustice in policing while realizing that true change will require much more. We realize that systemic problems require systemic and sweeping changes. Our advocacy is not against specific individuals, but towards a system that has historically devalued Black lives. Cash bail and the plan to transform the City of Atlanta Jail into a Center for Equity and Justice were led by community voices demanding change — we are adding our voices to demand change to end injustice and to bring equity and opportunity for Black lives.

We are calling for **reformation** and **transformation** and support the following policies to move our communities forward:

Community Building. The City of Atlanta and the Atlanta Police Department have a responsibility to strength our communities, rebuild broken systems, and earn the trust of its citizens through significant community building endeavors. Police Officers should be seen as an asset to citizens, but that will require a greater commitment to serve and build personal relationships within the communities they protect.

Community Investments. We know that citizens of many of Atlanta’s neighborhoods face significant, multi-faceted hardship with limited access to opportunities and that their voices are often unheard. To create lasting change, investments must be made in community programs and centers, health centers, affordable housing, and psychosocial services. Employment and educational opportunities have the greatest capacity to lift people out of poverty and to reduce crime, so it is incumbent upon our leaders to redouble their commitments to these important investments. When we make these investments a priority, community services can be provided by professional who are best equipped for each situation and police services can be reserved for issues related to true public safety.

Training. Officers should have extensive training in de-escalation techniques and must be required to exhaust all opportunities to de-escalate each and every situation using community resources and non-lethal means. Community members should lead the creation of locally relevant and culturally competent training programs to ensure that Officers can serve the unique needs of the communities they serve.

Demilitarization. Police Officers should be guardians — not warriors. Police departments should not possess tools of war or have the appearance of occupying forces.

8 Can’t Wait. The City of Atlanta should immediately enact and implement the remaining changes suggested by the 8 Can’t Wait Campaign.

Citizen Review Boards. The City of Atlanta must empower and revitalize Citizen Review Boards to conduct true oversight and provide guidance to best serve their needs.

Accountability. Officers should be required to wear body cameras in all interactions with the public and face disciplinary actions for noncompliance. Citizens should have access to the disciplinary files and records of Officers who serve. When Officers fail the high standards that communities demand, they must be held accountable and removed if a pattern emerges. The City of Atlanta must institute appropriate early-warning systems to ensure that only the best Officers serve our communities.

Police Unions. We support the rights of people to organize including Police Officers, but there has been a history of unions stifling change demanded by citizens. Police Unions

must work together with communities to affect change and increase transparency by releasing their contracts to the public.

Future Forward. Many street names, memorials, and public properties within Atlanta hold names that conjure painful memories of racial injustice and discrimination to citizens. The City of Atlanta has made strides on creating change, but must continue to rename, remove, and/or provide appropriate context for these painful reminders.

Working Together. Leaders across municipalities, counties, and the State of Georgia must work together to bring about change. This work should target criminal reforms starting with removing the Georgia Citizen's Arrest Statue and banning no-knock raids.

The Atlanta Pride Committee, Inc. is more than a Festival and Parade — we are a social justice organization forged in the queer liberation movement. We have seen hard fought wins and advancements for LGBTQ+ individuals, but we will not rest until every person can truly realize their human and civil rights. We demand equitable treatment and opportunity for all persons. Equal justice under the law must be afforded to each person regardless of who they are, how they identify, or the people they choose to love.

Black lives matter — we say this with conviction and without equivocation. Our organization has recommitted itself to direct advocacy work, voter registration, racial justice, lobbying, and holding our leaders accountable to create an equitable and brighter future. We understand the fight for justice is not a fleeting mission, but a long-term commitment to arduous work. We stand ready for this challenge and will not be deterred by setbacks or when challenges appear.

We look forward to scheduling a meeting with you in the coming days to further this conversation and to move forward the important work that we can do together. We also ask that as you stand up and appoint LGBTQ+ representatives to advisory and community-led boards, along with Black members and other members of underrepresented communities, so that our voices are represented in these groups.

For scheduling, please contact our Executive Director, Jamie Ferguson, at 404/382.7588 or via email at Jamie@AtlantaPride.org.

Wil Bryant
Chair, Board of Directors

Jamie Ferguson
Executive Director

Justin Gavette-Boring
Vice Chair, Board of Director

Trisha Clymore

Treasurer, Board of Directors

Traci Romero

Secretary, Board of Directors

Jane Acuff

Member-At-Large, Board of Directors

Earl Fields

Chair, Governance Committee

Glen Paul Freedman

Chair, Public Policy and Advocacy Committee

Emily Gettelfinger

Member-At-Large, Board of Directors

Sam Lim

Chair, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

Emily Porter

Chair, Strategic Planning and Vision Committee

Elaine Marie Serrano

Chair, Nominating and Review Committee

Daniel Wilkerson

Member-At-Large, Board of Directors



THE ATLANTA PRIDE COMMITTEE, INC.

THE ATLANTA PRIDE COMMITTEE, INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS RESOLUTION

We, being the Directors of The Atlanta Pride Committee, Inc., consent and agree that the following Resolution was made at the Board of Directors Meeting on June 21st, 2020 at 10:30A which was held virtually.

Whereas The Atlanta Pride Committee, Inc. was forged in the fires of the gay liberation movement and realizes that injustice against anyone is injustice against us all.

Whereas the fight for human rights does not end for us at rights for LGBTQ+ individuals.

Whereas we realize that racial and human rights have yet to be fully realized for many communities.

Whereas we actively condemn police brutality.

Whereas The Atlanta Pride Committee, Inc. is more than a Festival and Parade, we are a social justice organization first and foremost.

Whereas advocacy is inherently political.

Whereas true and enduring change occurs through holding our Elected Officials accountable through direct advocacy.

Whereas we have a responsibility to use our social capital and privilege to fight for change for marginalized communities and to end state sanctioned injustice.

NOW, therefore, be it **resolved** that the Board of Directors of The Atlanta Pride Committee, Inc. hereby authorizes:

Filing of the 501(h) election with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

Exploration and consideration for how The Atlanta Pride Committee, Inc. can best support direct lobbying activity including, but not limited to a 501(c)4 organization.

A strategic goal and direction to Staff that focuses programming, our Festival and Parade, events, and community outreach through the lens of social and racial justice, human rights, and equity.

The creation of a Strategic Plan that centers our work for social and racial justice, human rights, and equity.

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THE ATLANTA PRIDE COMMITTEE, INC.

Reprioritization of our funding priorities to appropriately fund advocacy, community development, and to advance social justice and equity within our community.

Capacity building and training programs to support and develop community voices especially Black voices and those from other marginalized communities.

Reviewing all interactions and engagement between The Atlanta Pride Committee, Inc., law-enforcement, and security companies including identifying ways in which diverse populations are affected by that engagement.

Engagement with the City of Atlanta on reviewing law enforcement requirements for permits and to create plans for welcoming and secure events without militarization or over reliance on law enforcement.

Development and Training for Directors, Staff, Members, and Volunteers to promote effective social advocacy and change within our community.

The Officers and Directors of this Organization are authorized to perform the acts to carry out this Resolution.

Wil Bryant, Chair, Board of Directors

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wil Bryant".

Signature of Chair, Board of Directors

Signed on June 21st, 2020.

The Secretary of the Corporation certifies that the above is a true and correct copy of the Resolution that was duly adopted at a meeting of the Board of Directors.

Traci Romero, Secretary, Board of Directors

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Traci Romero".

Signature of Secretary

Signed on June 21st, 2020.