

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP)

Valerie Cofer Butler, President
Rudolph Jefferson, Vice President
Lauren Harrison, Secretary
Diane Bowser, Treasurer



Isle of Wight Branch #7079
Post Office Box 639
Smithfield, VA 23431
757-357-3812

April 16, 2021

The Honorable Mayor Glyn Willis
Williams Saunders, Town Manager of Windsor
The Honorable Greg Willis Vice Mayor, Walter Bernacki, Kelly Blankenship, J. Randy Carr,
George Stubbs and Jake Redd

To the Leadership of the Town of Windsor:

We are writing this letter in light of the recent events that have occurred in the Town of Windsor Virginia. The incident that transpired on December 5, 2020 between Lt. Caron Nazario and Officers Daniel Crocker and Joe Gutierrez; and the timeline of events that followed, have left the citizens of the Town of Windsor, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Nation with more questions than answers.

From the onset, Officer Crocker initiated this stop because of tinted windows and the location of the vehicle's license plate. Upon seeing the flashing lights, Lt. Nazario decreased his speed and slowly pulled over to a well-lit area. Officer Crocker "*immediately*" escalated this situation by radioing to the dispatcher that this was a "high - risk traffic stop" and that the driver was "eluding police"; only to later admit in a written report that Lt. Nazario was traveling at a low rate of speed. Upon exiting his vehicle, Officer Crocker "*continued*" his escalation by drawing his gun during a simple traffic stop, yelling conflicting orders at Lt. Nazario and would later search his vehicle without cause. During this traffic stop, Officer Crocker stood by "*idly*" as the other officer used taunting language towards Lt. Nazario, pepper sprayed him and would later join with the other officer by using unnecessary physical force during the detainment. If this brief summary of facts does not constitute immediate grounds for termination. Then we must ask the Town of Windsor and its officials, what does?

Throughout this process Chief Riddle has been complicit in this entire situation. He stated that on December 8, 2020 an internal investigation of this incident began, with it concluding on January 28, 2021. The investigation conceded that the "Windsor Police Department policy was not followed." and "disciplinary action was taken" but both officers were allowed to remain on their

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jobs. During Chief Riddle’s first public press briefing regarding this incident, on April 14, 2021, Chief Riddle *admitted* the only reason he terminated Officer Gutierrez was due to the video going *viral*. This leads our community to wonder if any disciplinary actions were taken against the officers on January 28, 2021, as originally stated by the Chief of Police.

Instead of taking *full* responsibility for the actions of these officers - as a leader should - Chief Riddle chooses to invoke favoritism by letting the community know of his longtime personal ties with Officer Crocker. He further defends his officers by stating *they used* de-escalation tactics through this stop and that Officers Gutierrez and Crocker “initially reacted *relatively well*” during the traffic stop. He further offended the African American community by stating that “with some additional training” Officer Crocker “would continue to serve this community well”. After these egregious actions by the police officers, the Chief of Police, feels Lt Caron Nazario does not deserve an apology. And instead seems more focused on protecting the brand of the police department than the concerns of our citizens. This gives many in the community the perception that Chief Riddle can no longer effectively lead, protect and serve the entire community.

The Town of Windsor and the Chief of Police have stated that they are “reaching out to community stakeholders to engage in dialogue”. We as the NAACP and other African American community leaders have attempted to reach out to the Town Officials and the Police Department on numerous occasions since the video went viral on April 9, 2021 and we have received *no* response. As leaders of this town, it is your responsibility to be transparent and accountable to citizens who both agree and disagree with you.

Many African Americans and other allies have lost complete confidence in the Town of Windsor and the Police Department due to their handling of this case. For the aforementioned reasons and many others, we are immediately calling for the resignations or terminations of Chief Rodney Riddle and Officer Daniel Crocker.

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The nation is watching as this situation unfolds. And in the coming days we will continue to speak with and listen to the citizens of Windsor and the surrounding area. Based on our initial conversations with the citizens of the Town of Windsor. We are requesting the following from the Town of Windsor:

1. The January 2021 Windsor Police Department's newly implemented department wide training manual
2. A timeline in which you will implement a Citizens Review Board.
3. The hiring of an active duty African American patrol police officer.

Let us be abundantly clear, this Chapter of the NAACP will not stand by "idly" as oppression and injustice occur to Army Lt. Caron Nazario and the Citizens of Windsor.

I am yours truly,


Valerie Cofer Butler
4/16/2021 3:27:07 PM EDT

Valerie Cofer Butler
President, Isle of Wight NAACP


Brandon Randleman
4/16/2021 3:32:16 PM EDT

Brandon Randleman
Advocacy Advisor to the Isle of Wight NAACP

CC: Chief Rodney Riddle

CC: The Honorable Senator L. Louise Lucas, Senate District 18

CC: The Honorable Delegate Emily Brewer, House District 64