

City Commission Sub-Committee

First Amendment Assemblies

November 2, 2020

OVERVIEW

Created by City Commission on August 17, 2020

Includes Vice Mayor Griffin, Commissioner Cunningham, Commissioner Praedel, and city staff

Initial report issued August 28, 2020

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

SAFETY:

- Ensure community is safe during events and can go home safe
- Prevent violent confrontations and escalation
- Use appropriate force and limit the use of chemical agents to only when necessary

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS:

- All people are treated with respect and dignity
- Improve communication before, during, and after events, between KDPS, City Administration, City Commission, event organizers, and the public
- KDPS' presence is there to protect the right to peacefully protest
- There are clear, shared expectations for media, observers and medics during First Amendment Assemblies.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

EQUITABLE APPROACH:

- Policy, protocol, rules are content neutral and applied equitably to everyone.
- Ensure there is an equitable approach to enforcement.

ACCOUNTABILITY:

- Laws are upheld
- Establish measures and practices to ensure clear, objective accountability to policies, protocol.

COMMUNICATION

- Communication before, during and after an event is key
- Stakeholder Contact List
- Easy to access public information on how to plan and hold an assembly, reserve a park, plan for a march, etc.
- Information on basic legal rules for assemblies
- Training for city staff and KDPS on First Amendment assemblies
- Increased communications with media & public
- Implicit bias training for staff

COMMUNICATION

BEFORE AN EVENT:

- City staff and event organizer(s) will work together to identify and plan necessary logistics
 - Expected number of attendees, location, permitting (if required), road closures, etc.
 - Identify possible scenarios necessary to keep everyone safe
- Communicate with City Commission, community stakeholders, media and others prior to an event

COMMUNICATION

DURING AN EVENT:

- City staff will remain in contact with event organizer(s)
- Safety issues will be monitored and addressed
- Communicate with City Commission, community stakeholders, media and others during event as necessary
 - E.g., road closures, detours, etc.

COMMUNICATION

AFTER AN EVENT:

- Debrief with city staff, event organizer(s) after event to review the assembly
- A report of this debriefing will be sent to City Commissioners to ensure transparency and accountability

KEY POINTS

SAFETY:

- Our top priority is providing a safe community for everyone who lives, works and visits Kalamazoo.
- The first amendment guarantees your right to express your opinion through non-violent, peaceful assemblies and demonstrations.
- A safe community means safer neighborhoods and a culture that promotes respect for one another.

KEY POINTS

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION:

- The City of Kalamazoo and KDPS embraces the diversity of our community and we are committed to creating a welcoming, inclusive city where everyone feels at home.
- The City of Kalamazoo and KDPS works hard to ensure all policies regarding First Amendment assemblies are applied and enforced equitably.
- The City of Kalamazoo and KDPS have launched several diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives related to hiring, training and cultural awareness.

KEY POINTS

STRONG COMMUNITY:

- The mission of the City of Kalamazoo and KDPS is to build strong community with vibrant small businesses, accessible parks and recreational opportunities, and a connected community where people can walk, bike, drive or use public transportation.
- We are committed to effective communications, transparency and accountability.
- We are committed to listening to the residents and leaders in our community to help us make decisions, garner feedback and constantly improve.