

City Council Regular Meeting Transcript – 07/23/2020

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[10:01:44 AM]

>> Mayor Adler: We have the mayor pro tem Garza with us. We also have councilmembers kitchen and Flannigan and pool and harper-madison and myself. With a quorum present, I'm going to go ahead and call to order today's meeting, Thursday, July 23rd, 2020. It is 10:01. We are doing this meeting virtually. There are two items, first is conduct a public input session. This is not required by law, something we're doing to give the community an additional opportunity to speak to us. And then at the end of the day we will set the public hearing. Certainly people can speak to us about that, they are entitled to, to consider and

[10:02:44 AM]

receive public comment on the proposed rates and fee changes for Austin resource recovery as part of the proposed budget that will be set for July 30th of 2020. Okay?

>> The conference numbered followed by the pound key.

>> Mayor Adler: I can't hear you, Leslie. Okay.

>> That is not a valid conference number. Please try again. Please enter your --

>> Mayor Adler: Somebody has your phone on.

>> Mayor, if you could give us about two minutes, we're connecting to a different line because one of them was full of static.

>> Mayor Adler: Go ahead. While we're letting the staff --

>> Host meeting as a speaker.

>> Mayor Adler: We have over 400 speakers that signed up. We have posted that every speaker would have two minutes to be able to speak.

[10:03:45 AM]

That gives us a little over 13 hours of public comment today. People can speak to the public hearing setting, the fees or the budget generally. We're going to start the clock when people speak and at two minutes we will thank the speakers and stop. There's not going to be any extensions over the two minutes because we literally have 65 people scheduled to speak in every two-hour segment. We've done this in two-hour segments so people get assigned a segment so they don't have to sit and wait on the phone all day. We'll see how that model works. It could mean that we end up with a break if people speak quickly or not everyone comes, we may need to take a recess and there will be slight recess between blocks

[10:04:45 AM]

as people sign up. The blocking system enables us to take a lunch break at 12:00 to 1:00, so that's going to be programmed in. There's going to be a dinner break from 5:00 to 6:00. Batch 1 is going from 10:00 to noon, batch 2 from 1:00 to 3:00, batch 4 from -- and it will be that long a day because there will be people signing up getting on for their batch. I understand that my colleagues over the course of the day will need to move away from the camera at certain points, and colleagues, feel free to do that. You don't have to say anything unless you want to. You can just go and come back as you can. Jimmy Flannigan is with us and earlier said that he

[10:05:46 AM]

wasn't sure exactly how much he's going to be able to be on camera but he's with us and I say that Paige is with us too as well. I want to remind everybody --

>> Mayor?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Kitchen: I will have to step away for a short period but we'll be listening.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Good.

>> Pool: Mayor, you can hear my mic now?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes, I can hear you, councilmember alter.

>> Casar: Call the roll as soon as I was coming on.

>> Mayor Adler: Sounds good. I want to remind all the speakers that we would appreciate if everybody speaking today would be kind to one another. These are pretty emotional issues that are before us today and the council needs to deal with over the next two weeks. And I think that there's a lot of personal investment on both sides and strongly

[10:06:47 AM]

held views. But this meeting, to the best we can, should focus on the issues and not personalities and this is a rough time as we're going through with the virus. We are one community and we should be trying to make our points to convince one another, but to recognize that most everybody here is really concerned with keeping the community's best interests front and center. Even if we disagree on how those are pre or tied or how those should be achieved. Staff, tell me when you are ready to start calling speakers.

>> We're ready, mayor.

>> Mayor Adler: Colleagues, do you want to say anything? Going through the first batch. The staff is going to call the speaker. When the speaker gets called, you should start talking. Know when the time is over, there's going to be an

[10:07:49 AM]

abrupt stop so that we can quickly get to the next speaker because we have to get everybody through in batches. So I apologize for any discomfort that may cause.

>> Tovo: Mayor, it's councilmember tovo.

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Tovo: I'm not sure if you had an opportunity to express that my office had gotten -- I just wanted to let the members of the public know that I am unfortunately have a family medical situation that I'm responding to and so I may not be able to be on the dais for all of this meeting and some of our upcoming meetings and at other times I may be on the dais but have my video off. I just wanted to convey to you all I appreciate your engagement. There are many of my constituents and my staff will be watching live throughout this meeting and anything that I'm not able

[10:08:49 AM]

to provide today I will be listening to and getting via archived video as well as the transcript. My apologies for not being present on the dais for the entirety of today's meeting, but know I appreciate your participation and will be receiving your comments through those means that we have with our video. Archive.

>> Mayor Adler: Councilmember tovo, two things. First is we all appreciate what are actually extraordinary efforts you are going to to participate given the circumstances so thank you for that. And you are also not alone. Other councilmembers have indicated that they are going to need to be stepping away for certain periods of time and I have also indicated 13 and a half hours looking at a green dot is a hard thing to do so I expect all the colleagues having a need to get up to use the restroom over the

[10:09:50 AM]

course of the day. But everyone is paying attention. With that, if we could get started so we can move through this. Staff, if you want to call the first person and then make sure that I know when the two minutes are up so that we can move to the next person.

>> The first speaker is Amanda gavasos weens.

>> Hi there, mayor, council. Thank you for allowing me to speak. I wanted to speak on the budget on a couple of things. Mostly I think the proposed cuts to the police budget are not in line with what the community was asking for. Council requested 100 million and I think just refusing to fill already vacant positions is just not in line with what we're looking to see. I'm a former city of Austin employee. I saw facilities rec centers, pools, parks in

[10:10:51 AM]

egregious states of disrepair. Economic divides in the city. I urge the council to really look closely at the budget and reallocate some of those funds away from the police department and towards public good. City services, city employees who work to make this town such a lovely place to live. I think that there are many things that make Austin a wonderful community to be a part of, but right now the police department just ain't one of those things. And I think the only thing they will understand to kind of change their behavior is going to be losing some of their funding. I yield my time. Thanks, y'all.

>> Next speaker is Laura Clark.

>> Hi, I'm Laura Clark. I received a master's of public health from U.T. And

[10:11:51 AM]

chief transformation officer at United Way although I speak as resident of district 1. In June I told you police brutality was a public health crisis. I ask you to begin solving that crisis by rejecting any budget that does not reduce APD by \$100 million. Interventions designed to reduce police violence such as community policing, training and body cams at best have little empirical evidence to prove effectiveness and at worse increase police violence. The American public health association recommends reducing the physical and psychological violence structurally carried out by law enforcement by increasing investment in racial and economic equity and alternatives to reduce harm and trauma. Invest in public health, low-income housing, direct cash transfers and apartment displacement efforts. Our view of the recommendations of president Obama's task force on 21st century policing found that

[10:12:53 AM]

although college educated officers are less violent, race and sex based diversity are not associated with change in violence and most components of community policing are associated with more violence. The use of force is found to be higher when ratio of officers to citizens rose and more police result in more police violence. I leave you with the words of congressman John Lewis. We have long said we cannot be patient, we are tired, we are tired of being beaten by policemen, tired of seeing our people locked up in jail over and over again. And then you holler be patient. How long can we be patient? We want our freedom and we want it now. Councilmembers Garza, harper-madison, kitchen pool and mayor Adler all posted remembrances of congressman Lewis this past weekend. You can actively honor him by rejecting any budget that does not defund APD by at least \$100 million.

[10:13:53 AM]

Black lives matter.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> The next speaker is Devin Woodard.

>> Hello. I'm a resident of district 7. This budget proposal is an insult to recent protests in which Austin residents quite literally risked their lives to participate. Removing 100 vacant police officer positions is not reform. Updating a 15-year-old record system is not a reimagining of public safety. A lot of reduced funding is going back into APD's budget. As public officials your primary concern is saying and doing things that keep you in office. As a black resident of the city of Austin, I ask that you take this opportunity to set your political careers aside and respond to the wants and needs of the community. I yield the rest of my time. Thank you.

>> Next speaker is Leticia walker.

>> Good morning. I'm Leticia walker.

[10:14:55 AM]

I'm a native austinite and a central health care worker representing district 1 and east Austin, all the broken and marginalized communities we have. As a working group member, the past few weeks have been consumed with budget talks. I am neutral on number 2 because I do not feel community input thus far has made an impact on the 2021 proposed budget. 11.3 [inaudible] From APD is nowhere close to meeting the desires of directly affected citizens and households. The restructuring of the budget matters to me because I like many others have a family member that was close and dear to me who was going through a minute crisis at one time. APD was called out on her and unfortunately it seems the only thing they knew to do was to break her arm and take her in from there. We as a working group are asking that much more than

[10:15:56 AM]

the 11.3 million is reallocated. We've asked for 100 million to be reallocated from APD's budget. But after realizing that 428 million was spent on policing instead of public health, libraries and youth programming and even emergency medical services, I realize how unjust the budget proposal is. A civil rights office that will make an immediate impact has more than 300,000 in operating and startup costs. Eliminate 100 to 200 additional police officer positions to deduct another 9.2 million from the APD budget. Don't just delay weapons replacement but begin a process of removing all firearms from APD and eliminating police violence totaling more than 400,000 deducted from the forecast budget. Remove the 2020 cadet class and double the deduction from 1.5 million to at least 3 to 4 million. With that alone we could

[10:16:56 AM]

double the insufficient proposed amount of 11.3 million.

[Buzzer sounding] We demand --

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Next speaker.

>> Next speaker is Michelle Edwards.

>> Hi, my name is Michelle Edwards, assistant professor of sociology at Texas state university and resident of city council district 5. I'm here to support the demands of -- to defund the Austin police department by 50% and to invest that money in real solutions. In other words, the rise fund, the equity office, Austin public health, low-income housing. Effective solutions that begin to remedy the long standing inequity faced by communities of color in Austin. The only way to diminish police violence is to reduce contact between the public and police. It's not about bad cops, it's about the institution of policing, not being able

[10:17:56 AM]

to be reformed. I'm also here because the public comment process has been accessible to members of the group directly backed by this policing and the budget inequity and who do not have flexible work hours and face other barriers to participation. I beg city council reduce -- recognize the failures of this process.

>> Next speaker is Sara Mathis.

>> Hi, my name is Sara Mathis and I live in city council district 1 and I'm here today to support demand of communities of color united and grass roots leadership to defund the Austin police department by 50% and invest the money in real solutions, in other words, the rise fund, the equity office, Austin public health and low-income housing. Solutions that begin to remedy long-standing inequalities faced by communities of color in Austin. I'm here because this public

[10:18:56 AM]

comment process is inaccessible to most members of the community. I do not have flexible work hours, consistent phone access or face other barriers to participation. I ask that city council recognize the failures of this comment process and take immediate action to make it more accessible to these communities. I'd like to implore city council to recognize the enormous potential that comes with budget making. To invest in the community and the constituents that you are bound to support. But let me be clear, reinvesting city funds in these programs will only help our city. There is no harm done by bolstering community programs. Continuing to fund a militarized police will only harm Austin. I know these calls are coming in to you as voices, but we're watching on a screen to see that you are hearing us. We know that you are here and we want to know that you are listening and that you are here to support us. Thank you. I yield the rest of my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Next speaker.

>> Next speaker is Bobby Mack.

[10:20:02 AM]

>> Hi, yes, this is Bobby Mack. I'm representing -- I'm a native austinite and I'm representing district 1 as well as other marginalized communities. Today I'm calling, there have been several talks in the past about defunding the police. I'm calling to stand with those that -- and I'm also requesting a 50% reduction in defunding the police. I feel very strongly about where the needs can better be met being from those communities and seeing how overpolicing impacts the community in a negative way. We

need that money to be allocated to more centers within the community that provide resources and education, for people of color and disenfranchised communities. We need to bring people of color, we need to create incentives to live, work and enjoy Austin. We need to provide more resources in backing the

[10:21:03 AM]

programs in east Austin and marginalized communities. Mass policing does not work. There are several other cities that have defunded the police and studies show it works when more money is put into programs that actually benefit the community. I've seen it. It does not work -- and who knows what other lobbies are involved in making sure that mass incarceration continues so that private companies flourish. It is -- it's just -- it's a crime to humanity we continue with this cycle that is not working. Black and brown people make up over 60% of the prison population. They cannot afford adequate represent education. That says something. Because there are a lack of opportunities, we create more opportunities, less people will be in prison. We need to defund the police and you need to listen to your constituents because everyone, if over 90% of the

[10:22:03 AM]

people are saying the same thing --

[buzzer sounding]

-- I think it's time to wake up and make a change. Thank you.

>> Next speaker is Kevin Welch. Kevin Welch. Be sure to unmute if you are muted. Next speaker is Alicia Hamilton.

>> Hi, my name is Ashley Hamilton, native austinite and a central health care worker representing districts 1, 4, 7 and all of east Austin. All the black and brown

[10:23:04 AM]

communities negatively impacted by the decisions made without the community input and agreement. As a working group member the past few weeks have been consumed with budget talks. I'm neutral on item 2 because I do not believe community input has made an impact on the proposed budget. And we direct our intentions against the general fund. 11.3 million reallocated from APD is nowhere close to meeting the desires of directly affected austinites, especially those like myself and my family. This week we calculated the numbers and are extremely displeased with know over 555 million in the over fund at

428 million APD budget. We as community coalitions have asked for 100-plus million to be reallocated from APD's budget. After realizing that 428 million is spent on policing instead of public health, libraries and youth programming and even

[10:24:05 AM]

emergency medical services, I realize how unjustly the budget proposal is. A civil rights office that will make an immediate impact has more than 300k in operating and startup costs, especially if they are going to address the issues we have as black austinians. To deduct another 9.2 million from the APD budget. Don't delay weapons replacement but begin the process of removing all firearms from APD and eliminating police violence in Austin. Totaling 400,000 deducted from the forecast budget. Remove the 2020 cadet class and double the deduction to three to four million. We could double the amount of 11.3 million. We demand 58 million immediately be put into the rise fund of the 170 million available in covid relief funds --

[buzzer sounding]

-- By covid-19 pandemic. Thank you.

>> The next speaker is

[10:25:07 AM]

Nathan Stevens.

>> Hi, can you hear me?

>> Yes.

>> All right. I'm from district 9 and after hours upon hours of testimony witnessing APD shoot street medics, witnessing them unleash tear gas and have friends of mine go to the hospital, I cannot believe we are being offered this pittance and insult of a cut to the APD budget. They committed what would be considered in international treaties war crimes upon Austin citizens and they are being shielded. Now we get to understand if Austin is owned by its people and its elected representatives or is it owned by undemocratic forces within the APD? This is the time we understand that dichotomy. We understand if we as austinians actually have any power at all after going out into the streets, shutting

[10:26:08 AM]

down I-35 and telling you time and time again that the APD is uncontrollable and needs to be reprimanded and cut back and defunded. Or are they simpling about to be allowed to run riots for the rest of their lives because you are too scared to stand up for them -- against them. I cede my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Next speaker.

>> Kathy Mitch even.

-- Mitchell.

>> Hello?

>> Mayor Adler: Go.

>> Oh, great, sorry. This is Kathy Mitchell. I'm calling on behalf of just liberty. Can you still hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes, please go. >>En that you. Earlier this week just liberty sent you all a letter and three reports about the police academy that have been sitting on chief Brian Manley's desk, two since may 22. The findings should surprise no one.

[10:27:09 AM]

Our police academy teaches young people from a warrior model, minimizing issues of bias and police a relies on fear based learning and strict adherence to demand. The warrior mind set and the fire that drives it must change. It's time to reclaim the wisdom of servant leadership where officers are viewed as guardians that serve and protect their community. One student noted we have watched the 1999 Rodney king video three or four times which leans to the idea issue are solely a thing of the past, unquote. One report notes that cadet training instructors do not receive formal preparation or training on how to teach effectively and another report notes that teaching is frequently a person reading to the class from power point slides. So what is being taught is the problem and the only saving grace is that it

[10:28:09 AM]

isn't being taught very well. The only truly independent community audit has just restarted from a rough start. That process is now slated to finish at the end of October. At that point we will know the scope of the problems. Based on what we already know, there will need to be a complete restructuring of the curriculum, the teaching methods used and perhaps even the people who teach it especially with respect to the diversity of the teaching attachment why do we care about this today? Because it is an insult to the seriousness of this process to do anything less than shutter the academy for this entire fiscal year -- bus bus -- redirect funds to alternate uses and sweep --

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Next speaker.

>> Brenda vamos.

>> Hello. Can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes, please go.

>> Okay.

[10:29:09 AM]

Hello, mayor and Austin city council staff. My name is Brenda Ramos. My son, only child, murdered by APD 90 days ago. I am so angry and exhausted by the official lies and confusion delays. My lawyer keeps asking APD for information and they tell us the investigation is going on. What does that mean? It means nothing. The entire shooting was on video. APD can arrest and charge the protesters [inaudible] For my son, but they can't even finish the investigation of his murder. I am so upset, hurt and angry that the man who killed my unarmed son is still getting his city paycheck. Why hasn't he been fired? Here's the truth. You should take away all APD's budget for investigating murders and give that money to someone

[10:30:10 AM]

who actually care. Thank you for listening, mayor and Austin city council staff.

>> Mayor Adler: Ms. Ramos, thank you. Next speaker.

>> Next speaker is Lindsay Lagrange.

>> Good morning, council. Anyone who can do basic subtraction can see the budget proposal do not defund APD by \$11 million. The budget would be \$150,000 less than it was last year. That's .03%. The \$11 million ts premium references is 11 million we were planning to add to the APD budget but that was before APD shot a 16-year-old in the head giving him brain damage. Mayor Adler, Paige Ellis, Kathie tovo, Alison alter, Leslie pool, on June 7 the

[10:31:10 AM]

seven of you approved an APD grant for \$430,000, nearly three times as much as APD would be defunded with this proposal. You told us, oh, this is just a special situation, we have to pass this so our cars don't good get stolen. This is different. This has nothing to do with the defunding next month. Just you wait. Because you said that, we all know you are going to hold your own word and reject this insulting and bogus proposal. We demand \$100 million actually defunded from the budget. Spencer cronk, we're so disappointed in you. The city you serve and city council have called for new leadership and you have failed us by sitting on your hands and remaining silent. Over 90,000 people have signed a petition demanding new leadership. You think 150,000 is enough to defund a department that

[10:32:11 AM]

hospitalizes its own citizens and creates childless mothers. Council, you serve a city where the police department spent \$13,000 on jet skis while over 2,000 of your own constituents will sleep on the street tonight. Defund APD, black lives matter, I yield my time.

>> The next speaker is Seth Rosen.

>> This is Seth from district 9. Thank you for the chance to speak today. I don't envy the city council. Austin is staring down the barrel of a gun with a lot of turmoil ahead and you have tough decisions to make. I don't envy most of the citizens of Austin impacted by recent events. Some of the pain being felt is a byproduct of covid-19 but much of the pain is woven into the fabric of institutions like the APD. APD issuing little to no contrition for the brutality

[10:33:13 AM]

they inflict on the black and brown communities. Ken Cassidy running misinformation campaigns. I could go on, but you have hours of angry statements ahead of you. At a time when everyone is belt tightening, there's a \$150,000 budget cut from a largely unaccountable like APD. Please no more political feeder. Step up to the plate and take bolder action. Black lives matter.

>> Next speaker is Sheila Kirk Walsh.

>> I'm a resident of district 1 for the past 13 years. Thank you, councilmember harper-madison for your leadership, hard work for my neighborhood. I am proud to be one of your constituents. That said, I am not proud

[10:34:14 AM]

about the current proposed budget for the city of Austin. It does not reflect the necessary change to create more equitable and socially just community for all residents. I'm calling in support of further divesting of the police budget by at least 50% and decreasing the overall number of police working in the city and reallocating these funds towards different versions of public safety and public health. Examples of these reallocations include the ending of homelessness and providing permanent housing options for individuals experiencing homelessness in our community. And adequately funding ems in order to eliminate the need for police to respond to certain calls such as overdoses, homelessness or welfare checks. Instead a community health paramedic can address the individual's needs whether it's medication or food or

[10:35:15 AM]

something else. All of this speaks to connecting citizens of Austin with the resources, safety and support they really need. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Next speaker.

>> Next speaker is chivas Watson.

>> [Inaudible]

>> Mayor Adler: Do you need to unmute your phone?

>> Sorry about that. I'm at a work meeting as well.

>> Mayor Adler: Go ahead.

>> Good morning, you all. I'm chivas Watson, long-time austinite for 20 years representing all the districts in Austin, not just east Austin, not just south Austin, all the black

[10:36:15 AM]

communities negatively impacted by decisions made without community input, without agreements. Our working group you might not know yet, but we have been discussing the budget for a month. I'm neutral on item 2 because I don't think you have taken the right community input. We've been asking for 100 million, half of the budget to be cut, for police officers to be held accountable. Larry Jackson still does not have justice. Nathaniel Sanders still does not have justice, but Brian Manley still has his job. Property tax revenue funds the general fund, but it doesn't make sense 556 million of that 51% property tax revenue completely overfunds a 428 million APD budget. We as a working group are asking much more than \$11.3 million are allocated, that \$428 million cut and to be reallocated into Austin public health, Austin public libraries, youth Fannie

[10:37:16 AM]

maeing and even -- you'll programming and ems. A civil rights office is going to need much more than \$300,000 in operating and startup costs for it to be effective. You know how involved I am. Get rid of the weapons. Other cities, countries have done it. We've seen the outcomes. You are just moving in fear in allowing weapons to continue to be a part of the factoring in the budget. Immediately eliminate police violence in Austin. We provided eight policies you can implement immediately and you've already implemented some. We could double the --

[buzzer sounding]

-- We demand \$58 million be put into the rise fund. Thank you for your time. We will be participating in future conversations.

>> Mayor Adler: Next speaker.

>> The next speaker is Seneca Savoy.

>> Hi, resident of district 4, member of Austin dsa. Before people knew it was safe to go out in the streets, thousands did so.

[10:38:18 AM]

After multiple people had their faces shattered. People were out in the streets. People were willing in the tens of thousands to risk their lives to see a change, to defund the police and reallocate it to needs that we desperately have right now. So people are willing to risk death for this change. And I'm just here to ask what you are willing to risk. Because what we have today is a budget that cuts housing more than it cuts policing. It cuts housing when we know that thousands of people are likely to enter homelessness just as soon as the eviction ban is lifted. That -- essential services needed for people to serve by this pandemic. So how much are we willing to cut? If we aren't willing to reallocate from APD services that people will die without in our current

[10:39:19 AM]

circumstances, then we do not in the moral document that is our budget actually believe that black lives matter. So I'm asking you today to take as much as you can, and we know that it's a lot more than 150,000, a lot more than 11 million that we can safely cut and put it into housing, put it into services, put it into things we know are going to save people's lives during one of the deadliest times in our recorded history. Thank you.

>> Next speaker is Samantha Meyer.

>> Hello.

>> Mayor Adler: Go ahead, please.

>> Hello?

>> Hi, Samantha Meyer. I am a mental health professional working in Austin. I've been living here eight years. I just wanted to speak about the budget again.

[10:40:20 AM]

You know, speak in favor of considering decreasing the police budget more. In my mind I think it would be feasible to cut that police budget by 50% as you've seen a lot of organizations demand across the country. And allocate those funds to programs that get at the root causes of crime and harm in our community. You know, as a mental health professional, I've seen the ways untreated mental illness contributes to so much suffering in this community and there really is an immense lack of resources and accessible treatment for mental illness, especially for, you know, poor and indigent folks. And I think we've been trying to put a band-aid on those issues that are arising from that lack of accessible resources with law enforcement, and that's why we're seeing, you know,

[10:41:20 AM]

the highest rate of police killings of individuals in the country and Austin. And to me, you know, this isn't about, you know, revenge for those instances, but this is how do we do better in the future for the most vulnerable members of our community on their worst day. To me, the way to move forward product I feel is to see -- productively is to see where we can reallocate going to law enforcement. To me a budget is list of priorities. With our dollars we're saying what do we prioritize in this community. Right now we are saying that we prioritize law enforcement over housing, we prioritize over mental health resources --

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Next speaker.

>> Karen maggod.

[10:42:21 AM]

>> Hello. My name is Karen maggod. I'm the chair of the austin-travis county food policy board. I'm here to speak in support of investment in the local food system in alignment with the recommendations passed June 12. The recommendation begins the covid-19 pandemic demonstrates a food system that was formed and has been sustained through exploitation of black and indigenous -- and the urgent need to invest significant resources in order to address a crisis. Covid-19 has also revealed a woefully under resourced and undeveloped food system in terms of planning and coordination. New research suggesting food insecurity has doubled among Texas families during the four months Texas' disasterer to declaration from covid-19. More than double the official rate in 2018. According to community impact, most neighborhoods

[10:43:22 AM]

east of mopac average over 30% food insecurity and prior to covid-19 nearly 40% of ACC students reported food insecurity. The investment in budget should reflect our values as a community so we must invest sufficient resources to understand, dismantle and remake our food system into one that is just and workers in small businesses show have been negatively impacted at the center throughout. For the fiscal year 2021 budget, we are asking you to allocate sufficient staffing and program. One,ed a a minimum of two full-time full-time equivalent position and funding a regional food -- to evaluate food specified in funding for food and equity passed in may of this year also by the food policy board. This creates a framework in the Austin metropolitan area, democratic control of the food system of, by and for the people. I urge you to take action

[10:44:23 AM]

and allocate city funds to strengthen our local food system.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Next speaker.

>> Next speaker is Jesse Bradford.

>> Hi, I live in district 1. I'm here today to support the demands of communities of color united, grass roots leadership and hhc to defund the Austin police department by at least \$100 million and invest that money in the rise fund, the equity, Austin public health and low-income housing. Solutions that begin to remedy long-standing inequities faced by communities of color in Austin. This public comment process is inaccessible to most members of the groups who are directly impacted by policing and budget inequities. I'm asking that city council recognize the failures of this comment process and take immediate action to make it more accessible to these communities. I just want to remind council in this historic

[10:45:25 AM]

moment of nationwide protest what you see and heard will be represented by not just austinites but by people around the world.

>> Grace Hanson.

>> Good morning. I'm calling in support of community of color united proposal to cut APD funding by 50%. Manager cronk's proposed budget does not meet community needs, nowhere near. Instead of funding overpolicing of Austin's communities of color, I call on city council to reallocate that money to support this community. First through increase in direct payments to people facing economic and housing instability due to covid-19 through the rise fund. Next to increase the funding to the equity office. Third, an increase in funding to Austin public health to address the urgent needs due to the pandemic as well as long-term funding

[10:46:26 AM]

for mental health and low-income housing to support -- to prevent further destruction and gentrification of black and brown working class communities. Thank you for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Emily garrick.

>> Thank you.

[Inaudible] APD's 2020 budget was \$434 million. This year's budget is also \$434 million. We have a real proposed decrease of \$150,000 from last year or .03%. This is completely unresponsive to community demands. Thousands of people are demanding transformation, a response to APD's brutality.

[Inaudible] To solicit input from the community on what the budget should look like. Over 1500 residents used the

[10:47:27 AM]

tool available in English and Spanish and allows residents to increase or decrease as much as they wanted. Over 95% chose to divest from APD. The average cut was \$237 million from APD's budget or 54%. Again, the 2021 budget is really only a .03% cut. The 2021 budget gives significant increases only the the fire department. The community on the other hand is demanding large portions of APD's budget be reallocated. The 2021 budget gives 15 million less to ems than the submissions. 33 million less -- 34 million less to housing and community development and \$47 million less to violence prevention and survivor support. Furthermore, over 90% of those 1500 residents said they wanted fewer police

[10:48:27 AM]

officers. This budget proposal wants to hire and train new police officers even though there's no way the training academy can be meaningfully reformed to stop officers from being trained -- and encourage aggression and violence over de-escalation. In addition, we need to cut all overtime and unfilled positions which are over 100 of them.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Next speaker.

>> Chaz Moore.

>> Good morning, y'all. So yeah, I mean a lot of people have said some amazing stuff already. I just wanted to encourage and remind you all that this is a -- this is a chance for you all to, you know, continue to build your legacy, right? This is a moment and opportunity for you all to take your sight and not lose

[10:49:28 AM]

it. And I think it's important for you all to also keep in mind that as citizens we are not able to be in the room where it happens. We're not able to make the budget decisions that you all are able to make, but this is why we elect you all. We elect you all and trust you all to reflect the values and opinions of the community. And I can tell you with the 11 million-dollar cut that really cut from the top of what APD would have got is really \$150,000 that is something that -- is not leaving the community satisfied at all. And I think much of the community feels [inaudible] Because like Seneca said earlier, you see people in the streets, you see people fighting and willing to put their livelihood and their health at risk to stand up and fight for something, and then we get this -- but, you know, I'm confident you all

[10:50:28 AM]

will not waste this shot and that you all will be bold and step out and do bold things and at least I think the bare minimum for what people need to see that the city council and that the city is serious about, reimagining public safety and policing is that 100 million minimum. And yeah, I want to encourage you all and just remember that in this moment that history has its eyes on you and again, I really hope you all don't [inaudible]

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Michelle Glenn.

>> Hello. My name is Michelle Glenn from district 4, but representing all of Austin. I am opposed to item 2 because we don't need further discretion to defund and demilitarize APD. I demand you start removing

[10:51:29 AM]

weapons from officers to make our city a safer place. Austin citizens recently participated in a poll on budget reallocation. We have spoken and demand you listen to us and cut APD's budget by half. We demand you reinvest these funds into health care, EMS, education, housing, mental health and drug addiction resources and the city parks and libraries. We demand that you take action to build up low-income areas of town who literally have nothing, no hospital, no way to get reasonable amounts of food

at a reasonable price. They have three grocery stores on the east side between 183 and south Austin. And that is just disgusting. And I deal with that so we create the Austin that we all want to live in. We have spoken and demand you listen to our requests

[10:52:30 AM]

and follow -- follow what we have made for our -- I'm sorry, follow what we want to make Austin our home. Thank you very much for your time. Black lives matter. Hash tag defund.

>> Mayor Adler: Next speaker.

>> Rachel manning.

>> Hi. Hi. Good morning. My name is Rachel manning and I am a resident of district 1. I am here today with undoing white supremacy Austin in support of demands of communities of color united and grass roots leadership to defund the Austin police department by 50% and invest that money in real solutions. The rise fund, the equity office, Austin public health and low-income housing. These are solutions that might begin to remedy the long-standing inequities faced by communities of color in Austin.

[10:53:31 AM]

I'm also here because I want to just comment on the inaccessibility of this public comment process. I've been on the phone for an hour and ten minutes and I know there are many, many people behind me. Most people who are directly impacted by these systems do not have the flexible work hours, consistent phone access or have children or other folks that they are caring for and don't have the opportunity to sit for hours and hours on the phone to -- in order to participate. And I ask that council recognize the failures of this process and take immediate action to make it more accessible to these communities. Thank you so much. I yield the rest of my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Jeffrey Hanna.

>> Can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes, please go ahead.

>> Okay. I am here -- I'm calling in support of at least 100 milk

[10:54:33 AM]

defunded from the APD. The comment measure is insulting and it is just a clear example of just the city manager not listening. I am here specifically to call out councilmember Leslie pool. Councilmember pool, I was at your district budget meeting. You were asked a question about do you currently support the \$100 million defunding amount from APD. And if you did not, why do you not currently do so for both -- for any [inaudible]. You were asked a yes/no question with every opportunity to explain your position. There was no wrong answer and you did not answer it. That is unacceptable to your constituents, insulting to your constituents. Because that question could not have been more gracious to you in whatever position you hold. You did not answer. You dodged it, then had the

[10:55:36 AM]

gall to speak about being dedicated to erasing systemic racism. That is unacceptable and I am going to be working to have -- supporting the campaign of your challenger this election cycle because that is an unacceptable way to treat your constituents. I yield the rest of my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Emma chevalier.

>> Hi, this is Emma chevalier. I am from district 9, Kathie tovo's district. I support -- I'm here to support the demands articulated not only by communities of color united but Austin justice coalition and grass roots leadership. I support the demand to defund APD by 50% now and totally abolish within the

[10:56:37 AM]

next four years, remove firearms and remove positions, reinvest in programs that will enrich Austin and improve quality of life, invest in the proposed rise funds to allocate funding to families in necessitated and equity office and invest much more in public health which currently receives only 7.8 of general spending even now during covid-19. Invest in accessible public health programs, low-income and truly I believable housing. Austin is notorious for gentrification. Reinvest in communities of color. The current proposal by the city council and manager is insulting and inherently racist at best. You guys aren't listening to us and it's time that you really step up and show up for Austin residents. You know, Austin is

[10:57:37 AM]

watching, Texas is watching, the world is watching. This budget proposal really reveals how far Austin has to go in order to become a truly Progressive and inclusive city. So we're asking that you hear us and reimagine Austin and please don't be on the wrong side of history, black lives matter, I yield my time.

>> Devin Woodard.

>> Sorry, I think I got put in the queue twice. I will say \$4 million is going to the office of police oversight and I think this is atrocious because investigations are handle by internal affairs investigations process and the judgment is given out by police chief Manley. This is essentially \$3 million going into Austin police department holding themselves accountable for their citizens complaining against their own brutality. Again, this budget is an insult through the protests

[10:58:38 AM]

in which protesters risked their lives to participate during a global pandemic, risked their lives to interact with thuggish police officers who do not know how to de-escalation the situation. Please remove me from

>> David Peterson.

>> My name is David Peterson. I'm a resident of district 1. I worked as an assistant federal public defender for over 12 years. In that time I saw how the system works from the inside. And having seen that, I want to say this this body should listen to grassroots leadership and united bodies of color. They have been offering real solutions to real problems for years. It is time to listen. The current data and the will of the people demand real cuts to APD's budgets,

[10:59:39 AM]

at least 50%. If a budget is a living document, sponsor cronk's current document is similar moral. The budget doesn't reflect the words spoken by mayor Adler and much of the council at the last meeting. It doesn't match the will of the people of Austin. And city manager cronk knows that. He's starting low, he's low balling. This is our tax money that he's propose going to APD, taking it away from public health during a pandemic. From housing and economic relief, during an economic crisis. This budget is an undemocratic and immoral document. And a councilmember who votes to approve something like this the way this is written should and will be voted out of office. For an example of when a decent local politician failed the will of the people, see Margaret Moore.

[11:00:39 AM]

I want to add that Ken Cassa day and the police union do not have democracy. They cited the next district attorney for the very precise of the issues that the people elected him on. We do have a docracy problem in our city. At this point you're our only hope because we can't yet elect our police chief and

city manager and both of them are failing us. This body needs to take action. Tell sponsor cronk to fire chief Manley and make real cuts to APD's budget. If he does not.

[Buzzer sounds] , Fire Spencer cronk and let him make his way back to Minneapolis to see what real reform is.

>> Mayor Adler: Next speaker.

>> Stephanie Villanueva.

>> Hello, can you hear me?

>> Yes, please go ahead.

>> Okay. So my name is Stephanie Villanueva and I live in district 3 represented by

[11:01:40 AM]

councilmember Renteria. I want him to hear me. I am hear to support defunding the Austin police department by at least \$100 million and divert that money to Austin public health. I need you all to commit to this because #blacklivesmatter and remember Mike Ramos. You need to fire the cops that murdered him. And Pio, I'm going to make sure that I do not vote for you in the next election and I will make sure that you do not get reelected. You need to support the black and brown community in the city and in your district. Thank you very much.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Breidi springer?

>> Good morning. Can you hear me?

>> Yes, please go ahead.

>> Can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes, please go ahead.

>> Good mortgage, can you hear me? Good morning, I'm an Austin native. Austin independent school district parent and I'm representing district 1. Which is has been negatively

[11:02:41 AM]

affected by financial decisions made without community desires being done first. As a working group member the past few weeks have been consumed with budget discussions. I'm neutral on item 2 because this input thus far has not made an impact on the 2020-2021 proposed budgetment we target our intentions against the general fund since our are increased property taxes rate account for now over

50% of it. 11.3 allocated from APD is nowhere close to meeting the desire directly affecting austinites. Especially like myself who remain to be a worker in the city I've always known. We all know the numbers are imbalance and disproportionate to us and for the increase that funds the 1.1 billion. And to pay so much to the Austin police department. We as the working group are asking that much more, and I mean much more than \$11.3 million to be reallocated. As community members we have demanded for over 100 million to be reallocated from the Austin

[11:03:41 AM]

police department's budget. After realizing that 428 million is spent on policing instead of public health, libraries, youth programming and emergency medical services. I realize how unjust and unfair the budget proposal is. How about allocating APD funds to create community pods with Austin parks and rec or to help Austin independent school district reopen our schools. 11.3 million doesn't even take care of deferred maintenance costs of east Austin school closures. A civil rights office would need more than 300,000 in operating and start-up costs if we really want to make a difference. Also, let's eliminate 100 to 200 additional police officer positions to deduct another 9.2 million from the Austin police budget.

[Buzzer sounds] Thank you for your time. You will be receiving a letter from you.

>> Mayor Adler: Next speaker.

>> Steven fox.

[11:04:42 AM]

>> My name is Steven fox from district 9. Everyone on this call, including the councilmembers and the mayor, know that the proposals for the budget that they've received is an insult to the demands of the community and the insult to the notion of democracy in Austin. This is not a response to the directive that the city council sent to the city manager's office and that we expect to be living in a city where the voters' will is the mandate of governance. We should not be able to be entirely ignored by a single person. The city manager's office is undemocratic if it's not willing to respond to the will of the people. You need to defund Austin police by at least \$100 million and demonstrate that this city in fact has a legitimate government structure that respond to

[11:05:42 AM]

the will of the people. Thank you.

>> Claudia Canfield?

>> My name is Claudia Canfield from district 2 and I just want to echo Steven fox's words that we just said. I also want to express my support for the newly formed office. I can absolutely guarantee that \$300,000 is not nearly enough. Take some of the money from the police department and give it to the civil rights office because the police department in this city is the one that's abusing people's civil rights. By continue to go give them money and barely even funding the civil rights office enough to employ a few people is, again, insulting to the citizens of

[11:06:45 AM]

Austin and it's a real shame. Thank you.

>> Kevin Welch.

>> Can you hear me?

>> Yes, go ahead.

>> Dear representatives of the council, my name is Kevin Welch and I'm a native and lifelong citizen of Austin, president of the board of a local civil liberties non-profit. I'm calling today to express my opinion regarding the current proposed budget for the city of Austin laid before the council by city manager Spencer cronk. And I many other citizens spoke in the last public comment to express our shock and dismay about the actions taken by the APD and the black lives matter protests in our city and the lack of accountability due to recent incidents over APD's excessive use of force. And the priorities of the city budget going forward,

[11:07:45 AM]

priorities that included a massive allocation of APD funds to other departments and city services that could better serve our community. This budget as it currently stands is completely unacceptable and I ask the council to veto it in its current form and send back for a serious rework. This budget [indiscernible] Planned increases in APD's budgets as somehow decreasing the budget as well as redirecting funds cut from APD back into APD, but earmarked for different purposes as somehow decreasing APD's budget. APD's total budget currently stands at over \$400 million, by far the largest portion of the city budget. And the city budget proposes a net reduction of \$145,000, a rounding error. The people made clear that they expected cuts in the range of \$100 million. Funds that are desperately needed for housing, health care and support programs for our city while we have an economic crisis and pandemic. We will accept nothing less. If the city manager doesn't propose a budget that has real reform, we will find a city manager that will.

[11:08:46 AM]

If the council did not veto this budget, we will work to not elect any person that votes for it. I urge you to create real reform. In issue is not going away and the citizens will watch until you get the job done. Thank you for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Next speaker.

>> Mailbox mayor, that was the last speaker.

>> Mayor Adler: Colleagues, it's 11:09. That went a lot faster than we anticipated. We actually had more than 60 speakers identified because we assumed that there would be some --

>> I'm not sure I --

>> Mayor Adler: Of people that are speaking less than their allotted time, but their locked in this program for the day because people have been given times with respect to sign-ins. It is 11:09 now.

>> Mayor? Mayor?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> This is Verna, sorry.

[11:09:47 AM]

We just had three people call in. We've just had a few people call in.

>> Okay. Let's take those speakers in the first block.

>> Joel Mcnew?

>> Hello, can you hear me.

>> Mayor Adler: Please proceed.

>> Hi. I am calling in to support and really have more conversation about the budget process. We do not support eliminating 100 officers or take money away from the budget of public safety until we have better understanding. And I do agree with the other speakers in regards to that. I'm sure many of you realize that not every austinite

[11:10:49 AM]

even know who all these groups are that are calling in that reference their demands and what they expect from all of you. Not every austinite knows who grassroots or Austin justice coalition, and I think that it's very, very important that there are people who do support public safety, that defend public

safety. And we need to have clear understanding of how you are talking about reallocating these funds before you do it. I think that from my experience in the last five years, the city council many times can be an echo chamber. Please step out of that echo chamber. Please make clear decisions that impact the entire city and how, if you do reallocate funds, what does public safety look like? We have an expectation of living in a safe community and we need to understand how [indiscernible] A budget

[11:11:49 AM]

that may be the only thing that I've heard from a city councilmember so far is that she's pushing the \$100 million because the council should stand in solidarity with the criminal justice advocates. Okay, that is not a plan. There's no solution within that comment. It's not a strategy. Please understand that not every [indiscernible]

[Buzzer sounds] Is part of the echo chamber. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Next speaker.

>> Genevieve chow.

>> My name is general new year's eve and I difficult in district 7. I demand at at least \$100 million be die vested from APD and reallocated towards affordable housing, education, health care and other community-based resources. Protests are still ongoing and I am still hearing incident after incident of APD officers using intimidation tactics and excessive force on non-violent protestors.

[11:12:50 AM]

APD has targeted medics and media. Just this past weekend they arrested an independent journalist who is only a media presence. He is respectful to everyone, yet he is still arrest and there is video evidence of an officer punching him when he was already apprehended on the ground. The video footage related to other victims has been delayed honestly says enough about what APD believes about public safety. APD is willing to protect their entire department over outing officers responsible for assaulting, abusing and murdering Austin residents. It's horrific. I stand with Linda and I am Moore everyone to visit justice for tko.. They are supposed to serve and represent the people so I ask you to please vote no on a budget that does not include at least a 100-million-dollar cut from APD's budget. Please invest more funds into people's health and well-being, not overpolicing, which effects

[11:13:50 AM]

communities of color. Black lives matter. Yield the rest of my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Staff, my office is getting texts from people saying that they're on the line. I don't know if there are two lines or if there are just additional names. Who do you have next?

>> Katherine lane. And mayor, while she queues in, we have had several speakers call back in so now we have a longer list. If the speakers that are not on the list, they will be receiving a phone call so they need to answer that call.

>> Mayor Adler: Great, thank you.

>> The next caller is Katherine lane.

>> Hello, can you hear me?

>> Yes, please proceed.

>> Thank you. My name is Katie lane and I am a district 7 native.

[11:14:51 AM]

The citizens of Austin have been asking our councilmembers, mayor Adler and especially Mr. Cronk for months now to substantially defund APD by at least 100 million. APD continues to terrorize peaceful protesters, and have arrested a journalist and still not arrested the officers responsible for the deaths of Mike Ramos and things happening to Linda Nuno. Here are some faces that -- places that their funding could be reallocating to truly impact our community. According to echo, \$38 million to the neighborhood housing and community development would effectively end homelessness, which is especially important during a health pandemic. Austin is expecting another wave of evictions in August after the moratorium ends and this would be especially useful. As alternatives to policing, the ems could also receive funding to create a mental health first responder department and Austin public health could receive funding, including harm or reduction services. I've spoken at both previous

[11:15:52 AM]

meetings and then at a protests weekly since the end of June and will repeat my urging here. Reinvest at least \$100 million from APD to directly fund our community and health services. Rather than only the proposed decrease of 150,000-dollar net risk to APD. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> For all the speakers on the line, please press 0 if you have not already. Thank you. The next speaker is Rachel Shannon.

>> Good morning, mayor Adler and members of council. My name is Rachel Shannon. I have owned my home in district 1 for 18 years and I'm a member of undoing white supremacy Austin. I'd like to first thank councilmember harper-madison for her leadership in this time. I'm asking for defunding of APD by

50%. Right now Austin needs to invest in real solutions as advocated by grassroots leadership and communities of color united. The rise funds, the equity

[11:16:53 AM]

office, Austin public health and low income housing. 40%, 38%, or even 25% of our budget allocated to policing is not only irresponsible but it's harmful to the health of citizens of Austin as we've seen explicitly in these last few months. Austinites have been asking for significant police reforms for decades because of the violent impact of policing on communities of color specifically in Austin. And the deep need for budget support and housing, public health and equity reforms. The time for reform is so long over. We're asking for massive defunding of APD and we hope you can hear and respect the needs of the community. Additionally I implore you members of city council to acknowledge the failure of the democratic process in these community input sessions. I was just bumped off again despite being on hold for hours and it was very uncomfortable to hear that my input may not be heard today after waiting so long.

[11:17:54 AM]

I'm a person privileged to have the time and computer to sign up for the computer input process online from my home computer, wait until the night before to hear how it will work and receive my assigned place in line and then make myself available, not having to concern myself with my work schedule or childcare. If my call gets dropped I have time to call back in and wait and hope that I get a place to speak with no concern for losing the possibility of quality interpretation services. I know this process is not and hadn't been democratic and that is --

[buzzer sounds]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much for your time. Next speaker.

>> Rebecca weber.

>> Hi. It's Rebecca weber speaking for the public safety commission today. I wanted to talk about the two Travis county ems recommendations we passed this year in 2020. Both were unanimous. On February third we asked the manager to implement

[11:18:54 AM]

seven straightforward solutions that would improve medics' lives considerably. Our February recommendations were pretty simple. Don't require medics to switch their gear between ambulances in

the rain when it's not urgent. Things like that. I'm told that only one of our February solutions have been implemented and that's understandable. The department got very busy when the pandemic hit. But given the pandemic and the department's increased call volume, it defies logic that the manager rejected our June 1 request that ems receive 12 additional ftes in order to convert two demand trucks to 24 trucks and that ems buy two new ambulances and hire new ftes. Our motivation for recommending a significant increase in public health at this time is self-evident but it is also detailed in our June 1 budget recommendation which I hope you will reconsider along with our February third

[indiscernible]. Thanks very much, y'all?

>> Thank you very much.

[11:19:54 AM]

>> Next speaker is Christian wreath. >>

>> I've been a resident of Austin for seven years and I've lived in the Austin public school district as an English teacher for five of those years. I call today to add my voice to communities of color united and greets leadership to urge you to defund the police by 50%. The city want to defund the police and reallocate those funds to community development programs and real solutions. Rise funds, the equity office, Austin public health and low income housing. I work with at risk students in Austin public schools and for the last five years my students of color, my lbgtq plus students, by students

[11:20:56 AM]

experiencing homelessness, addiction and mental health issues have continually expressed that if they do not trust the APD to have their best interest at heart. I fear that their names will join those of Mike Ramos, Justin Howell and so many more kids who have been victimized by the police department. Epidemic police brutality must be stopped. Reform has not worked. Community policing tactics have not worked. Sensitivity training, body cams and restrictions on use of force have not worked. Every citizen of Austin has a right to safety and life. Vote in service of justice. Set an example for the nation. Half measures and false promises will no longer satisfy us. Black lives matter. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Jao Paulo. Hello, can you hear me? Please proceed.

>> I've been waiting on the line all morning.

[11:21:57 AM]

This is JP from the Austin justice coalition and what I want to say today, this morning, is that change is trouble. Change makes us uncomfortable. As pattern-seeking creatures we constantly rely on the security of the familiar. But there are moments in which it is literally madness to insist on the familiar and this is one of those moments. All that we [inaudible] Did not the crisis. The true crisis is what is yet to come if we insist on doing things the way we have always done them. Those calling for change are the moderates right now. The most ideally thing we can do right now is change. Right now we are stuck in the twilight. The old is dead and it seems like the new cannot be born. I am here to say along with thousands of austinites that we should not fear the birth pains of the new. We should not fear the labor. And it will be labor, creating a favor support department to replace what we once relied on the police

[11:22:57 AM]

to do will be labor. Investing in appropriate mental health response will be labor. But if we allow this new hope to become still born within us, it will burst and tear this city apart. Our budget can reflect the tone deaf insistence on the old policies of the American city. A reactionary insistence on hoarding or a willingness to squarely face our moment and do the work of changing. We can see there is a new horizon for the city. The city will become a new space where black lives truly matter, a space of shelter and healing. Or it will become a giant prison, but not a prison without revolts. Like the confederate statues, this document can become a-- owe did you know can become a document of our racist past or can be a step to our future. Thank you for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Frank neitcher.

[11:23:59 AM]

>> Hi, can you hear me.

>> Go ahead.

>> Awesome, thank you. My name is frank. I'm from district 1. I'm calling with Austin

[indiscernible] To support the demands of communities of color united and grassroots leadership in cutting the funds of the police department by 50% and investing in real, elusions. I wanted to tell you a story about how poorly our police depament is run. Recently service discovered that the APD spent \$3,000 on cheese balls in 2017. This of course blew up on Twitter and got so much attention that APD responded. They claimed that the cheese balls were for sexual assault survivors, which in 2017 APD was actively suppressing sexual assault statistics so I guess we are supplying cheese balls and not actual support for survivors. When they are called out on their obvious lie they asked Twitter users to submit a freedom of information act request. Now people who are manning the APD Twitter account are

[11:24:59 AM]

three civilians and three sworn officers. One is a sergeant, two are senior police officers. Combined they make about 215k a year. More than anybody on the city council. I just saved -- if you cut those positions, they are armed, they are supposed to be trained in deescalation and they only made everybody angrier. I just saved you 215k a year, which is more than Spencer Cronk affidavit and DI it with 10 minutes of googling. Spencer Cronk makes 350k a year. He has to go as well. You are about to hear 12 more hours of testimony of people that agree with me and whether or not you listen to them is going to decide whether or not we are going to save the soul of Austin and whether or not we are going to have the same city council in November. Thank you very much for your time and attention. Let's fund real solutions. Let's cut APD by 50%. Thank you very much for your time and attention.

>> Cynthia Vasquez.

>> Everybody, good morning. My name is Cynthia Vasquez and I'm here representing

[11:25:59 AM]

gave as the school organizer. I'm representing schools and families in 78744, 78745, 48 and 52. I'm here to urge you as a city council to continue investing in our people who are already historically underserved in Austin. And please place \$58 million into the city rise fund. Remove the obstacles of this application process to serve more people most in need and allow families to meet their own needs. This is the most equitable. Of the schools we're connected to, there are well over 200 students who don't have the dual access either without a digital device or wi-fi. Currently on my mind are five families. One is floating around in airbnbs because we don't have the money to have stable housing. Sometimes the kids stay with a family member while the parents stay sleep in the

[11:27:01 AM]

car. Neighbors and other family members check on them and drop off food pantry items when they need. Three, a single mom who struggles with finding someone to watch her kids for free while she catches the bus to get groceries, which for most of us with a car can be done in about an hour 56 her world it is a three to four hour event where she is exposed to interactions with many and must return safely and uninfected to her children. Fourth is a father of two struggling with mental health because he can't find a job to meet the basic needs of his family. Fifth is the mom diagnosed with covid. She was the breadwinner and now her husband cares for her as she faces quarantine. He is unsure what will happen in the next month for rent and food, but all he cares about right now is his family's health. Please, please, city council, relieve financial strain especially on Latin's black and latinx communities and allow more people to shelter in place, care for the sick --

[buzzer sounds]

[11:28:06 AM]

>> Benny trice.

>> Hi. I am Ebony. I'm a black resident in district 1. I would like to say good morning to one. He daily I come into contact with those who are homeless. I am the director of a non-profit and it has been a year since the ordinance has been in put into place and it has changed on numerous occasions. The city is still trying to figure out what to do with our most vulnerable situation so why not try to make indoor camps. If the homeless had temporary housing with in-house resources, then they would have the opportunity to transition to permanent housing and it would allow them to be more independent. My question to you is should those experiencing homelessness -- should they be afforded the opportunity to live healthy and stable housing. Thank you for this opportunity. Have a great day.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

[11:29:06 AM]

Next speaker.

>> Demaz Frisco.

>> Good morning, everyone. I appreciate y'all taking the time to do this. Very pleased to be calling on behalf of Austin parks foundation and the broader parks community. So for the next two minutes we can all close our eyes and go to our happy place. We in the parks community know that you are all dealing with multiple pressing funding priorities this budget cycle. We also know very well that generally in times of economic hardship the city's park system can be a lower priority. But this crisis we face today is both unique and unprecedented. Trail usage across Austin has risen anywhere from 70 to 30%. Our park rangers are fielding thousands of citizen contacts every month as they encourage social distancing and mask wearing where appropriate in our parks and on our trails. And simultaneously thousands of volunteer work hours that

[11:30:07 AM]

are providing by groups like Austin parks foundation and other parks non-profits have totally evaporated from our park system. This leaves our park system with need needs that only additional funding from city council can help address a this the point I've met with a majority of our offices and will meet with the rest of them individually to address the needs in more detail. I look forward to meeting with each of

you on the path for the parks and rec department this budget cycle. This is a unique public health crisis as you all know and as we look to economic recovery this year as well, we in the parks know that parks are essential for all of these things. And we hope you all agree and will take action this budget cycle to support Austin's world renowned park system. Thanks and have a good one.

>> Cole [indiscernible].

>> I'm a policy analyst for the greater Austin crime

[11:31:07 AM]

commission. I've studied crime levels and staffing over the past few months. Increases in the size of a police force are associated with significant reductions in violent and property crime. In 2018 study of Obama DOJ grants found that each additional officer is

[indiscernible] And 15.392 of property crimes. Similarly a 2018 UCLA study found a 10% increase in police staffing led to a 13 percent increase in violent crime and a seven percent decrease in property crime and deterrent drives this inverse relationship between police staffing and crime. Police did he tear criminal behavior by increasing the punishment to these potential offenders. This concept was demonstrated in a 2017 joint study from Duke University of Chicago and Cornell that showed that arrest rates actually decreased by 6.2% after cities received grant funding from our officers. Research has also shown that better training resulted in

[11:32:08 AM]

a better police force that is a topic in our community. One study that looked at a procedural justice training in Chicago. The program was respect, neutrality and extra transparency in the exercise of authority. Two years after its implementation in Chicago complaints against the police reduced 10% and

[indiscernible]. So training programs like this will make our police force better and our city safer. I'm proud to live in a city whose leadership values the importance of research and data in making policy decisions. And if any of y'all are interested, I can send you a short document that has summaries and links to the studies I mentioned along with many others. Thank you for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speakerment.

>> Kerry Roberts.

>> This is Kerry Roberts with the greater Austin crime commission and a resident of district 8. If you learn anything from the pandemic, it's that the community working with the

[11:33:09 AM]

pandemic can accomplish almost anything, and they rely on city staffing and other research that has the crime rates. We're not making this up. While the proposed you know eliminates temporary vacancies we know that those authorized positions are often billed using overtime to maintain adequate patrol coverage and if you haven't asked how much APD has had to spend in over time this year you should. So instead of cutting cops why not use vacancy savings for other programs. The saving plan adopted by the council two years ago was about building capacity in a fast growing city and let's be honest, the city is losing population and crime isn't going down. When it comes to the budget, somehow the debate every summer ends up being about cutting cops to invest in other programs and services. What's forcing us to choose between adequate police staffing and responses. No one knows the responses of cutting 100 police positions but what we do know is despite the stay home orders crime has gone up in the first half of this

[11:34:10 AM]

year. Murder is up 64% with four more homicides since the end of June. Rape is up. Auto thefts up. Building thefts, robberies, assaults and burglaries have also increased. Defunding the police doesn't hurt bad cops, it only hurts the community. Everyone deserves to be safe and at some point we all have to take responsibility for making change, not just using the police budget as a proxy. Social justice activists have asked us to imagine a world without police and that's a world we all want to live in. It's just not the world we do live in. Everyday 1,076 Austin police officers go with the family, friends and neighborhoods safe. They deserve our appreciation and gratitude. And after all they're only doing what the community is asked of them, which frankly is everything. Thank you.

[11:35:12 AM]

>> Colby Castro.

>> Everyone deserves to feel safe in their neighborhoods. How do we do that? Partly it's adequate public safety resources. For the 11th and soon to be tenth largest city in the country, we have to face urban challenges. Are we doing enough to ensure that the city has adequate emergency medical, fire and police services? It's not just the police staffing. There's also adding ambulances, community health, paramedics and clinical specialists for ems. It's making sure the fire department can add stations as the city grows and has a resources to implement the wild land urban interface code. For more than two decades, the greater Austin crime admission has supported central Texas first responders and promoted public safety planning. Our board of 60 business and community leaders is as -- is just as committed to the purpose now as it was in 1997 when the great mayor Roy butler and the others founded the organization. The crime commission has

[11:36:12 AM]

worked to be constructive, solution oriented partner at city hall. This public policy discussions while often difficult are always essential. Our request today is simple. Please consider how the budget decisions you make in the next several weeks will impact our city for years to come. I thank you all for your public service and thank you for allowing me to speak today.

>> Kylie hangs.

>> I am speaking as a resident of district 9 today. I am completely ashamed and disgusted with city manager cronk who thinks that decreasing APD budget by 0.03% is enough when heavy schools losing funding,

[indiscernible] Needing donations to get through a pandemic and -- chief Manley should be fired. I've seen firsthand, officers in the last week

[11:37:13 AM]

have violently targeted peaceful protest leaders, organizers, media and dead Mexico. I also saw the video of heir ram as he's overcome with police and the mob of officers attacked him. He was charged later with resisting arrest. No wonder we don't have people like Portland. We don't need them. They are doing a great job of arresting citizens on their own. If this is not to be true we must defund Austin police department by at least 50%. With the third-party overseen as complete abolition. Use that money to fund all other community services across the city. Fire cronk, firemanly. I yield the rest of my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Courtney Mallon.

>> Hello?

>> Mayor Adler: Please go ahead.

>> Hi okay. My name is Courtney. I've been a citizen of Austin since 2008 when I

[11:38:14 AM]

came to UT for grad school. And in that time I've seen the city move further and further away from what it wants to be and what it is. The allocations in Spencer cronk's proposed budget, particularly the disproportionately amount allocated to APD does not show evidence based building practices, nor the needs of our community. The small reduction is especially painful following justifiable outcry about the multiple egregious failures of the agency. I feel you have a duty as elected officials and a moral

obligation as fellow citizens to allocate resources in a smarter, more effective manner. It's ridiculous to me that we fund any such be link rant entity that refuses accountability on a basic level. I understand that APD has a storm track he will hold on some fronting, but it is within your power to hold the reduce of power and reduce the funding as requested by the Austin justice coalition and ccuc and for appropriately

[11:39:15 AM]

trained human services and health care entities. We already have highly trained professionals that can and should address mental health, affordable housing, violence, equity issues. We have the knowledge and people power to make a real lasting difference with reallocated funds. I would gladly give up

[indiscernible] For that. Please reduce the APD budget by at least 50% and reinvest in the help and safety of your larger block of constituents. We know how to do this, so let's do this. Thank you for your time.

>> Maddie Bratt.

>> Hi. My name is Maddie Bratt and I live in district 9. I'm calling to represent the all my leftists live in Texas broadcast. And I want to say that the proposed 150,000-dollar decrease to APD is insulting, intentionally miss pleading and absolutely disgusting. Additional the manner of this call is completely

[11:40:15 AM]

inaccessible. I'm literally making sandwiches right now in the middle of the lunch rush. We should have more control. There are so many voices who can't be a part of of this conversation because of how inaccessible you've made it. Additionally sponsor cronk ignored ems's desperate pleas for four new ambulances even though we're in the middle of a health pandemic. We need more ambulances. We don't need more cops. Maybe if they were good cops, but there's not. All they do as we've seen time and time again is unfairly, unfairly hurt our

[indiscernible] Community and it's time that it needs to stop. Defund APD no less than \$100 million. And reject any budget plans that doesn't meet those demands. Put those funds into ems, into mental health and make this system more accessible. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

[11:41:15 AM]

>> Ryan Pollock.

>> Can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Please proceed.

>> Hi. This is Ryan Pollock P I'm a former resident of representative Pio's district, not a resident of councilmember Paige Ellis' district. Also a I've been in front of you many times speaking on this subject and getting pretty tired of of it and also this point frankly tired of feeling like I'm not being heard or that the rest of the city is not being heard. Particularly with regards to Mr. Cronk's doubling down on his poor priorities. In which case I would like you all to reconsider his position in the future. I'd also like to say that

[11:42:19 AM]

I've been here for 15 years and I don't feel like my quality of life is increasing. I feel like it's gone downhill. I'd like to see more investment in just quality of life and I don't feel like we're getting that by investing in APD. If you look at the numbers, it's a very poor investment. We're not getting much bang for our bucks. And it's just terrible all around. And as you can hear from all these people, as outreach heard many times before, I'm not alone in that feeling. So I want you all to remember, and I know you all have seen especially in this most recent election, but Austin dsa has 1100 trained people. If your note going to listen to us today or in the future when we bring it up, we will remember that and we will replace you. Thank you, have a good day.

[11:43:20 AM]

>> Okay. If there are any speakers on the line, please press 0. Okay, mayor, that concludes all the speakers.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Colleagues, again, it's 11:43. We're going to now break and recess until 1:00 to do the next block. I want to remind all the speakers that it's two minutes and we're cutting off at two minutes sharp in order to make sure that everyone fills the block. I want to remind everybody that these are emotional topics. We're going to let everyone speak to them, but we're not going to allow attacks on people or claims about people's motivations.

[11:44:22 AM]

This is a tough time for all of us and we need to make sure that we are as kind as we can be during this period. Council, if there's any more specific direction that the dais wants to give me in terms of how to run decorum, let me know. Anything else before we take a break to come back at 1:00? All right, council, then at 11:44, we are in recess until 1:00.

[12:11:25 PM]

Test, 1,.

[1:01:19 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: It is 1:00. We have a quorum. I'm showing councilmembers kitchen, tovo, pool, Ellis, Renteria, and myself here. That means there is a quorum. Again, 1:00. This is Thursday, July 23rd, 2020. We are in the special called meeting. Two items that we're asking people to be able to speak on one is just general comments to us on the budget, and the second concerns the item we will vote on later today, a public hearing on July 30th for proposed rates and fee changes as part of 2020-2021 proposed budget. We want to remind everybody who signed up as a speaker, we've assigned people by blocks. We have to stay with those blocks.

[1:02:19 PM]

So every speaker is limited to two minutes. And at the end of two minutes, we're stopping people and immediately moving to the next speaker. I apologize for the abruptness that that may cause or foresee, but we need to work through this. And, again, I'll remind everybody that the issues we're discussing here are obviously issues of great significance and importance. Issues that people have invested a lot of themselves, a lot of issues that people very, very strongly about. And my colleagues and council are urging everybody to try to have this meeting go forward in a way that respects that different people have different views, different priorities, different ways of sometimes achieving the

[1:03:20 PM]

same result, and that in this time, there is so much stress and anxiety. We're doing our best to try to be as kind to one another as -- as we can. Colleagues, do you have anything before I ask staff to go ahead and start recognizing the speakers? All right. Then we'll go ahead and proceed. The clerk will call the next batch, this is the batch that goes from 1:00 to 3:00.

>> Okay. To all the speakers, if you have not already, please press 0. The first speaker is Ron Schaefer. Go ahead.

>> Yes. I'm downstairs.

[1:04:20 PM]

I'm trying to get to speak in person because I am [indiscernible]

>> Continue to speak, sir.

>> I'm sorry?

>> I think he's asking for accommodations.

>> I'm sorry?

>> Mayor Adler: So, sir, there is no place physically to go to, to be able to speak in person to us. But we can all hear you. Why don't you speak on the telephone.

>> Okay. I believe you all have gotten my text that I'd written regarding my point that I wished to have considered. By way of professional background, I am a cpa,

[1:05:23 PM]

certified internal auditor. I worked in the financial area for the state for a little over 30 years. So I know my way around management and contract management. Part of my concern is that the current situation for chief of police does not appear to be willing to address the toxic culture within the police department. The police chief and the city manager need to develop an immediate action plan, with deadlines, to be able to enable the police department to treat citizens with respect and

[1:06:25 PM]

dignity like they would like to be treated themselves. And by the council's inaction or indecisiveness on this matter, they're enabling the situation to continue as is.

[Indiscernible] About the situation because the states frankly are out of control. They demand people to take control of the states from us and not have a situation on the states where people feel safe and secure. And the police department and their culture aren't doing this and enabling this situation to continue. I have a person that I know that works in

[1:07:27 PM]

counseling that knows that people

[indiscernible] Are flocking to Austin as fast as they can because they know the police department will allow them here to just carry on their merry way and inflict damage onto Austin and the police department won't do anything about it because of the toxic culture. We need to take away the militaristic control, attitude, and get back to situations -- so the streets of Austin are once again safe and secure. If chief Manley and the able to get that to happen, we need to find

[1:08:28 PM]

somebody else who's up for the job, frankly. And I would encourage the upper -- the members of the council to listen for the public safety.

[Indiscernible] Council member Flannigan, I've seen him on TV, and he's truly, honestly, off the record, for whatever reason, members of council have their own agenda and doesn't feel like listening to him, trying to get their attention on this issue.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> And in that, I've said with that, I've said my peace.

>> Mayor Adler: Next speaker?

>> Next speaker is Sonya Kelly.

>> Hi. Yes. My name is Sonya. I'm a resident of

[1:09:29 PM]

district 1. I just want to say thank you for hearing me today and the community on budget issues. I really appreciate all the hard work you do on this council, especially you, Natasha, I'm happy to have you. The budget of 100 million of APD into mental health services, what the city wants and needs is a 24-hour mental health response team, as well as improvements to homeless shelters and outreach programs, and that is just a start. So I truly believe that many of you want this as much as I do and as much as the rest of this community does, and I do understand that you're up against a lot, so I encourage you to be bold with this budget. And I'm ready to do the work required to support you and our community. Also, chief Manley must resign. And I really like the idea of having multiplies

[1:10:32 PM]

chiefs and requiring several, you know, if not most of those seats to be filled with black and brown bodies. So thank you for listening.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Jason spurlal.purgal.

>> Hello?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes. Please proceed.

>> I represent district 4 and I'm opposed to proposition 2, I'm 2, because we've done plenty of studying on it, and after seeing what the police decide to open fire on peaceful protesters in front of the police station, that really tore my heart. So amongst other things, I'm really glad to see that Mike Ramos's mother, I believe it was, that called in earlier, represented her feeling, and this is amazing how much violence there is just in our so-called protected forces. So if we would just

[1:11:32 PM]

decriminalize a lot of things and make things not a crime, then there wouldn't be reason to police them. And, you know, if we just allocate at least half of the funds of the 400-plus million dollars that you spend on these people who like to shoot innocent people, like children, then we can reinforce the east side and bring some food and more schools and more libraries over there, give people reason not to be out committing crimes, you know? I just don't understand why anyone would allow it and why there's so much talk about it. Manley needs to go. There's no reason to have a militarized police. And on top of that, if here in Texas or anyplace, just like in Portland and other cities, we have federalized unmarked police, we have a real

[1:12:33 PM]

problem. I'm not trying to threaten anyone, I'm saying the police are doing the harm here. But if that's what it takes to demilitarize so we do not have this kind of violence, I already understand there's been studies done on this, so we don't need to restudy it, we need to take action. Okay? It really --

[buzzer sounding]

>> I appreciate the time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much for your time today, sir. Next speaker?

>> Eliza Epstein.

>> Thank you, council and staff for the work that you've done to make this testimony process more accessible. I know there's some more work to be done, but I appreciate the staff for what they have accomplished so far. My name is Eliza Epstein, I live in district 5. I'm here to support the demands of

[indiscernible] To defund the Austin police department 50%, invest money in real solutions, in other words, the

[1:13:34 PM]

equity office, Austin public health, and low income housing, to remedy longstanding inequities by communities of color in Austin. But I'm also speaking directly to council member kitchen. On your Twitter and in your emails, you frequently applaud colleagues and community members for their leadership. Today I ask you to lead, to lead the way in listening to the demands of the people most negatively impacted by the existing policy that uphold police violence and white supremacy. I ask you to double down on your sadness and frustration, get angry, get radicalized, lead us towards transformational change. Also, chief Manley must resign. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker?

>> Jeffrey Clemons.

>> Hello. I'm a citizen of district 3. While I'm thankful for all the work done by council,

[1:14:35 PM]

the budget exposed an incredible lack of imagination and moral courage on part of the city manager's leadership. The longer than we take to make significant change, the longer than change will take. Why should we be satisfied with small steps when we are more than capable of making great leaps forward. We have deluded ourselves to -- let's recognize lives have already been disrupted by institutions granted the ability to monopolize violence. It's often been said police kill more white people than black people. The job of an officer is make arrest, not judgment on the value of someone's life. Our streets showed in the be the sites of personal abuse. There is no high threat situation which makes it disproportionate violence that ends in the disregard of human and civil rights.

[1:15:36 PM]

By not taking a stronger step, we are only enabling the further violence in our community. I believe the real public safety and community health begins with a critical appreciation and recenterring of human life in Austin. I'm calling on the city to seriously consider their budget proposal and take a step toward

our possible future with a 100,000 reduction -- led by community members and organizations. The money for these things has a clear and obvious source, a source which has long been a albatross on the neck of the city. Thank you all for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much.

>> Eric Nelson.

>> Hello. Thank you, I'm a resident of district 4. The budget proposal set forward by city manager Spencer cronk which only reduces the \$400 million police budget by 100k is an

[1:16:36 PM]

insult to the nationwide movement led to protect black lives. We do not need police and have resolved problems and needs without them for thousands of years. The modern concept of police was -- this modern police state and prison industrial complex were designed to be engines of economic and racial violence and domination. Racist groups and people have always understood this. And that is why racism is endemic to cops and why they historically and continually coordinate openly with right wing and racist groups like the kkk. Reform is not a tool to reverse the fundamental design structure and purpose of an institution. Civil rights leader Dr. Angela Davis has said we are trapped on a treadmill of reform. A cop used a chokehold to

[1:17:36 PM]

kill Eric Garner. Community oversight boards will not fundamentally change the behavior of the police because months of the violence is completely legal. The police are -- to criminalize and incarcerate the victims, inequality. I stand in solidarity with the working last and leaders who are calling for the complete abolition of the police. Read more about why and how at abolition.com. We take that commitment seriously and we must call for Spencer cronk's resignation. His proposed budget is on attack --

[buzzer sounding]

>> David king.

[1:18:37 PM]

>> Hello. Can you hear me?

>> Yes.

>> Thank you. My name is David king and I live in city council district 5. Please implement the following real budget recommendations from communities of color united, go Austin, vamos Austin, grass roots leadership and Austin justice coalition. Reallocate at least \$100 million from the Austin police department budget and other sources to invest at least \$70 million in rise cash assistance programs, to relieve financial strain especially on Austin's black and Latin X residents, invest in Austin public health and provide equitable services to black and latinx communities and invest in our parks and provide funding for lighting and green spaces. Invest in housing for low and low-income families in Austin. Invest in and empower the

[1:19:38 PM]

equity office and the civil rights office. Invest in resiliency and anti-displacement programs including rental assistance, downpayment assistance, home repair, transportation services, and digital services that directly benefit communities of colors and low-income families in the eastern crescent. Invest in transit orient anti-displacement programs to help prevent involuntary displacement of families of color in project connect. Fund an equitable process for a new chief of police. Inequitable public policies and budgets adopted by this and previous councils have facilitated gentrification and involuntary displacement of communities in color in the eastern crescent. Now these families and communities are literally fighting for their lives to survive the covid-19 pandemic. Please enact policies and adopt a budget that will help sustain and strengthen them now. Thank you for listening to my comments and for your service.

[1:20:38 PM]

>> Gabby bavia.

>> Hello, I'm 26, Mexican, born and raised in Austin, Texas, briefly served on the Austin imagine plan. I want to make clear defunding the police is 100% about improving public safety and walk us through the data that provides the evidence. Austin's violent crime rate in 2014 was 3.96 making Austin the second safest city of large U.S. Cities in violent crime. Among fatalities, APD and sheriff's deputies between 2009 and 2019 accounted for four deaths. Civilians murdered by APD accounted for 15 deaths. And among the people who actually build our city, construction workers, accounted for 39 deaths. Construction workers make half the average salary of a police officer.

[1:21:38 PM]

They build our homes, businesses and public spaces. It's one of the most dangerous professions. With the birds eye view of you a employees police compared to construction workers are a far cry from

having the most dangerous occupation claimed by blue lives matter. 97% of the ten leading causes of death in Travis county from 2010 to 2014 were health and/or accident related. .5% were homicides. Suicide accounted for 2.7% of deaths. Of those committing suicide, 78.8% are white, non-latinx and the victims of homicide account for 34.6% are white, non-latinx. Compared with 51.4% of population of white people in Travis county and severe disproportion analyst. Of the officers responsible for shooting civilians, 76%

[1:22:39 PM]

are non-latinx white men. Of the terrorist attacks, all four from the 1960 U.T. Bombers --

[buzzer sounding]

>> And the --

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you for your time. Next speaker.

>> Arile silva.

>> Hi there. I'm a resident of Austin district 9. I'm calling today to demand that the Austin city council approve a budget that defunds the police department by \$100 million and instead use that money to fund social services and jobs, affordable housing, public health and direct economic assistance. So the police don't have the tools and neither should they be responsible for emergency crisis response. Such as drug addiction and

[1:23:41 PM]

homelessness or mental health illnesses. A lot of the time the police actually cause more harm. As someone who presently has experienced mental health crises, I know how critical it is to have the knowledge and training to help the person at that moment to deescalate the situation. And I personally am privileged enough to be able to access mental health services. Unfortunately even people very close to me who do not have the monetary means to access mental health help get to a point where there's a crisis and the police are needed to call, and that's really unfortunate. I feel very privileged. The police were not meant to -- were not established for this purpose and like somebody else said defunding the police is 100% of all

[1:24:44 PM]

public safety that is absolutely true and it's time that we are smart about where we're using that money. I want to read a quote from June 27th of 1865, Thomas ward, Austin city mayor, held a special city council something's --

[buzzer sounding]

>> And said -- anyway, defund -- I just want to say.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you for your time today. Next speaker.

>> Paulette blank.

>> Can everyone hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes, please go ahead.

>> Good afternoon, council. My name is Paulette blank. We stand in solidarity with other groups like Austin justice coalition who have done an amazing job of gathering community input and voice for a better budget. The city budget is an opportunity for us as a city to determine where our values lie and the plans we

[1:25:45 PM]

have for our future. It's 2020 and the projected budget is showing that our future will look no different than the past. The same commitments to the institutional system that perpetuate racism, the same arrangements with the police department, the same lack of investment in community-led innovations and the same outcomes the police violence, killing of unarmed people, that the data and reports show is increasing over the years. And it's our black and brown people who are most at risk for being recipients of that violence. We'll get to spend more money on lawsuits and payments related to police misconduct. We'll get to watch the horrific toll that the culture of policing takes on our officers' well-being because the policing isn't designed for compassionate humans. The current budget says we're okay with those outcomes. What if we chose to do something different.

[1:26:45 PM]

Councilmembers, we urge you to -- our values of being an equity believe city safe for all. Our values of being a Progressive city that thrives on innovation and create activity. We need a budget that reflects our commitment to ending racism. A public health crisis that has plagued the city and the birth of this nation. We need a budget that reflects our progression from punitive systems of police to go focus on community wellness. We need to create jobs that allow people to be servant leaders in our communities.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Necessitated of jobs that -- instead of jobs --

>> Mayor Adler: Next speaker.

>> Robert Nathan. Robert Nathan.

>> Hi, can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes, please proceed.

[1:27:47 PM]

>> Thank you. I live and work in district 7. Thank you all for your dedication to making our city better. Before March, 1% of the food consumed in Austin -- and one in four children

[indiscernible]. Unacceptable before the pandemic and since March this has exploded. I see 12 of you on my screen. Four of you would be food insecure meaning you don't know where your next meal is coming from. You would have to decide between feeding your kids or yourself or paying the rent or keeping the electric on. That is not okay. I'm here to speak in support of our local food system. We have to realign our food system and I'm here to speak in support of the recommendation passed unanimously on June 12 by the food policy board. They state the covid-19 demonstrates a food system formed and -- and people of

[1:28:48 PM]

color needs -- to the community and urgent need to invest significant resources in order to address the crisis. Covid-19 has revealed a -- in terms of planning, resiliency and coordination. In really this takes people power. A shout out to he had Edwin Marty and commandmentser knight. And but it's not their job. It's not the department of health's job. We need to have people working full time specifically on food, producing food, growing food, getting it into the hands of people who need it especially now. If kids don't have the food they need they are not going to grow up to be Austin's leaders. It's only -- only going to lead to more health care costs and more costs. This is a good investment and the policy board has

[1:29:51 PM]

given you --

[buzzer sounding]

>> Purpose and thank you for your time.

>> To all the speakers, if you have not pressed zero, please do so at this time. Thank you. The next speaker is Jacob Aronowitz.

>> Hello and good afternoon. I think this is a really important topic and I thank you all for your service and for taking this on. I'm here in support today of the proposals and the framework put forward by communities of color, grass roots leadership, Austin justice coalition and so many other leading organizations. We really need to defund the police substantially, \$100 million or more, reallocate those resources to programs and other systems that build up capacity in our communities, that build people up instead

[1:30:52 PM]

of tearing people down. And we've seen over the past week the incredible brutality that frankly our own police forces have brought to bear on people exercising constitutional right and it's beyond unacceptable. This isn't just about repercussions, though, this is about a framework and a structure of good policy making and good budgeting as budgets are moral documents, we should uphold our communities and make them stronger instead of attacking and terrifying them. I also come to you today as, you know, someone who has worked on political projects in this city, active with united professional organizers, a union representing campaign workers, many of whom have worked on either you all's campaigns or closely aligned efforts. And a lot of our members are subject to police interdiction, police violence, subject to overpolicing as they are doing their jobs to try to spread important messages, and many of our members have

[1:31:54 PM]

joined the protests or joined in support of the protests and have been brutalized by police under the discipline of people they help to elect. I think this is a microcosm of how a lot of this city feels. We believe in you all as Progressive leaders of this city and we need to see action commensurate with that faith and fidelity in this important budget document in our communities and nation's history.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Next speaker.

>> Jan marguiles.

>> I live in district 1 and I'm asking you to defund APD by 50% of support real solutions. The rise funds, the equity Austin, Austin public health and low-income housing. For years devoted the lion's share and starved our city of resources we need to take care of our community. The proposed budget

[1:32:55 PM]

unfortunately does not fundamentally alter this. We must make deeper reallocations. The 50% cut to APD that grass roots leadership and ccu are calling for will make a real shift in building a new infrastructure of public safety and equity in Austin. As Dr. King said in Montgomery, we cannot afford to slow up. We have a moral obligation to press on. Now is not the time to go slow on reimagining public safety. It's the time to press on. This will be a long-term process, but we have to seize this moment and seize the opportunity to take bigger first steps to narrow the scope of policing, divest from APD and reinvest in our community. I also ask council to consider the inaccessibility of the current public comment process for groups most directly impacted who might not have flexible work hours or consistent phone access and face other barriers to participation. Please consider more options for even more accessible public comment. Also chief Manley must resign. Thank you.

[1:33:57 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: Next speaker.

>> Monica Guzman.

>> Good afternoon. I'm Monica Guzman, policy director for gave. The public safety equals public health. The APD budget is more than one-third of the city's budget. The city manager's proposed 111.3 reallocation is only a drop in the bucket. We urge council to reallocate funds from APD and other sources to increase funding for these critical needs that will support better public safety and health equity. We urge continued and increase fund to go rise fund. Remove obstacles and hoops to jump through. Relieve financial strain, especially on Austin's black and latinx communities. Prevent further spread of the virus. Invest in Austin public health. Ensure they hire more

[1:35:00 PM]

epidemiologists and nurses. Increase -- to dispro forks nature impacted communities. Increase messaging in Spanish and other languages and fund partnerships with community organizations and neighborhoods hit hardest to increase access to food and other basic needs. Invest equitable in parks to ensure lighting and language accessible programming in Austin's eastern crescent parks. Double the commitment to lighting in districts 1 through 5. Lighting is proven to decrease crime. Allocate resources for green spaces equitable not equally among the ten districts. Consider the pandemic and evaluate climate shocks and investors in Austin's green spaces. To quote mayor Adler, the movement is 2 work of our tie lime. We must rise to the occasion. People are angry, fed up, tired, scared, outraged. We urge council to stand by its pledge to address systemic inequities and rise

[1:36:00 PM]

to the occasion by re allocating APD funding to invest in the community.

>> Amy Weis.

>> Hi. My name is Amy and I'm a resident of district 1 and first I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak in opposition of the proposed budget. I'd like to add that I won't support any budget that doesn't cut funding to APD by at least \$100 million. And also redirect those funds to social services that have been proven to reduce crime like substance abuse programs, workforce development, counseling and mental health services. And I'll explain why. Putting aside the racial bias and disparity in policing and the justice system, and the use of force and abuse of the power that we've seen and have been

[1:37:02 PM]

documented by APD specifically and the police more broadly nationwide, policing doesn't prevent crime. Anyone who has ever been stalked can tell you that firsthand. At if very best and most generous, policing interrupts crime that is in progress. And if we as a community want to prevent crime, we need to get serious about how you do that. And that is not through endless investment, massive investment over decades into policing. I think if we look closely, we'll see that we are not seeing a great return on that investment. The community has been very loud and very clear about the vision that we see for our community as more equitable and just. And I think it's time to try

[1:38:04 PM]

something new and realize that vision for Austin, and I hope that city council will have the vision and the political courage to make that happen. I would also like to add that if city manager cronk will not replace chief Manley --

[buzzer sounding]

-- City council needs to replace cronk. Thank you.

>> Claudia Sperber.

>> I'm calling in to say that the current proposed cuts to police budget are completely insufficient. Community organizations like Austin justice coalition have asked you cut between 100 million and 225 million from the police department this year, but you have -- city manager has asked you to reduce it by \$23 million, which could be done by eliminating unfilled positions. I've lived in Austin 40 years and I've never spoken at a council meeting before. I used to be too radical and

[1:39:05 PM]

now I was cynical and hopeless, now I'm grabbing on to a slim thread of hope. How consistently city government has failed to ensure that police really respond to needs of the community. 20 years ago my neighborhood association, mostly elderly people, were asking for better police response to crime in their community. That didn't happen until the community got whiter and wealthier and that -- other people's color when policing was increased. We're now at a point where the community is demanding changes across Austin and the country and we need our city government to spanned. It's not a simple fix. Officers are real men and women, believe in their work, take pride in their jobs, but defund police doesn't mean fire the officers tomorrow. Very specific ways we can redirect our budget. We must remove chief Manley. The department has to have leadership responsive to the community. You can start this process by requesting his resignation and requiring a

[1:40:06 PM]

budget that immediately reduces the police budget by the \$23 million minimum you've already recommended. Then begin the work right away to further reduce the budget by recommend -- we can redefine our community in a way that helps all of us, not only working towards saving black lives but making a healthier and safer community for all austinians. I urge you to please take this action. Thank you.

>> Beverly lasar.

>> Hi, can you hear me?

>> Yes.

>> Hi, can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes, please proceed.

>> Okay. Hi everyone. My name is Beverly lasar and I represent district 8 and the Austin justice coalition and in case I get cut off

[1:41:07 PM]

I'll say what I was going to say at the end right now. And I think that chief Manley needs to resign and if he does not then city manager cronk needs to be let go. APD needs to be defunded by at least 50%. I urge you to stand strong with the community and support the following specific changes to city manager's budget. Cut all open positions. Cut all cadets for this fiscal year because reports from various academy audits have made it clear we cannot reopen the police academy this year if we want to change police culture. I think most of you were at the city council meeting when several people who had attended cadet classes spoke and it was very

[1:42:09 PM]

illuminating, but also horrific. I urge you to cut most of the overtime budget and require a fund by fund review at the police department and slash funds that are not needed for -- not needed or not spent. Cut divisions we don't need and redirect those sworn officers back to criminal investigation. I believe these listed cuts are a good start, but then you need to listen to the community voices.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Mayor Adler: Next speaker.

>> Megan scornia.

>> Hello, council and thank you for your time. I live in district 1 and I'm here to support the message of my black and brown friends and neighbors. I'm upset and embarrassed by the budget and insulted by the fact when you dive into

[1:43:10 PM]

the numbers it's much lower fending that he tried to reflect. I'm disgusted to see city manager cronk is so overtly racist as to submit a budget that will no doubt lead to injury and death of more black and brown people and to try to sell it to us as Progressive. When I think about what is wrong with the city of Austin, Brian Manley, Spencer cronk and Chris Taylor come to mind. What is right about Austin, I think about many of you on council to whom I'm speaking today. Please remove these racist leaders and replace them with people who care about friends, neighbors and co-workers. Insist the Austin police department be defunded by at least 100 million. I don't care about political cover, who appointed who, donated to who and I don't care how it's usually done. These are gas lighting terms used to uphold systems of oppression and have no place in the city. Mayor Adler, I appreciate your call for kindness, but I cannot be kind to white

[1:44:11 PM]

men who are taking action to continue inequity in police brutality. Please do the right thing and most importantly so people like Justin Howell don't have to be killed at the hands of white men ever leading this city again. Thank you.

>> Amanda Phillips.

>> Hi, I'm a community manager for blue spot that makes community involvement accessible to everyone. I'm a third generation resident of district 3. I'm disgusted that APD after severely injuring a

16-year-old child, a pregnant woman and shooting lethal rounds at residents are on trying to pass such an in facilitated budget. We need to -- who told members two days ago to stop, he said quote, answer your calls and that is it. I want Austin Justin berry

[1:45:11 PM]

who got his -- delivered to protesters, we don't want your cookies, we want justice. We need police officers like Christopher Taylor who murdered Mike Ramos to be fired, officers who arrested local Austin journalist Garcia and broke his equipment this past weekend to be fired. I'm a survivor of domestic violence. I called APD before the violence escalated. The officers who showed up are not trained to help me. All of the women shelters were full and wouldn't take me and my son in. I was told to stay with my abuser until I had more proof of his violence. Only when my back was covered in third degree burns did APD make an arrest. Just for the record, I was not offered snacks so I'm not sure where those 3,000 worth of snacks went. We need to defund APD by at least \$100 million and allocate that budge total mental health and community resources. We need more shelters and

[1:46:12 PM]

resources for domestic violence survivors through children and the homeless people of Austin. We need health care for those affected by covid-19. We need resources to prevent violence. Stop asking us to wait for violence to be met with violence. Spencer cronk and mayor Adler, the community is watching your actions to make sure you do everything in your power to protect us. We are tired of being hurt, but we are more tired of --

[buzzer sounding]

>> Sidney Landry.

>> Hi, my name is Sidney and I live in district 7 and emetology to say I'm disappointed in the budget presented because it seems more concerned with maintaining status quo than reimaging public safety. I'm scared because over the last few months it's become apparent the city is more -- emergency health services or affordable housing. I'm not asking for a

[1:47:13 PM]

specific number, but I am asking to be bold and cultural shift amongst not only APD but Austin in general because until Austin starts to embrace the needs of citizens in color, I don't think the addition of a sensitivity course is enough. Officers who use abusive force -- we need accountability and start leaving room for -- we have to recognize good police work doesn't involve tear gas or outfitting officers for war.

It doesn't involve tearing down homeless camps or as one caller mentioned breaking their arms. It doesn't involve peaceful protesters acting like war criminals. I'm trying to get at we need to move away from that method of thinking, move away from a culture that prioritizes sending the police for every situation and where citizens assumed

[1:48:13 PM]

an arm officer is the person to call when they see a homeless person. Properly trained mental health workers, social workers and emts. Prioritizing people as human beings and not as problems and I do not see police chief Manley or city manager cronk bringing about those changes. Thank you very much.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Brian register.

>> Hey, can you all hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes, please go.

>> Hey, so I'm here with Austin justice coalition, all those names and stuff. So, you know, budget first proposal is obviously a negotiating point. People say we want 100 million removed. We know we're not going to get that. But when Spencer cronk put up this budget, he was saying clearly which side of the negotiations he and the city council were going to be on. This is a budget that says that the tens of thousands

[1:49:14 PM]

of people who you were with, mayor, when we marched a few weeks ago, those are the people this budget is against and we're going to have to negotiate against. It's a pretty straightforward declaration of values. That is -- as a number of people have said, an insult. A huge number of people who have done an enormous amount of work on this issue. I'll close out by pointing out that any time anybody brings actual facts or figures or historical -- they are invariably on the side of substantial police reform. The other side has scared old white people. They don't have data to support their claims. Please try to negotiate on behalf of the people of the city of Austin rather than against them. And pay attention to facts that had been brought to your attention. Thank you. Have a good afternoon.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank U.

>> Richard Garland.

[1:50:16 PM]

>> Hi, can you hear me?

>> Yes, go ahead.

>> Hello, can you hear me? All right. Well, I just wanted to echo a sentiment from a gentleman and he said these words, paraphrasing during a town hall meeting. To translate for Austin, this budget has 434 million dedicated to APD safety. 20% of officers live within city limits, according to the statesman. Within the last couple years, which means at least 250 million of our budget yearly goes directly to salaries of officers who invest outside of the city. Outside of our community. So we're giving away that much of our budget to fund the suburbs. I don't understand how you can be so tone deaf to propose this budget which reflects you have not listened to your community one bit in the last couple

[1:51:18 PM]

months. I call for council to replace cronk if this budget is not drastically altered in a town that has witnessed firsthand the way in which police operate with no outside review, with chief Manley, Margaret Moore at the helm, I have no faith to make any meaningful change as has shown. Communities of color. Citywide calls for man Lee's resignation and your inaction is glaring and lack of courage to steer us away from union influence will only lose control of your city more until you put new leadership in place. Council, we need you to be bold. We're in a pandemic, an economic crisis. I stand with my community, Austin justice coalition, to reallocate at least 100 million away from the police and begin healing our community from police violence, covid-19, steer it toward affordable housing. We need food, not guns. Housing, not police. No more time to look into

[1:52:19 PM]

things. You need to do something now. We have the means and you just need the courage to do it. Violence and suffering is happening now.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Next speaker.

>> Benjamin Chantos.

>> I'm a resident of district 9. I appreciate you for having me. A study was released earlier that showcased the Austin police department in 2018. Black austinites were subject 15% of all traffic stops and make up 33% of the incarcerated population in Travis county, but less than 10% of the population. Austin police department has refused to adhere to their own policies. Afters in riot gear, peaceful protests for weeks after the less lethal munition was banned. Less than 48 hours after banning chokeholds --

[1:53:20 PM]

refused to cooperate with police oversight to the video of Mike Ramos' murder can be released to the public. These peaceful protests continue outside of APD and week after week peaceful protesters are corralled, pepper sprayed, beaten with batons, charged by mounted law enforcement officers, wrongly arrested and beaten while in handcuffs. Adopting of the budget will only -- properties of force. On average there's \$228,000 per officer per year. Can you imagine if that amount of money were allocated to our educators, our public health and social workers? How about funding or having initiative instead of letting save Austin now attempt to criminalize aspects of -- if Brian Manley can keep his -- and Spencer Cronk will -- reducing Austin police

[1:54:21 PM]

department's exorbitant budget by 50% is the just and equitable way moving forward. You must protect those people who you promise to represent. Thank you for having us.

>> Kenya Gillespie.

>> I'm a resident of district 1 in support of the request for at least \$100 million to be reallocated from APD. I believe it's unnecessary that a majority 40% of the city general fund budget goes to the police. Austin to invest in programs that reimagine the community and support those who are most vulnerable. The proposed \$11 million cut to police bringing APD's budget to the same level as last year is a weak overture to the Austin community. If this budget is approved, I have to ask have we learned anything from the last two months of protests following the deaths. Have we learned anything

[1:55:21 PM]

from the violence that APD inflicted on Austin's own citizens? I'm asking you to please consider reinvesting of things that will actually help citizens of Austin. An increased mental health, harm reduction programs, youth education programs, community housing. Austin public health to help those in need during our current pandemic. And perhaps most importantly violence prevention and survivor support department. This department would ultimately help police by taking off the owed -- not necessarily qualified to do. Other than obviously saving people's lives, violence prevention saves cities an enormous amount of money. There's less spending on police departments and courts. Higher revenues from income earned by people who otherwise would have been crime victims or perpetrators. Rising housing values and higher property tax revenues in neighborhoods where homicides are reduced. In the long term business

[1:56:22 PM]

investment in those neighborhoods. The national institute for criminal justice reform conducted a detailed study on the real costs of gun violence in eight cities including our neighboring city of Dallas. In Dallas the total cost of one shooting homicide, \$1.1 million per death. Other cities are in a similar range. In contrast the cost to prevent one homicide is about \$30,000 in the connection of a city's violence prevention program. Please consider divesting \$100 million from APD and invest in the future of Austin and its citizens.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Fred tallyfoos.

>> Hi. I live in district 9. We have a budget that -- we need a budget that's defunds APD by at least \$100 million. As it stands the budget is

[1:57:23 PM]

unacceptable and clearly many others who calling in today. Shows the priority of the council is not to protect citizens but to protect its police department. I would encourage you if you are hedging non-action that moving too quickly could cause harm. A choice between no change which will cause the harm that it is already causing for austinites, particularly austinites of color and black austinites. And consider the other option, an evidence backed change that will likely help these austinites. Thinking about your choice in these terms makes it pretty clear as you make your choice what side of the story you fall on. Kind of summing it up, we need to have chief Manley resign and if not we need to see Spencer Cronk fired. In addition to that, we need to see the APD defunded by \$100 million. Any other outcomes are going to tell us exactly where the

[1:58:25 PM]

city council stands. Thank you for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Next speaker.

>> Harmony Stewart.

>> Hi, can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes, please go ahead.

>> Hi, harmony Stewart and I'm a grad student in the

[inaudible] Program at st.~edwards university. And a resident of district 1. Several months ago someone close to me was depressed and suicidal and I was so relieved to find out about integral's care mobile crisis outreach team who will send plain clothes responders to an individual's home. The last thing I want to is traumatize or treat someone like a criminal when they need mental health help.

[1:59:26 PM]

[Inaudible] The already traumatizing job of being a police officer. Police are human too and redefining the law just as protective as APD officers as it is civilians. Based on the Austin justice coalition, data on priorities gathered directly from Austin residents, I urge the council to reallocate at least 100 million from the APD to invest in resources that support safety and wellness for all. I ask you specifically prioritize funding for non-police first responders, community based substance abuse programs and affordable housing and community -- to reduce homelessness. Austin has a reputation of being a [inaudible], it's time we live up to that reputation by prioritizing resources for the most vulnerable in our community. Thank you for your time and service to the city.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

[2:00:27 PM]

Next speaker.

>> Olivia liu.

>> Hello. City of Austin budget office has been hard at work composing the 2021 budget proposal. While trying to integrate exacts of the covid-19 pandemic into the proposal, I'm concerned the budget proposal does not -- economic exacts of covid-19 and the budget office will not have time to integrate these changes and this will end up harming

[indiscernible] Community members. I'm concerned

[indiscernible] The city has doubled percentage of affordable housing from the 2011 budget through 2021 budget. In many ways the effects of covid-19 can be worse.

[Indiscernible] In the past decade and families were wiped out in the recession. Long-term health impacts of around 15 to 20% of covid patients. This budget is inadequate. Because of this inequality,

[2:01:28 PM]

the most vulnerable members of our community will be and have been impacted by covid-19. The federal relief funds do run out quickly. A part of the focus today on the Austin police department budget. There's only 3% more spending on neighborhood policing for the budget. Disciplinary teams and reformed to meet community demand must discuss where the \$210 million neighborhood policing has been spent. Further transparency is necessary. As the budget office notes, general fund will be less than expected, exacting spending across the board. We need to reallocate funds that we already have. I ask council to consider the following. First that the budget office begin additional time to review its proposal in light of the pandemic. Second, transparency and review line items for the

[2:02:29 PM]

policing budget and further detail in the current budgees, and third that the multi-disciplinary -- where neighborhood policing budget goes and show further where funds can be diverted to community support services to mitigate covid-19 impacts.

[Buzzer sounding] Thank you for your time. I urge you to continue to listen.

>> Paula Mcdermott.

>> Hello. I work at ACC to help --

[busy signal]

>> Mayor Adler: Did we just lose Paula?

>> We're checking on it, mayor.

>> Mayor Adler: We could go to the next speaker and Paula can call back in.

>> We don't know where that disconnection sound is

[2:03:30 PM]

coming from. We're trying to figure that out.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay.

[Busy signal] [End of busy signal]

>> Mayor Adler: Staff, are you with us?

>> We're working on it, mayor.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay.

[2:04:42 PM]

>> Your conference number followed by the pound key. You are joining event 63,957. City of Austin. In session, host meeting as speaker.

>> Okay, mayor. I'm going to try again. One second.

>> Mayor Adler: Sounds good.

>> Benjamin Steele.

>> Hi, good afternoon. Thank you, council, for -- am I good?

>> Mayor Adler: Go ahead.

>> Okay. Good afternoon, council. Thank you for giving me the time to speak. My name is Benjamin Steele, I live in district 9. I'm asking at least

[2:05:43 PM]

\$100 million is redistributed from what's currently been proposed for APD's budget. Since I've been in the workforce, I have consistently worked in social services which means that in my opinion I have good connections and I know who to call in a [inaudible] situation. Nevertheless, I think what we have right now in Austin is insufficient through personal experience. Since moving to Austin, I have had experienced mental health crisis including attempted suicide a couple years back. When I attempted to get in touch with mental health services through integral care, I was given a couple of different options. One of which was basically to wait a couple of hours for the plain clothes services brought up by previous speakers, or I could call APD. Which I see as a fail in

[2:06:43 PM]

response to mental health crisis in the past. Right now when we are in the middle of a crisis situation, we are expected to go to APD because we don't have enough funding to cover the mental health crisis services that our community desperately needs. And instead we're put into the hands of the police who we've seen are insufficiently prepared to handle this and that's because it should not be part of their job. What I am asking for is for a reallocation of \$100 million to be used to expand mental health crisis services to ensure people have been properly trained to respond to needs --

[buzzer sounding] If we don't reallocate these services --

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Next speaker.

>> The next speaker is Paula McDermott, who disconnected mid-sentence.

>> Mayor Adler: Please go ahead.

[2:07:54 PM]

>> Paula Mcdermott. Please unmute your phone if you are muted. Okay, we'll try back. Next speaker is gavino Fernandez.

>> Hello.

>> Mayor Adler: Go ahead. Your time is starting.

>> Good afternoon, council. My name is gavino Fernandez and I reside in -- [audio breaking up] And I just wanted to give comment and thank the voters for coming out this last election. Especially the young voters. In regards to what

[2:08:55 PM]

changes -- here in Travis county and -- [audio is breaking up] She was not going to send the Ramos and other case to the grand jury that institutional racism and the district attorney -- white supremacy. APD, give it up, we need change. On the ballot in November. You are going to approve this budget before that. If you don't take action on what the community really voted on already -- I urge you to consider chief Manley I want to make a personal plea, please resign.

[2:09:58 PM]

Maybe give you a contract to be a -- but we commend your service to the city, but it's time to move on. And this is the only way we're going to really believe that there's going to be a change between the police and our community. As to funding, I would like you to expand funding to the police activities league. Community policing is not a choice anymore. Community policing is something that must be funded and must be done in order to improve the relationship between our people and the police department and communities of color.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Mayor Adler: Next speaker.

>> Paula Mcdermott.

>> I'm going to start one more time. Can you hear me?

>> Yes, go ahead.

>> I'm going to make this brief. I thank you all for your

[2:11:00 PM]

work and I'm here to ask you to invest very boldly in food and the food system. Understanding how critical this has been, the lack of real overall investment in our food system has been really stark during covid and I really commend many community members and the few staff members that we have for the work they have done that has been absolutely essential during -- from covid-19. What covid does is make stark how these systems disproportionately impact the black community, who is more impacted as workers, suffering the most from covid, those who have the underlying health issues that are determined from the root causes that are old and based on a racial hierarchy that is extremely explicitly

[2:12:01 PM]

laid out in the recommendations that your food policy board sent to you. And so I really, really think it's critical to think about how much we invest in water, how much we invest in policing, how much we invest in things that are less essential than food and how little in our budget goes towards food, which is a huge economic driver, and if you really want to work on equity, you have to really think systemically and regionally about our food system and all the different parts of it and put some very, like real resources toward it. So now is the time and thank you very much for your work and we have a lot of amazing people in the community to support this. Thank you so much.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Allen [indiscernible].

>> Hi. Thanks for taking my call. I'm a resident of district 4

[2:13:03 PM]

calling to stand in strong opposition to the proposed budget released last week. Specifically I'm calling in support of the \$100 million reallocation of APD funds to go to alternative crisis response systems. The fact that APD spends the overwhelming majority of its time responding to calls for assistance with situations that they are totally unqualified and untrained to address makes the percentage of the budget they receive which is 40% of the entire city budget not only ridiculous but unjust. Far less than 10% of police action the past year and a half were for violent or property crime. The police themselves are the first to bemoan the nature and futility of their work. They are asked to take on social problems they are not equipped or qualified to handle. They are equipped primarily with training for punitive and too often violent actions directed overwhelmingly at people of color. What the community is

[2:14:03 PM]

calling for is the beginning of a solution by reinvesting much of the funding and using it to fund alternative crisis support systems thereby allowing police to focus on narrow problems they are equipped to address. The money is there. Incrementalism, delay or superficial reforms are insufficient. I urge you to look deeply and honestly at the history and research on these issues and have courage in your decisions as you are currently in positions of great power. I would like to hear specifically from manager cronk and the rest of council individually about how they will do much, much better in the next draft. Thank you very much for your time.

>> To all the

>> To all the speakers, if you have not pressed 0, please do so at this time. Thank you. The next speaker is Aubrey hays.

>> Hi, city council members. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak with you today.

[2:15:05 PM]

I'm a volunteer voter and I live in district 10. I need to tell you a story of one of our citizens. He's an independent journalist covering the peaceful protests. On July 17th he was singled out and ripped away from a group of peaceful protesters going down the street. You can hear a police officer say that's him and he is removed from the group. Bearing witness to this and the atrocities of late is the reason I'm here to speak with you today. I'd like to tell you that the work we've done is not the enough. The cut of 11.3 million is an insult. The largest portion of which 9.2 million comes from eliminating the 100 currently vacant police officer positions. This is not reform. The second largest portion of three million is to enhance the work of office of police oversight. There's no transparency on how this will be utilized. Only 275 were investigated, out of the internal affairs, how do we know this won't lead to more police conduct. Invest it wisely.

[2:16:06 PM]

Hire more psychologists for the APD. They currently only have one on staff for 1900 officers. Spend this money on affordable housing, if any, public health, mental health responders, education and the strain on the APD will lessen. The reform I and many citizens are asking for will help heal the relationship between officers and targeted citizens. We believe you work for us, people who elected you no are this position. Thank you for considering my words and for this opportunity to address the council. That's all.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker?

>> Joy chevalier.

>> Good afternoon, counsel. I'm resident of district 7, I have the cook's nook located in d3. I'm a member of the austin/travis county food policy board and I have a covid-19 working group. I have the [indiscernible] In the office of sustainability. I speak in support of investment and alignment

[2:17:07 PM]

with recommendations passed unanimously on June 12th by the austin/travis county food policy board and was already delivered to council. You all have to know by now that covid-19 has laid bear a very woefully underresourced ecosystem, in terms of our practical planning, resiliency and corning. It was surprising to see more about food systems in the proposed bundle. This is something happening right now. For the fiscal year 2020-2021 budget, we were asking you to add a anymore of two will full-time positions in the food ecosystem and fund the original food system committee's planning process, the equity cool kit and screening kit specified in the recommendations passed this year by our food policy board. These budget requests are towards the long time goals of purchasing developed out of the food planning process and a food system department to lead the planning and implementation of a just and resilient regional food system that

[2:18:08 PM]

recognizes also more than farms and restaurants, but a need for a robust system that incentivizes distribution supply chain manufacturing production companies that are needed here to make a food system really truly work. In addition to these items, you heard comments on from others today, there are a couple other long-term points. Unless we improve strategic planning with equity, focus, and significant investment, we will face these similar gaps in emergency responses during the next crisis, and these disparities will continue to widen. Aside from the work already in existence as part of the emergency task force --

[buzzer sounding]

-- Serving a population -- thank you guys.

>> Joan Denson.

>> Hello. I represent only myself here. I'm a white 75-year-old retiree. Homeowner and citizen of

[2:19:09 PM]

Austin for 19 years. This is the first time I've spoken before council. I'm not one who wants to defund police and started over, however, you consider more cuts to the proposed budget. 100,000 is what most people are asking. I'm asking that you fully cut it by one-half or 200,000, and that be reallocated to community services. That will help staff nonprofits dedicated to bringing about real equity and justice for all people. I am totally for community policing.

[Indiscernible] Money should be allocated in the new budget, however, it's easy to see where shortages of services show up, especially in areas which are mostly black and Latino pop laced. Some of these are counseling, crisis and family violence intervention and prevention, children's services for both kids and adults, prenatal health services, and much

[2:20:09 PM]

more. As an ordinary citizen I'd like to see a minimum of that 2,000 cut from the policing budget. I don't think that social workers employed by the city should receive these funds or that such additional staff should be hired by the city. If you think that only city officials in offices need to fill these necessary niches, that is to completely overlook the talents, skills, and dedication of people who really care about their fellow human beings and are badly in need of funds to do good work of their choice. There are several organizations already working in communities where needs are most prevalent and where citizens cannot afford much of what you and I receive. With these organizations fob allocated funds by the citizen, they'd be able to hire more qualified staff and service --

[buzzer sounding]

>> Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you for your time. Next speaker?

>> Joey Henley.

[2:21:12 PM]

>> Hi. Can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes. Pleased. Please go ahead.>> Thanks. I'm from district 9, living in Austin to the past 80 years. I came to the city for employment cities and remained here due to the agriculture. However, all the city's positives cannot hide the disturbing reality, Austin is a deep and segregated facility with a history of enacting racist policies. There's perhaps no more significant visual metaphor for this divide than the APD building itself, a structure that bears the tone deaf slowing an, one Austin, safety together. These empty words stare down Austin's east side, one of the nation's best examples of red lining. It is not a coincidence. Austin police department came into existence with the sole existence of driving people of color out of metropolitan areas. Through redlining, it forced them to the other side of 35 and it will

[2:22:12 PM]

remain there until gentrification transforms the east side into haven for white people. My point this Austin has historic will I been a segregated community, at the hands of APD, combined with lack of consequences, has revealed to the world the true colors. The proposed budget and to term very loosely, budget cuts, is a slap in the face to an already outraged populous. City manager cronk, your actions in adequate, and -- take a stand, history shows that racist policies, come disguised in non-racist terminology, in the face of apologizes eager to compromise, I urge unanimous rejection of this budget. The people Austin are demanding nothing short

[2:23:16 PM]

of \$100 million divestment from the APD. Nothing less. Thank you for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speak?

>> Rosalinda treviño.

>> Hello. Can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes. Please proceed.

>> Thank you so much for this opportunity. I've been looking forward to [indiscernible]. I don't know if you are familiar with my case. I'm the mother of

[indiscernible]. We have been brutalized by one, in specific, police officer. I haven't [indiscernible] Over nine years. My daughter made allegations of sexual molestation.

[2:24:16 PM]

This is [indiscernible]. I understand perfectly well that if one person does not reflect an entire institution. I believe that it is time for you, council, to build a bridge

[indiscernible] -- [Audio is break up] -- The accountability that you have allowed the police department to get away with. I do not [indiscernible] Have my baby back.

[Indiscernible] Have an impact on the way we have been treated. I have been tear gassed, I have been

[indiscernible]. I was recently sexually assaulted on the 4th of July. My video went viral with more than 10 million viewers around the world.

[2:25:18 PM]

My petition alone has nearly 300,000 signatures. I do respect the position that you find yourself in. I appreciate that your secretary was still trying to reach out and

[indiscernible] --

[buzzer sounding]

>> I know the budget that you are given --

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you for time. Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Rico Perez grant. Are.

>> My name is Rico, I live in district 1 and I want to start off with how Pio, I have not seen your face enough. If you're actually looking, I would like to see your face. I want you to be aware that [indiscernible] Cut by 150,000. APD is now one month overdue in releasing the

[2:26:19 PM]

Mike Ramos tapes. We know the announcement was stated it would be reassessed by August 14th. How convenient that's right after budget vote. What are you have scared of? What is the hold-up on releasing the protests critical incident tapes from last may? It's painfully obvious these tapes will make APD look worse than they already do. We are past protesting, whether on the streets or behind the scenes without letting up, we aren't going nimble eyes and ears are on all of you. It will influence how revote later this year, and to call out my own council member, district 3, Pio, a man of color who grew up in segregated Austin, voting in support of more funding for APD. I'm sure you all have learned of the voter turnout and primary runoff with the huge trunk of younger folks that have never participated in local elections before. It's time to be constantly on the radar because we see you. I could shout statistic

[2:27:19 PM]

after statistic but I don't have to because you already know. I want you to know that we too know and we aren't going to be quiet about it anymore. Neither should you. Lastly, did we see APD target Andreas the journalist last weekend? Because he's the only one that's been livestreamed to the protest date in and south? APD is silencing media now? Do better. And I'd like to kindly invite Adler and cronk to the front lines of these protests, just like Ted wheeler did in Portland. Maybe then you'd pull your head out of your ass. I yield my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Next speaker.

>> The next speaker is Sarah Overton.

>> Hi. My name is Sarah Overton. I'm a fourth generation austinite and resident of district 1. This is my first time participating in a city council meeting. You may have heard of my cousin, Richard Overton, or my grandfather, or maybe even my father.

[2:28:24 PM]

Our roots are deep in the city. I'm extremely disappointed in city manager cronk. Last month the citizens were asking for the resignation of chief Manley. Cronk did not pursue that or listen to the people. I was hoping he would redeem himself with an updated budget reflecting what was asked. He did not deliver. The current APD is budgeted by .03% from the 2020 budget. It needs to be reallocated to other services like EMS. The Austin EMS says they have not been able to meet their goal of responding to 90% of priority 1 calls, which include a heart attack and stroke, and add ten minutes to the added burden of COVID-19 calls. On Friday, July 10th, at 4:30 P.M., 32 of the 33 Austin ambulances were unavailable. On Monday, July 13th, at 11:50 A.M., 12 out of the 12 south Austin ambulances were unavailable due to already being on a call,

[2:29:26 PM]

at a hospital or being decontaminated. We need to invest in more ambulances. We're in the middle of a global pandemic. Crime is down, spend money where it's needed the most for the upcoming year. In cities can afford tear masks for police but not for doctors, defund the police. Your time in this position is limited. Do the right thing while you can. If not, I ask the council to look to replace the city manager. Thank you for listening and thank you for your service.

>> The next speaker is Zachry Kent.

>> Hi. Can you hear me okay?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes. Go ahead, please.

>> Great. Hello. Thank you for your time today. My name is Zach Kent and I live in 9th. I'm calling today to echo what many speakers have said and I stand in

[2:30:27 PM]

support of the grass roots leadership of the Austin justice coalition. I'm asking the city council to reject any budget proposal that does not cut at least \$100 million from the APD and reinvest those funds in social services and programs that will actually make our city safer, more livable and just, including

housing, duces health care, community violence intervention and restorative justice, eliminating vacant positions in APD are important measures but to promote 150,000 cut will not change the fundamental nature of policing in this city, which has been plagued by a, quote, culture of racism, homophobia and sexism, unquote, as reported by KVUE in an independent investigation this year. The issue is bigger than culture, it is the paradigm of policing itself. Recent study commissioned by the Austin justice coalition found that 21.5% to the APD address crime. .6 of calls address violent crimes. To continue to fund the APD to the tune of

[2:31:28 PM]

\$430 million, in light of these findings, and at the expense of fully funding social services, is to create poverty, homelessness and unmet needs, discrimination, structural violence, racism and generations of community investment, black people and business people, people of color, immigrants and people in the working class. In closing, I'm not asking for anything extreme, just asking to recognize our current methods for dealing with crime are inefficient and unjust. I'm asking to recognize better solutions exist and fund them accordingly. We don't have to be perfect to be better. We need to create more opportunities for

[indiscernible] With all due respect, the city manager's proposed budget does not represent us. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Julie Nolan.

>> Hi. I'm an austinite, and the thing that I find

[2:32:30 PM]

concerning is threatening to fire the city manager or change the city charter if

[indiscernible] Is not fired. That seems concerning perhaps an abuse of power or definition of police. I'm not paid by any organization. I think defunding the police would be more expensive and costly. These 911 calls, again, to have counselors responding to them, responders have vehicles with lights, driver's training, they have self-defense, will they carry a gun? Will there be an increase in response time when police are needed?

[2:33:32 PM]

Also, [indiscernible] Doctors and police can commit a person who is a danger to themselves. So bringing counselors into the front line will increase officer deaths and increase many deaths. Will they have adequate insurance? Sad subject. Will there be an oversight committee now to this office as there are for APD, when rapes and other abuses happen? I've had more

[indiscernible] Experiences, a handicapped African American needing medication, left alone in the dark at the governor's homeless camp. They came out for one person. They're right around the corner from this camp. We pleaded with them to care for Ms. Tracy, not leave her in a wheelchair going into sepsis. I'm not a doctor --

[buzzer sounding]

-- But she needed her

[2:34:32 PM]

medication.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Thanks for participating. Next speaker?

>> Joseph Hays.

>> Hey, thanks for taking time for me, Joseph Hays, district 8, I think I'm the second district 8 person to speak. I want to split my time. First I want to talk about parks & rec because you guys closed down the lake. Parks & rec has been short on money for a while. We know that, you guys in 2017 tried to put more money in. There was this thing where they decided to get more money from concessioners, but now that you've closed the lake they can't make their payments to the city, they can't afford it. So we're going to be looking at a short fall, and when I went to see through your budget document, I didn't see anywhere that we were planning for the short fall that parks & rec is going to have. So that was something I wanted to bring up, just as kind of a change of pace. Onto the topic of the

[2:35:32 PM]

day, I think that I'm not someone that pays a lot of attention to the protests, but I will say that I was shown a video yesterday and a young man who is restrained by the police and punched repeatedly in the face, that's completely unacceptable. They showed me another video of looks like a young man standing on a hill, got shot in the face, I don't even know if he's alive. But whatever you're discussing, what I would like to convey to you as a voter of district 8 is, when I do my contracts, it's 7.5%. If I want to see a change, I'm looking at 7.5%. Anything less than that, I can move money around, move positions around, make it work without doing anything. So for me, I look at whatever comes out of your budget, if it's 7.5% or more, you want to make a big statement, if it's less than 7.5%, I would say that's something you possibly could have done without. Having said that, I think that it's important to point out that it's an unacceptable idea that we could allow this to

[2:36:33 PM]

happen. This isn't the city I grew up in, or maybe it is and I just never was involved in this type of thing. But I do want to provide support for the council to do whatever it is that they need. I want to go completely off book and appoint some support for Mr. Cronk because as someone who's been in a similar position --

[buzzer sounding]

-- I would never want to do that. Thank you, guys, good luck.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker some.

>> Jacob Sheek.

>> Hello. This is Jacob. Thank you for your time. I live in the Zilker neighborhood of district 5. I wanted to talk about the APD portion of the budget and also Chief Manley and Manager Cronk. I'm speaking to all members of council, but particularly to my council member, Council Member Kitchen. The decisions in front of you come down to which side of history you want to be on. I say this because this is not about safety, and it's not about politics. It's not about safety

[2:37:34 PM]

because since 2013, the APD budget has increased by 105 million over inflation. We're just as safe now as we were in 2013, but we have \$105 million over inflation allocated to APD. It's not about politics. I don't think that all councilmembers' decisions are driven entirely by politics, especially one as important as this. But in this instance, the politics are for change. Because Ed Garza's landslide victory is a clear indication. What's left? Only excuses. People want structural change. You have a choice to be a part of that change or to go down in history as being against it. You have a choice to tell your grandchildren you stood for black lives, or you stood for excuses. The change is to take that 105 million over inflation and fund real solutions. The change is to

[2:38:36 PM]

terminate Manley, and if Cronk continues to refuse to listen, to fire Cronk. It's an excuse to say it's hard to fill Cronk's position. Make no mistake, it is a choice to keep Cronk if he doesn't reform now. No matter what your motivations or intentions, you all will be remembered for whether you sided on the right side or wrong side of history. You can make the right choice. Please make that choice now. Thank you.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much for your time. Next speaker?

>> Laura Jorgenson.

>> Hello. I am a resident of district 7 and I speak in solidarity with all of the groups calling to defund the police by 50% or more and to reallocate that money into programs that provide needed resources for our community, not police them. Affordable and accessible housing for all. Food security.

[2:39:36 PM]

The rise fund. Emergency and preventative health and mental health care, and access to green spaces. Support our music in our communities, especially ways that uplift and empower artists of color to ensure that we, the supposed live capital music of the world, still have music. Recognizing that the black and Latinos are essential to our communities and don't perpetuate the violence they have long faced. They have been underserved and overpoliced since the very establishment of this city and it's your responsibility to ensure that history ends here and now and that transformative reparations are made. We owe an enormous debt that must be paid to our communities of color to ensure that we do not continue to lose diversity in our city and we all know where that money needs to come from. We don't need neighborhood policing, we need healthy and well-served neighborhoods. You've heard from seasoned organizers but from many of us just now stepping into more politically active roles.

[2:40:36 PM]

This is my second time at a meeting and I recently became a member of dsa. There are many more of us paying close attention now than before and we are not going to go away if you fail to do what we are demanding of you. We need to see your support is not just transformative, and that it means to you what it means to us. Leslie pool, show us that you're listening and truly represent you us. If you don't, I will knock on every door in our district this fall to replace you with someone who will. Mr. Cronk, your cuts to the program and .03 to the police budget are shocking and completely unacceptable. Please, do your job. You work for us and you know what we are asking you to do. Be bold.

[Buzzer sounding] Stand up. Be an example for others. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Next speaker?

>> Shanta major?

>> Hello?

[2:41:37 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: Yes. Please proceed.

>> Yes. My name is Shanta major and I am with an organization, family for justice. We deal with crisis intervention, homelessness, mentally ill, et cetera. I'm basically on this line because the amount that was suggested is like a slap in the face. We suggest and the community so far from what I'm hearing suggests at least a hundred to 200 million real cases from the Austin police department to things such as civil rights, health care, homelessness, teachers, hospitals, to help the betterment of black lives. Also, for shelters and health care and for covid, and for grass roots organizations and social workers. Main reason this eustess because the police are not equipped to handle the things that are put in front of them. I'm going to the protests and looking at how they've done the protesters and how they've done people who aren't even protesters, like [indiscernible] Who

[2:42:38 PM]

was not a protester, was arrested and beaten up. That lets me know what they're doing in the community, I've residence witnessed them doing things like this in the community as well. It will also increase crime reduction, increase the livelihood of those targeted black and brown persons as well. Cronk needs to definitely sign on to something a little bit better, a whole lot better, a hundred to 200 million reduction from the Austin police department, they are not equipped to take on these things. I'm appealing to your heart, I'm appealing to your reason. I know you joined city council, I'm sure you joined thinking on things such as making changes and making things happen, I thank you for having all of us on here today also, and I really would like to get back to when you first got on city council, when you first started thinking about making a change, today is that day. You are able to make that change. So I really beseech you to do that and definitely increase that budget a hundred to 200 million. We need them out here in

[2:43:39 PM]

the community.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much for your help today. Next speaker?

>> Greg boseley?

>> Good afternoon. My name is Greg, I'm a resident of district 3, member of the Austin chapter of the democratic socialists of America and I'm calling to demand a budget that defunds APD by 50%. I'm making this demandment in solidarity with community leaders and grass root leaderships, communities of college united, Austin justice coalition and other things. APD is racist, and they crypt to the destruction of our black and brown communities, murdering neighbors, we demand justice for Mike Ramos and [indiscernible], justice for friends and neighbors who have been arrested, shot, critically

injured by APD during protests, including the journalist, and members who have suffered critical injuries after being shot by police during

[2:44:39 PM]

protests. Mr. Cronk's proposed budget is cowardly. He should be fired, needs community justice and wellness by investing these in public housing and direct investments in our communities. Working people in Austin have been taking to the streets during the largest protest in American history. We elected Delia Garza to reimagine justice and the message is clear. Now it's your turn to take actions and your actions will show which side you are on. To those of you who fail to choose transformational change, remember that Austin has 1100 trained volunteers and phone bankers and we will run working class candidates against you in city council elections. You can ask Margaret Moore how that feels. Thank you very much.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Michaela Jones.

>> Hello. Can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

[2:45:39 PM]

Pleased.

>> Okay. Spencer cronk, you have continued to fail this community. It's a fallacy to the constituents in the city of Austin. There's individual footage of police using excessive force. The majority of Americans agree with the black lives matter movement the in the two years he's inflamed the racial disparate in our community. We demand him to step down. Giving commands to pepper spray protesters as a vicar plagues our city. We the people ask for a 50% decrease in police budget and reallocate those funds back in the community. If Austin wants to continue to be the Progressive city we claim to be, that starts by hearing these demands and leading the way and reinvesting in our community by providing mental and physical health services, after school programs and housing development. Cronk, I've started a position asking for you to step down as city manager as you continue to play this game of smoke and mirrors, as if you're adequately

[2:46:40 PM]

responding to this crisis. Ems is begging on Twitter for ambulances. The money removed from the APD budget doesn't even buy two. It's necessary to drop all charges of anyone arrested during this peaceful protest. These charges are completely baseless and it's clear these officers are instigators and just don't like what we the people have to say to police brutality. We chose Jose and Delia Garza to represent us because of the corruption of the current administration. We want to see a return on our investment in the city and we demand these changes. The reality is that the majority of these loaded police budgets are spent on paychecks, so considering that a large portion of the Austin officers means that millions of dollars are leaving our city to allow communities outside of our own to thrive off our investment. There's plenty of footage and more and more civil lawsuits to be brought down on this city and the budget, so how about instead of choosing to pay these lawsuits, we be proactive and change the funding.

[Buzzer sounding]

[2:47:42 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Next speaker, please.

>> Dan farcasu.

>> Yes. Good afternoon. Do you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes. Please go ahead.

>> Yes. You have my address on the handout. My objections are, police defunding. Your sworn duty is to protect our personal safety and safety of our positions. This measure indicates great dissatisfaction with police, there are serious malfeasances by the police, you must give reports with measures you took in each case. If you cannot report egregious bad behavior, issue an apology to them. If there has been serious transgressions which are not timely corrected, the council should resign in its entirety. The police are an agency of the city, appointed, organized, and controlled by the council, so the main responsibility is yours. A new council should then reorganize the police, providing the resources

[2:48:43 PM]

and leadership needed. Next, the budget. Of course the pandemic has affected city's economic state, the budget should be reduced to respond to this change. The notion to raise property taxes is obscene. Taxes should be cut. First, you should eliminate programs designed to enlight, educate, and amuse the citizens. I can give examples. People who feel they need such activities should pay for them. Next, whenever feasible, the city should reorganize services from tax money supported to user supported. I can give example. To address this year's short fall, the city should [indiscernible] Essential employees, the executive employees to take two weeks of annual vacation without pay. Police, firefighters, medical emergency, trash collection should be exempted. Other cities did that. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker?

>> Alex Hornstein?

[2:49:47 PM]

>> Hi. My name is Alex Hornstein, I'm a resident of district 5. This budget is

[indiscernible] To the community and the city manager has shown that he's not listening to the community and instead is protecting chief Manley and the APD. I'm calling on you, the city council, and my council member, Ms. Kitchen, to decrease APD's budget by 25% or a hundred million dollars, versus the 2019 budget. It's clear that the APD's leadership is not good for this city. Earlier this year before any of the protests, the study came out showing that APD's leadership was promoting racist, homophobic, and sexist behavior, both in the academy and the force in general. Not only chief Manley, but with brutalization of the community over the past two months is showing and appalling, in a city that had low

[2:50:48 PM]

crime. I'm urging the city to allocate these funds from APD, increase funding to mental health, housing, and community health initiatives. Police officers shouldn't be expected to deal with these issues, and yet we have them out there dealing with them. Police officers are meant to deal with violent crimes and property crimes, not mental health issues, not homelessness. Thank you for your time, and I hope you listen to the community. I yield my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Angelica Benavides Garza. Please press 0 if you haven't or unmute if you are muted.

>> I'm -- yeah, I was muted, I'm so sorry.

>> Okay. Go ahead.

>> Thank you, mayor and city leaders. I know that you all are underneath a lot of pressure. My son's dad is in his fifth week of covid icu,

[2:51:49 PM]

so I know you're just trying to protect everyone right now. Mental health is needed. I can tell you that we've had quite a few breakdowns just in the process of covid icu. And watching our community be involved in riots and fires, watching a police officer go against our community, the community going against our police officers. I was out there when the fires were actually happening. I'm not sure why we

didn't call a curfew that night the way San Antonio did. These answers are not easy, we're in a time now when budgets are going to be tight and that's just a reality of what we're in right now. And what I have found is that it's better that we work together in consensus because what we have found is that I have a former husband who's -- going to die in ICU, hopefully not because we didn't come together as a state and city, not that our city didn't, but others didn't wear their masks because we didn't

[2:52:49 PM]

work together. So I can't say for sure what this budget has to do, but I can tell you that there is a need right now with all that's going on and the chaos that's going on, and all the violence that's going on for mental health, definitely. Like I said, I certainly had any breakdown, we're trying to stay as strong as possible. Proud of my sons. They're very strong during this. But, you know, what I have found by going out there in the community, front lines, is to bring it back into the community and maybe have our own chief of police in this area to see how we do with a person of color in this area to build the real relationship and make sure that they live in the area. That's what we found by talking with people in the area and going out there, because I'm very communal, always have been, in asking questions. And people love working side-by-side with people they know.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you for your testimony, and prayers for your family.

[2:53:55 PM]

Next speaker.

>> Austin graham.

>> Hi. Can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes. Please go ahead.

>> My name is Austin graham. I'm calling today demanding the resignation of not only chief Manley but additionally the resignation of Spencer Cronk who came from Minneapolis, which is obviously, from what we can see now from looking at their history, awful police brutality against citizens, the allowing of -- of [indiscernible] To stay on the police officer, murdering multiple people and being involved in shootings and him not being reprimanded for that is something that Spencer Cronk allowed to happen there and he's allowed to happen with Christopher Taylor. All my love to Mike Ramos and also all my love to Dr. Maurice who was also murdered by Christopher Taylor. And y'all are the ones who allowed him to stay and carry that badge and carry that gun which led to the shooting of Mike Ramos, which should have never happened. And both of their families are hurting and

[2:54:55 PM]

y'all have done nothing to bring justice to them. And seeing Bryan Manley still employed after so many people have called for him to resign is a slap in the face to all of us. Additionally, we need the defunding of the police in Austin, and we need to end the Riverside togetherness project which is exploitive to working class communities. We need to do more, we need to do better, and see it now. This is not something that can wait. Justice put on wait is justice denied. And after being at the protest and being amazed by these police officers on multiple accounts, watching them beat people with Billy clubs, watching them punch children in the back of the head, yeah, we have a problem here, and it needs to be addressed. And I'll yield my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker?

>> Mayor, that concludes all of these speakers in

[2:55:56 PM]

this batch. We're ready for the next.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. We can't -- well, I guess if we have speakers here that have signed up and you're ready to go --

>> Yes.

>> Mayor Adler: -- We'll go ahead and start with the next batch. This is the third group. I would remind everyone that we're running these in batches, so people don't need to be on the phone, but that means we have to get everyone through in the allotted time. So we're ending people's ability to be able to speak at two minutes, and I apologize for any abruptness that that causes. I want to remind everybody that in today's debate, which is highly charged with strong opinions on all sides, that we're focused on, this time, trying to be nice to one another, and recognize that we have different priorities, perhaps, or different goals. We are joined in carrying

[2:56:57 PM]

about the city. All right. Clerk, why don't you go ahead and start us then on the third batch.

>> Everyone who is on the call, if you haven't already, please press 0. The first speaker is Sidney Buehler.

>> Hi. My name is Sidney. I live in district 8. Paige, you don't stand with us. Where is Bryan Manley? How long have protesters been assaulted by police officers? They cover up name tags and badge numbers. I'm requesting that Spencer cronk and chief Manley step down, I'm requesting a meeting to review footage, I have on many officers on APD, brutalizing protesters with their badges covered. I request that

these officers be fired. If you refuse to do a sitdown and identify these officers, this will just reinforce that this is all about money and power. Drop the charges against protesters and quit your voter expression -- I'm

[2:57:59 PM]

requesting to reallocate funds in the black community and mentally ill. I have had experiences with officers have told me my only option is to kick him out onto the street. This is a faulty system. I know APD is known for abuse against the mentally ill across the country. I want help for the mentally ill. Give options, stop murdering and brutalizing the mentally ill. They are not all criminals. We don't have appropriate help and they continue to -- Bryan Manley and city council members have blood on their hands. We see who stood with us the last city council meeting. There needs to be a change in how things are run and how the police officer handles these issues. Many officers on APD have continued to get away with sexual assault, speaking from experience. This needs to be addressed. I see APD turn on their lights to run red lights, then turn them off as soon as they go through the light.

[2:58:59 PM]

More often than I should. Chief Manley ever Steve should -- Steve Adler, how do you continue to ignore us? A boy was crying because his brother was shot in the head with one of APD's beanbags and that put him in critical condition and you still voted.

[Buzzer sounding] You have no empathy?

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you for your time in participating today. Next speaker, please.

>> Lucy king.

>> My name is Lucy king. I currently live in district 6, I'm a mental health advocate, social worker, parent coach. Returning to Austin after 16 years in Oregon. 14 of those years were in Eugene, home to

[indiscernible], crisis assistance, helping out on the streets. We're living in a world where a pandemic has led to increased violence as a result of anger, fear, and loss of support for basic needs. Budget needs need to be adjusted to address the

[3:00:00 PM]

heightened concerns of community Meers to have their basic needs met, including housing, food, physical and mental health, and more opportunities for safe community engagement. In particular, the APD budget needs to be reformed. I fully support defunding the APD by 50% and real indicating funds to

housing, public health, mental health first responders like cahoots, youth programming, and violence prevention and survivor support. My professional focus is on education and the funding currently being taken away from schools as a way to get the local economy going again. This is the type of decision made when systems look at an easy way out, he instead of looking the deeper issues affecting our city. We need protected community engagement and must accept change if we're to survive the current crisis. It won't be easy, but it only gets harder if we

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deny the realities. One demand I have is to take school resource officers out of the schools and put them back in the APD pool, as an additional resource for the department. We don't need police in the schools. We need social workers, counselors, psychologists, nurses, and mental health professionals. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker?

>> Bennett Burke.

>> My name is Bennett Burke, resident of district 9. I'm a lifelong resident of Texas but fairly recently a resident of Austin. I've lived here a little under a year as a student. During my brief time here I've seen the Austin police department murder Mike Ramos and brutalize young protesters. Communities of color united are calling for a 50% cut to APD's budget, which is frankly a generous compromise. The proposed budget cut is a joke and insult to all the black people and people of color who have been brutalized and murdered by this police department. Look back upon abolitionists in the

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final days of slavery and wonder why more people didn't have the bravery and sense to gin their ranks. You all now have the opportunity whether you'll be looked upon fondly for helping people of color or disdain. Reject this proposed budget. I'd like to echo my comrade's then sentiment, if you're unwilling to do this, we will replace you with working class candidates willing to stand up for their community. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker?

>> Marcel Moore.

>> Hello?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes. Please go ahead.

>> I'm a resident -- I'm district 7, I'm demanding a cut of at least a hundred million, reallocated to the [indiscernible] In Austin. I hope you can empathize with the fear I and many

[3:03:04 PM]

others feel around law enforcement officers. APD has shown themselves to be a militant body in a only has gang members' interest in mind. To all the members of city council, to mayor, chief Manley, continue to vote against funding of APD, you are cowards. You have the opportunity to stand on the right side of history and do what's right. Failure to do so, you're just as liable for trauma caused by APD and police officers across the nation. Thank you.

>> Patrick Greer.

>> Hello?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes. Please proceed.

>> I'm Patrick Greer -- I'm Patrick Greer, district 9, speaking against item 2. My great uncle was [indiscernible], I-35 highway builder and complicit in the redlining of Texas cities. In early June I watched Mr. Cronk pledging in a meeting to thousands of austinites that he would discuss systemic change and significant budget cuts with APD.

[3:04:05 PM]

You said you needed more time, city manager. But now I feel that what you needed was for APD to manage you instead. As you've heard, many times and as the gray Austin crime commission itself records on its website, the inflated police budget has done nothing to curb violent crime in Austin. Over the past decade. Reallocate those hundred millions or more and save black lives. Don't be my great uncle. Mayor Adler, please hold Mr. Cronk accountable. He's yours to manage. In the same vein, I'd ask you to speak out against GOP chairman for Travis county, save Austin now and the multitude of organizations like it. As you may know, they just got 20,000 signatures, perhaps by misrepresenting their petition as pro homeless services, rather than a short sided one issue group. They blocked the establishment of the south Austin housing center last fall, which I doubt would have saved lives come covid. Maybe use some of that APD money to restore

[3:05:06 PM]

efforts for shelters instead? That's it.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Next speaker?

>> Jordan Gutierrez.

>> Hello. Can you guys hear me?

>> Yes. Go ahead.

>> Well, basically, as a person that is a victim of police brutality from APD as recent, I have to say that this proposal is completely disrespectful, unethical and immoral on all levels. At what point do you listen to the people? You see us flooding the streets, protesting, passionately and rightfully so for our just cause, and the fight against police brutality in the -- in just the oppressive say the that we live in, at what point do you listen to the people? What are we crying out for? What is the outcry? You can't say this is a democracy, by the people, for the people, when you're not listening to us. You're not listening one bit because obviously that proposal was a sign of ignorance.

[3:06:06 PM]

So it comes to a point where you almost lose hope in a sense, but it's about time that you guys actually - this isn't the end, this is not -- not --this isn't it for you guys. This is the final outcry when it comes to joining this movement. When we're protesting, the Austin community, we are forming a family. You can either choose to be a part of this family or be a part of the hindrance of this change. You're either on the right side or you're on the wrong side of history. Right now this is about moral value, this is about people, this is about human rights at the end of the day. We're being brutalized, traumaized, and hospitalized. You see time and time again, us being murdered, shot with beanbag rounds, rubber, but unlawfully detained and arrested. APD has shown time and time again that they're nothing, nothing, nothing less than domestic terrorists, and it's about time we started reimagining what public safety looks like. And it's Austin's chance and opportunity to be the

[3:07:07 PM]

change that other cities across this nation can see as the blueprint of change and the blueprint of progress. So it's either you rise to the occasion or you don't. At the end of the day, people are watching. We're out here putting our lives on the line. You either rise to the occasion or you don't.

>> Tovo: Thank you very much for your time. Next speaker?

>> Maria person.

>> Hi. My name is Maria person and I've lived in allandale in district 7 for 20 years. I'm joining the chorus of advises inviting you to reimagine public safety by reducing the APD budget by \$200 million, redirecting the money to public health, crime reduction, mental health services, ems, housing, domestic violence survivors, community development and other community priorities. A previous speaker remarked that homicides were up this year. From your website, I see they went up 20 to 25,

[3:08:08 PM]

the same period of time from last year to this year. To date the number of Austin covid deaths is 222, almost ten times that number. Community safety should be viewed through a public health lens. How many are dying due to suicide, drug overdose, poor access to medical care, and the conditions that favor healthy lifestyles? John Lewis encouraged us to engage in good trouble, necessary trouble. Please use this opportunity to stand with the community and make the changes needed to have our budget align with our values. Thank you for doing the important and difficult work of dismantling systems of oppression in order to build a just and equitable society. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Melania berry?

>> Good afternoon, council, mayor, and community members. My name is Melania berry and I'm a resident of district 10. I live and work in Austin and my daughter goes to school here. The proposed budget cuts

[3:09:09 PM]

to APD are woe fully inadequate to the changes our city has been calling for. I support at least a hundred-million-dollar cuts to APD's budget, with responsibilities being diverted to mental health responders, violence prevention, harm reduction, homelessness services, increased ems, and youth services. This diversion effectively will reduce the need for such a large police force and will ensure that community members are taken care of by appropriately trained responders. When we say public safety, we mean a public safety net so that no matter our circumstances, we can be sure that our city will be there to support us. That is true community. No life is more valuable than another, and we are asking for public safety that helps, not harms. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Crystal Erickson Collins.

[3:10:15 PM]

>> Hello?

>> Mayor Adler: Please proceed.

>> My name is crystal Erickson Collins.

>> Go ahead.

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Hello? Can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes. Please proceed. Go ahead.

>> My name is crystal Erickson Collins, speaking to you today is a privilege that not all can afford with time or technology. An equity lens means you need to find a way to make this process accessible for all. The proposed budget allocations from APD are a discouraging and insulting shell game. Shame on you, Spencer cronk. We must be bold and decrease APD budget by 50%. Doing so will require you to go beyond the easy, low-hanging fruit, and appropriately reallocate funding from existing personnel positions. We have allowed policing, controlling bodies, to replace services, assisting people to live and thrive, and this must

[3:11:17 PM]

be corrected now. Support grass roots leadership and ccu's request for rise funds, fully funding the equity office, funding public health, including ems, and low-income housing to address this gross negligence. As a social worker, I thank council member kitchen and pool regarding their proposal for services for mental health, but we must do this fully, no half measures. We can have staff allocating a few positions for mental health workers hooplas whoreplace the police but not function of policing. We must have a plan for community-based services. There are innovative programs nationally for how to do this. When people ask what less policing might look like, I say some of us already know. We are only asking you to provide the services and opportunities to everyone that we have in effluent, predominantly white neighborhoods. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Fran [indiscernible]

[3:12:20 PM]

>> Yes. Thank you. Good afternoon. Thank you to all the councilmembers for your sometime. I'm here as a mother and a resident and a homeowner of Austin to implore you to definitely defund APD. We are still waiting on news of numerous victims, and of course chief Manley is responsible, ultimately. Handoff [indiscernible] Cases we're waiting on the grand jury for use of force. And we do not know actually the status of Justin Howell who was shot in the back of the head, young black man and another black man who also suffered at the hands of APD. I would like to say when I'm not in Austin, I live on [indiscernible] Island, and also resident on the island is a hero of mine, former police of chief in Seattle. I suggest all the members take a look at that and recommend that to chief

[3:13:20 PM]

Manley, here's a quote from norm who oversaw -- who headed up the riots in Seattle, the wto on its in '99. Quote, for the greater good, we ought not to have brought those chemical agents out. We ought not to have raised the stakes. He was a great man who admitted most police are afraid of black men. He writes in his book, take it from the top and listen to -- of experienced and dedicated and compassionate men lime norm, please. And I also ask that cronk be replaced by a woman of color, ideally a black woman, in these times, troubled times, black lives matter, we need to turn to black women to lead us. They have been leading us from the very get go with civil rights and the unjust founding of this country. So thank you very much for your time. I'd like you to step back and just look as members of our community, what's your greater goal? What's the greater goal for Austin? Are we going to lead the

[3:14:20 PM]

country as a community to come together and represent all in the community of diversity?

[Buzzer sounding] Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Next speaker? >>

>> Kiki Avalos.

>> First of all, I want to congratulate Delia Garza on her win as the new county attorney. Congratulations. To everyone listening thank you for the time to call and speak up. Let's keep the momentum going, we need it. I'm calling all of you to reject the slap in the face of a budget that city manager Spencer cronk has proposed. The audacity. Spencer, you get paid really well to keep a podium of white supremacy. You are doing that. Whether you're conscious of it or not, quit doing it, do better. As a queer man you should know about unjust pain and suffering. Today you and I can live as openly queer people thanks to our black and brown trans

[3:15:22 PM]

sisters. Trans women of color such as those are still being murdered at higher rates than almost anyone else while most police forces do absolutely nothing to protect them. Spencer, it's time to wake up. When your career is over, how do you want to be remembered? What will your daughters think? Again, we demand that you police defund APD by at least 50% and use this to fund things such as echo, which stands for ending community homelessness coalition. This organization would essentially help end homelessness through mental health programs and housing and only need \$38 million to make this a reality. Our homeless population doesn't need to be policed. They need help. We can make our community stronger. There is so much good that can be done by defunding APD and reallocating the

funds to make Austin safer and better. The communities around the nation have much resources and not police officers who uphold the slavery are system. City council, it's time to

[3:16:23 PM]

be bold as a whole W he don't have time for fear. Either Spencer gets this budget right and fires chief Manley or you fire him. We are paying very close attention to your actions as leaders and we will vote your asses out if you aren't here to fight for us and for what's right. Namaste.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Next speaker.

>> Patrick Fuentes.

>> Thank you. I have a prepared statement that I'll read, but first I want to say that the fact that you're hearing these things now in such volume should tell you they're long overdue. But I want to thank you for this forum. And I applaud your efforts to make this accessible. I want to ask what is the role of police in our society? And I will assert that police are the enforcement arm of the state, authorized to exercise the state's monopoly on violence.

[3:17:24 PM]

And there will always be a role for that in any civil society, but that is not what we're asking of our cops today. .6% is the percentage of APD calls for violent crime. 2.8% the percentage of time they spend on violent crime. These numbers from the Austin justice coalition. And most of the time police are not doing things that we need police to do. They're not grove counselors, they're not mechanics, not relationship advisors. They're not mental health professionals. I don't need a cop with a gun to come write an incident report when I've had a wreck. I don't need a cop with a gun showing up because my neighbor is having a bad day and threatening to punch somebody. Now is the time to act boldly. I need you to demote chief Manley. Pass a budget that divests substantially from APD. Not this insult that is sitting in front of us today. If not now, then when? And if not you, then who?

[3:18:32 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Haven thahan:

>> Hello. My name is hey van Trahan. I am a citizen of district 5. I am against the proposed budget. It's not just a slap in the face, it's a middle finger to all of us that care enough to get out on the street and bring this up with you guys, to fight for what's right over all of these comments, what I've noticed more

than anything is how many people have talked about being not only not being held by the cops, but either being hurt, brutalized or -- brutalized arrest raped. That is unacceptable. We do not need a system that increases punishment. In times like this, in times of a pandemic, we need

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support. We need people to show up for everybody. And I promise you the same people that are taking time to make this call, that are out in the streets, we will be the ones who have these community programs, we will fix the communities. We will give everybody an opportunity to flourish. All that we're asking you guys is for a chance. And for that chance we need a significant reduction in the budget. 100 million or more. That will go to so many programs I don't need to repeat them. Please do better, y'all. Your job is to take care of your city and we're trying to tell you how to do it. I promise that if you give the community the tools, we will step up. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Cameron Berry: Sorry, mayor.

[3:20:38 PM]

>> Hi, thank you. I'm a resident of district 8 and I'm a third generation Austinite. Much of the council says defunding APD isn't an option because we need a plan. Your constituents are here with a plan you need. On these calls we've heard over 100 different ways to reallocate APD's massive 400-million-dollar budget. Virtually any of the options people have provided would result in a better outcome than APD retaining the current allocation. The plan I support is that we decrease APD funding by an additional \$100 million and decrease funding for violence -- increase funding for violence prevention to work with EMS and survivor support officing that autonomous with APD for the next five years. There needs to be an independent analysis of the city's gun violence. We need to treat gun violence like the disease that it is with hospital-based intervention. Increased police presence is evidence to not help communities in need and in fact makes our communities less safe. Incremental change is not

[3:21:39 PM]

enough. For too long we've lived under a broken policing system. What are we saying when we don't cut APD funding by at least 50% and reinvest in the community? While it tells us more residents are living in poverty and homelessness under a global pandemic we're choosing to criminalize and punish the suffering of our own communities. In addition to the reallocation of funds we demand that you fire chief Manley, release the video and audio of the murder of Mike Ramos, listen to the protestors and the

thousands of people on the ground who suffer from violence at the hands of APD. Cronk, Adler and Ellis, it is your duty to listen and to act on the demands of the people who put you in office. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Roy Martinez.

>> Hello. My name is ruy Martinez. I am a resident of district 10 and I am calling against the proposed budget. City council, mayor, we often tend to think of

[3:22:39 PM]

ourselves as living in a sort of bastion of progressivism and this thought is numerated in the response of living in a more conservative greater Texas area, but let's not kid ourselves. Out of the top 15 U.S. Cities, Austin pd is one of the most murderous and violent in the country. The fact that Spencer cronk has lied about the budget that nominally only decreased \$150,000 despite claiming that 11 million is an insult. Imagine what does it mean for citizens of Austin to be paying taxes to have people oppress them, to give them brain damage? To make them miss carry? What does it mean for our community when we talk about some vic notion of public safety that is enforced by bully clubs.

[3:23:39 PM]

What we need to be doing is taking at least 250 million of the dollars that go to ppp and put them into the programs like the rise fund that has been especially seem particularly, public housing, public health and we should encourage going further and I encourage the city council to do this, I call for a total dismantling of the police department and have community systems based on transformative justice. You can read fumbling towards repair and it includes work books. Essentially what I'm trying to say is city council, I have -- I'm sure that you all think of yourselves as staunch liberals, but liberal is not enough. And this view that we all have of ourselves must be challenged. It's not working. I yield my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Danielle silva.

>> My name is Danielle and I

[3:24:42 PM]

live in district 3. I'd like to voice my appreciation for the changes made to make testimony more accessible by creating the time blocks. And also acknowledge that there's a long way to go to ensure

that the people who are most affected by the policies passed by city council are able to make their voices heard. I'm here to speak on two things. The first is in support of investment in local food system in alignment with the recommendation by the austin-travis county food policy board. For the fiscal year 20-2021 budget I am asking for sufficient staffing and programming in two specific ways, adding a minimum of two full time ei have went positions to work directly with the food system and funding the regional food system process and equity toolkit and screening tool to evaluate food access work, specified in the funding for food and equity recommendation pass understand may of this year by the food policy board. I'm also urging the council, particularly my councilmember Renteria, to reject any budget proposal that does not defund APD by

[3:25:42 PM]

at least 50% and diverse those funds to real solutions like the rise fund, the equity office, Austin public health and low income housing. I would like to echo all of the testimonies by my foally members of esa and the Austin justice coalition and also thank the councilmembers for your service. I yield the rest of my time.

>> Sierara santana.

>> Good afternoon. I live in district 9. I'm adding my voice to the so many others demanding that Austin defund APD by at least \$100 million. Spencer cronk, 0.03 reduction is frankly offensive as is his claim that he is reducing it by 11.3 million. Mr. Cronk, allocations back to APD is not defunding. You know what we mean. We want actions to match words here. We want investment in our community. We want equity in housing and health care of all sorts, in education and jobs. It's strange that APD refuses to release video of

[3:26:43 PM]

police brutality committed against us prevently while we oppose police brutality and for the budget to be passed on August fourth. What are the odds? I do find it strange that in Austin the only job you can't be fired from is the same job that carries a gun and has the authority to murder people in the street if they so chose? Mr. Cronk, again, you have heard those sufferings, the families of so many and have chosen to do 0.03%, literally next to nothing for your city. Shame on you. City council, you said that you hear us, you've made promises. Defundingapd with actual significant numbers is the clear path forward to make about G on those promises. No justice, no peace. Thank you to justice, health care workers, emt workers, Austin justice coalition, everyone working for change. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Leeanna Hernandez.

[3:27:46 PM]

>> My name is Leeanna. I'm a resident of district 2. I join many members and social justice groups of the community to demand that you cut APD's budget by at least \$100 million. And reinvest in equitable education, health care, housing and other areas where systemic racism has left black and brown communities more vulnerable like food access and economic mobility. Reinvestment in people, not policing will undoubtedly improve life for those currently disenfranchised and underserved but also for the community of Austin as a whole of the of the 15 most populous U.S. Cities Austin has the per capita rate of mental health police shootings. Less than half the force has undergone deescalation training. When people are mentally ill or addicted to drugs we

[3:28:47 PM]

don't need officers showing up to the scene. \$100 million is a lot of money and still leaves APD with more than 75% of their current budget. We can see what APD's budget has been used for in the past. Jet skis, dogs, makeup, and as we're seeing more frequently firsthand, military equipment and weapons to use against unarmed citizens crying out for social justice. If you're not willing to listen to the people you serve, and make big changes in order to support those that need it most, then you're part of the problem. Be part of the solution. Thank you.

>> Shannon Plunket.

>> Can I put you on a brief hold, please? Thank you.

>> Hi. I'm calling to voice my

[3:29:48 PM]

concerns about the city budget same as everybody else. I think, you know, it's like everyone has said, it's a slap in the face. I think that, you know, it seems to be disingenuous to say that you're going to decrease by 11 million and then you only see 10-1 50,000 decreased -- only speak 150,000 decreased. The city manager makes comments about how change happens one step at a time. I don't think this is a step at all and I think it's quite frankly insulting to the public. I just want to add my voice to support what everyone else has said. Like another caller before me, actual solutions have been offered and proposals have been offered and it's time the city listens to communities of color. Austin justice coalition painted a mural in the streets that said black Austin matters. The budget does not reflect that. The budget does not show that the city believes black Austin matters.

[3:30:49 PM]

The black and brown communities here have been maligned for years, for generations, and it is time that we do something to change it. Like everyone else has said, you have the opportunity to make a change. You have hundreds, if not thousands of people telling you to make a change. So it is really time to do the right thing. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> To all the speakers on the line, if you have not pressed 0, please do so at this time. Thank you. The next caller is Ann pink haam.

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>> Ann Pinkham.

>> I'm a proud resident of district 8. I would like to add my voice to the chorus and add my dissatisfaction to the reduction in the APD budget. It is laughable particularly when much of that reallocation is being funneled towards APD rather than our communities and in particular our communities of color. This does not constitute a

[3:31:49 PM]

significant investment of housing, education, public health or any of the necessary services we have continuously asked for. And it will not contribute in any meaningful way to a much needed reimagining of public safety. I echo my fellow community members demands for reduction of APD's budgets by at least 50% and the removal of chief Manley from his position. Austin has the opportunity to become a leader in this national movement for justice and that power rests in your hands. Assurances to perform are no longer enough and I urge you to listen to your constituents, particularly those who have -- you have not served satisfactorily in the past to truly make our community safe for all. Thank you for your time.

>> Ana Perez.

>> Hi. My name is Ana Perez. I live in district 1 and I am a native austinite, a dsa member and a policy of the policy alliance for communities of color at UT school of public affairs.

[3:32:49 PM]

I'm calling today to demand that the city council defund APD by 200 million. The city manager Spencer cronk's proposed budget is an insult to every community member who risked their safety to demonstrate against APD and took time out of their lives to tell council to defund APD. You've seen report after report outlining racist and violent policing from investigations, some that the city itself has

commissioned. Aside from the disgusting abuse power and the recent murder of Mike Ramos, we have watched the police tear gas, shoot and brutal lyspeaceful protesters, especially egregious was 16-year-old Brad eye Ella. And you are insulting us whenever you say it is public safety. How many public hearings do you need before you do something stub tan active. What good are accountability reforms like more expensive body cameras when, APD withholds the video of the murder of Mike Ramos and video of the public and officers like Kristopher

[3:33:50 PM]

Taylor remain on the force. We're in the middle of a global pandemic where tens of millions have lost their jobs and have no health insurance and many more are in precarious financial situations barely hanging on. Take money out of the police budget and invest in our communities and social services like the rise fund, housing the homeless, libraries, community development and housing, mental health, mental health first responders, ems, sidewalks and parks. Make good on your promise to reimagine public safety last must not. Demilitarize and defund APD. Thank you.

>> Fan Mcpherson.

>> My name is Jim Mcpherson. I'm a resident of district 1. I'm calling in today with a host of other austinites demanding defunding of APD and reinvestment in community and social programs that actually solve issues at the root instead of criminalizing poverty and people of color. Spencer cronk's proposed budget is completely

[3:34:52 PM]

unacceptable, immoral and is an insult to those who put their bodies on the lines under fire of APD's brutal attacks on our rights as citizens, as well as all those black and brown people who have been brutalized and killed by APD over the years. It is very telling that the budget bends over backwards not to increase property taxes this year, but yet we can't seem to find a few million dollars to cut from APD. The message is clear, white, rich property owners matter more than black lives. Manager chronic, do -- manager cronk, do better or we will remove you. At minimum 100 million should come from APD. Mayor Adler, you have pledged to inimplement it can't wait and my brother's keeper. You have said all the right things, but it's time to put your money where your mouth is quite lit literally. Without financial commitments it's all lip service and smoke screens hoping that the public outcry will blow over and we will go back to normal.

[3:35:53 PM]

I'm here to tell you that's not going to happen. We are all watching and we will vote you out if you do not act in this moment. That goes for the rest of the council as well. You saw what we did to elect Delia Garza and Jose Garza. Show up for your communities or we will show you out. Rest in power Mike Ramos and Javier, defund APD now.

>> Nicole Humbolt.

>> Hi. My name is Nicole. I'm a resident of district 9 and I am calling to let y'all know that I am very deeply disappointed in the current proposed budget cut. .03% is not enough. 50% is the right amount. The current proposal disrespects all people of color who live in this city and it disrespects people who have been B brutalized

[3:36:57 PM]

by the Austin police department. And I ask that you reconsider and divest the money back into the community and continue to grow our community and better it. Thank you for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Farrad Javed.

>> Hi. I live in district 7. Quite honestly this budget is a slap in the face to everyone who is trying to reimagine public safety. The APD is essentially receiving the same amount of money as last year. The Austin justice coalition commissioned a study that showed that in an 18 month period, .6% of the calls that Austin officers received were for violent crime. Police officers are not community service workers. They are violence workers. We need to remove social services from the police department because why would you have a mill tarried police force that is allowed to kill people, respond to mental health issues or

[3:37:58 PM]

respond to calls regarding drug use. Police fail to repeatedly deescalate situations and we are consistently, consistently see unnecessary acts of violence and murder from APD. We need to divest \$200 million from the APD and fund public health and new departments that help prevent violence. Please put your money where your f---ing mouth is.

>> Emily Sawyer.

>> Mayor Adler: That kind of language we need to avoid as we continue this discussion.

>> My name is (saying name) And I live in council district 4. I am asking for the count to decrease spending on the police department in a much more profound way than what is proposed in the current

budget draft. Not increasing the budget does not count as decreasing the budget. It is time to invest in people, not policing.

[3:38:59 PM]

To admit that criminal at a is created by the social ills we refuse to correct. We can create a world that is safe without the threat of state violence. It looks like a world where human dignity is affirmed by enough for all, enough money to love, enough homes to live in, enough health care to take care of all people. Enough. Enough, enough. We have enough. And we have had enough. Make a radical change. Austin can do it, but soaring rhetoric of progressivism and equity is not change. Those who would say defunding the police is eliminating all police funding are disingenuous and intentionally misleading. Defunding the police means they will be defunded, but not overfunded. It means that police can focus on crime, but not do the jobs that we should employ and pay mental health workers, social workers, medical professionals and educators to do. Defunding the police means our values match where we put our dollars. By investing in communities,

[3:40:01 PM]

in people, in schools, in housing and mental health, in health care. In infrastructure. In, in, in. Everyone in. Don't let fear keep you from the bold and necessary action that the community is demanding of you. And don't use those in the community who would ask you to uphold the status quo in the field. So you don't have to do the right and hard thing. Defund APD meaningfully and be an example of actually doing the things you say. And make chief Manley resign. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Christina barber.

>> Here in Austin we do see ourselves with a different enlightened perspective from the rest of the country, but the fact of the matter is that your constituents are seeing you as individuals who are keeping the resources that we paid for

[3:41:01 PM]

for the benefit of yourself. If you are fully interested in helping your community, you need to fund the community by providing social services, including housing for homeless individuals, social services for low income individuals and mental health for those who need it. Funding the police for organizations that commit crimes that they will never be held accountable for we need at least a minimum of \$100

million defunded from the police into funding the community services as. As the community we are demanding that this take place. I yield my time.

>> Jessica Ramirez.

>> Hello. Just one second, I'm trying to run back to my computer. Thank you so much for allowing me to the time to speak today. My name is Jessica Ramirez. I live in district 2. I had the honor of meeting Natasha at I believe it was Rio Rita at the time. And she was very inspiring

[3:42:02 PM]

so I'm really excited to see here in a space of in division of power especially as a black woman in our communities. Good afternoon the community and city of Austin, councilmembers and Steve Adler. I was a young woman who held the door for you at the refugee office last fall. I was waiting for the time to speak up for the community who helped me, an hispanic woman who moved here in 2009. Mostly because most of the meetings are held in the day when most austinites are working to pay their bills, taxes and participate in the Austin community that you serve. I had the luxury and access to speak today. I will continue to use my voice while APD continues to mute bipoc, the community who built this community, its culture, and keeping the animate tow by keeping Austin weird. I see it all the time, raising property taxes and schools closing.

[3:43:03 PM]

I saw inaction when I needed police in Austin, but I see them harassing and arresting the homeless community now today after George Floyd's death and Mike Mike Ramos on and snipers on the rooftops of buildings, bringing that to a peaceful police protest against police brutalized. If you can't see the irony in that please step down. You serve the people who put you in the place of power. These protests have showed -- protesters have shown more bravery and have served the community than the Austin police department. I live in 78744 area code, the highest affected by covid-19. We are a community of black and brown essential workers.

[Buzzer sounds]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much.

>> Francis Acuna.

[3:44:04 PM]

>> Hi, everybody. Thank you for being there and also thank you for dividing us in groups. My name is Francis Acuna. I live in district 2. I like what the gentleman said earlier, if not you, when. If not now, -- if not you, who? If not now, when? I ask that you defund APD by 100 million and direct those funds to community services and programs, mental health services and programs. Parks and recreations. And we've faced flood mitigation and better infrastructure, access to healthy food, affordable housing for low income residents, Austin public health for epidemiologists, nurses, community health workers and environmental health team. And to write funds for direct public assistance.

[3:45:04 PM]

I work and I see hereby and feel residents needs and struggles right now in this pandemic. I hear residents waiting in lines to be tested at 1:00 in the morning. Residents that owe three months of rent that need food that are struggling to make it, pay their bills. I think it's unacceptable for them to be going to all of these struggles when they have city people that should be protecting them. They should be on their side that took an oath to protect them and serve them and to be there when all of this happens. This is your time to shine. Your time to be able to work with these residents to build that trust and that need for interaction or --

[3:46:07 PM]

thank you.

[Buzzer sounds]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Bria Moore.

>> Hi. My name is Bria Moore and I'm a resident of district 6. And I am calling to speak against this current budget. It is unconscionable that we would cut the APD budget by as little as .03%. Anything less than \$100 million is just unacceptable. We need to defund APD and invest that money and reallocate that money into public housing -- into public housing and public health and education. Thank you. I yield back my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Kathleen Houlihan.

>> Kathleen Houlihan, resident of district 9. I'm a white native austinite and mother and I'm here to

[3:47:07 PM]

amplify ccu's demand for the real budget for the people. We need a 50% cut to create a new vision for public safety. If we want change we must fund it. Spencer cronk's proposed budget that only reduces the police budget by a shameful 150,000 rather than the community's demands of at least 100 million at a bare minimum is unbelievable. Please listen to the voices of your community. Reallocate the funds to the numerous people centered departments named by the neighbors before me on the rise fund. I'm here to testify as a public librarian who serves Austin's teens and who has worked closely with incarcerated teens in the local juvenile detention center. Council and manager, those teens in gardener gets are 80% -- gardner-betts are 80% black and brown children. A vote against this is a vote against those children. This is decimating communities of color in Austin. Please, uplift and love on your black and brown young people by investing in them like their lives matter.

[3:48:08 PM]

We are depending on you for their very lives. Get in line with your values and be on the right side of your history. Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Lynette

[indiscernible].

>> I've been called in the middle of the night to provide [indiscernible], give people ride to struck hospitals, deescalate distressed, all the while unarmed and applying zero application of force. APD needs weapons to out weapon and they threaten our community members. We've seen this on display most

[3:49:08 PM]

recently as the APD citizens who are protesting police abuse of citizens. This culture of authoritarianism coupled with the white supremacy embedded in police work does not keep our community safe. Why would we continue paying into an agency that is not only failing, but also inflecting further harm. Austin is one of many cities across the U.S. Who are reevaluating their relationship with police and we keep funding. I ask you to reduce both APD's responsibilities and funding by 50% and begin reallocating it to agencies that already do the work and do it better. Fund ems, crisis response teams, housing and mental health services. We've been throwing half hearted police reform policies at this problem and funneling loads of money APD's way for more than 20 years. It is ill logical to keep investing our community's money into APD just because it's what we do.

[3:50:09 PM]

We need our leaders to

[indiscernible] To the community issues that policing was never meant to remedy. I frankly question the motives of any member of APD who objects to shifting both responsibility and funding to the agencies who are better equipped to effectively serve our community. Put the money where it makes a difference. I assure you --

[buzzer sounds]

>> Mayor Adler: Next speaker.

>> Terran hodes.

>> Hello. I currently reside in another seventh district. I call on you today in regard to item T, the proposed item by Spencer cronk is misleading and insulting and it falsely climbs to reimagine public safety. Do not pass a budget that does not divest at least 200 million from the Austin police department, no less than 200 million. Police only police crime,

[3:51:09 PM]

they do not decrease it. The police do not have the correct tools to address problems of mental health, homelessness, addiction or domestic violence in your communities, in our community. Policing targets communities of color, criminalization and criminal eyes, terrorizes or brutalizes the communities at disproportionate rates. We want our tax dollars to go forwards real solutions, not band AIDS or brutalized. Divest the APD and invest in our community, especially the communities of colors which have been harassed by police. I need you to prioritize our budget. We provide social services and jobs such as affordable housing, public health and direct community assistance. Investing in the programs that provide services and stability for those who are especially vulnerable in the

[3:52:11 PM]

city. Our city's beloved slogan keep Austin weird was a campaign that kept small businesses in a diverse and supportive community. I call us to keep Austin weird by investing in communities of color, amplifying black voices, investing in our community, our parks, our health and emergency services, and supporting local enterprises which have been corroding and is dying because of our pandemic. Die vest in the police at least 200 million and invest in our communities. Invest in what's best. Keep Austin weird. Thank you for your time.

[Buzzer sounds]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> [Calling speaker names].

>> I'm requesting that you

[3:53:12 PM]

defund APD by at least 50%. You guys had a shot to -- if you had said we're going to take away 50 million, maybe we're going to be okay with that. But 150,000 is frankly insulting. So far what I've seen that budget used for is brutalizing members of our community, people like Javier ambler and Mike Ramos as well as brutalizing people who are protesting those injustices. I've spent about 50 days now, 50 something days protesting. And what I've seen is I've seen that police budget used to beat my friends, to unjustly arrest them. And to fill unlocked white vans with eight to 10 officers to come by and snatch people out of crowds. To weaponize horses. That's what I've seen it used F.

[3:54:14 PM]

There are about \$100,000 spent on paying snitches for organized crime. Millions spent on renovating and upkeep of the

[indiscernible] Division. Equine division. I'm calling that you defund APD by at least 50% or 200 something million. I'm asking that you direct those funds to public health, public health, mental health, working on involving the homeless issue using affordable housing. As well as revitalizing working class communities under the direction of leaders of those communities. Lastly I'm going to challenge my city councilmembers to come out to the protest, do so, just wear jeans, a t-shirt and a mask. Don't make a big deal out of it. Just come.

[Buzzer sounds] Black lives matter. Defund APD. I yield the rest of my time.

>> Lexie quiones.

[3:55:15 PM]

>> Hi. Can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes. Please go ahead.

>> Awesome. Thanks so much. Good afternoon. I'd like to thank you for my time. My name is Lexie and I'm a resident of the fifth district. As callers I was looking for more than my chicano neighborhood could provide me. I love this vibrant and amazing time, but as a Latina whose family worked as migrant

farmers in south Texas I have to say I'm very disappointed at the systemic whitewashing of this town. The disrespectful of services here would further whitewash this community when they need it most. Having come from one of the most dangerous cities in the world, I think it's absurd that Mr. Mr. Conk thinks that APD needs that much money. Talented minorities are flocking to Austin as it's becoming the new silicon

[3:56:15 PM]

valley. We don't just walk the walk, but talk the talk for our community. Each year I've witnessed the disparities deepen among our neighbors. What sticks to that slogan keep Austin weird and make Austin a safe place for those who seek to make it better. Defund the police and make this a great place. I yield my time.

>> Sarah Calderon.

>> Defund APD by at least \$100 million. Chief Manley must resign. Mr. Cronk should resign while he's at it. This budget is cynical to the point of misanthrope pi. During the pandemic ems is already critically underfund and and needs more

[3:57:16 PM]

ambulances. During a pandemic, sales tax and property taxes will decrease. This is not reflected in the budget. During a pandemic the coming unemployment and housing crisis are not reflected in this budget. During a pandemic what this city needs is to defund APD, remove cops from schools and reallocate monies to social social services, release the videos related to the 11 incidents of police attacking the blm protesters, release the Mike Ramos video or we will have bigger problems for chief Manley to mangle and turn into even worse problems. The police will not house people, the police will not get people jobs. The police will not help people get to work. The police will not help feed people. The police will not heal the sick. The police will not solve the problems that are set to solve for us during the coming economic depression. It is a moral, political, civic and humanitarian imperative that the city council defund the police and reallocate those monies to agencies that will house,

[3:58:18 PM]

employ, transport, feed and heal the people of this city. Mr. Mayor, I wish you were as quick and responsive to the needs of austinities as you are to potty mouths. That would be amazing! Mr. Cronk, [indiscernible].

>> Zachary

>> My name is Zachry zare. I live in district 5. I'm calling to demand that Austin city council approve a budget that defunds the police department by 50% and instead invest that money in social services and jobs, formal housing, public health, and direct economic assistance. The police do not have the correct tools to address problems of mental health, homelessness, addiction, or domestic violence in our community, especially in the middle of a pandemic and recession, Austin needs the money currently funding APD for public health, mental

[3:59:18 PM]

health, first responders, housing programs, social services that support people who need help instead of criminalizing them. We need to help the people support each other and reinvest this money instead of -- instead of sending it to people brutalizing our front line protesters. We've seen police violent lip -- violently respond to criticism in public demonstrations, we know they racially profile black and brown austinians from the city's own analysis. Enough is enough. The problem cannot be solved by expensive body cams or oversight, the proposed cut by city manager Spencer Cronk on July 13th are misleading and insulting. They ignore the demands of community organizers and the public while claiming to reimagine public safety. Defund police and invest in public safety, housing, and health. Thank you. I yield my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Michael Garemco.

[4:00:24 PM]

>> Okay. Michael Garemco. Hi. I'm in district 8 and I'm here in my personal time -- I'm sorry -- on my personal time and in my personal citizen capacity, although I am a proud member of Austin DSA and my union, TSEU. Let's clear something up. Police are violence workers. They're not safety workers. If you need to use violence, you've already seen a breakdown in safety. Safety is not built in the moment, it's built over a long period of time by having a functioning community. But when the emerging trillionaire sets the sources, as a homeowner I refuse to let my property holding to be used to support that kind of who

-- that kind of hoarding, instead of seeing a society plagued by pregnancy and violence. Safety and free speech,

[4:01:24 PM]

safety in housing, safety in food, safety in education, there's no safety if we have superexploited people among us. And we, the merely exploited, need to stand with them and fight for change at the root. Council member Ellis, your constituents are saying to organize on these very issues. I want you to feel empowered to do what is right. We have a brand new group, already talking and organizing because we support the protesters and we're ready for a real focus on this in our city. Please cut the APD budget by at least half. Just not making APD bigger is \$60 million right there. In Portland, activists are already putting something on the ballot that will provide pre-k for all three- and four-year-olds in the city. It's \$250 million they get just by taxing the top 5% in the safety. That's safety. That the community.

[4:02:25 PM]

So we're not there yet in Austin, apparently --

[buzzer sounding]

-- But I think we really need to get there. Be bold --

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Thanks for participating. Next speaker.

>> Christian tibash.

>> Yeah. Hi. Thank you so much. I just want to take this time briefly to recenter your role as councilmembers, which is, first and foremost, to acknowledge democratic accountability and respond to the voicing of the constituents, and if it has not been made clear, defund APD has been at the center of the discourse on the grounds. People are sacrificing our lives and putting ourselves in the face of danger. I myself have been hit with a tear gas canister in the back of my head. Luckily, I wasn't turned around because that could have put me into serious -- into a serious condition.

[4:03:25 PM]

I was shot with a pellet gun in my right thigh. This is where the Austin police department's budget is going to, frankly, and many people have been saying this very -- very well, and I just want to amplify those voices. What is ahead of us is long overdue. Black women, queer folks have been calling on abolition of the -- of policing for a very long time, and it is only now that -- that white folks have added their voices to this, that we are considering it as a legitimate option. I would consider -- I would encourage you to -- to look at the vast amounts of research and studies and reports and literature on the matter, which says very clearly that policing in this country is neither broken nor flawed, as we've heard among political elites, including the

[4:04:26 PM]

democratic party, but operating just as it is intended. Policing was created just over a century ago --

[buzzer sounding]

-- To prey on poor folks --

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Andy hidad.

>> Good afternoon. My name is Andy hidad. I live in district 9. Thank you for your time today. I've been link to the comments today since 1:00 P.M. And am invigorated by my austinites. I hope you act on what you are hearing. I support defunding APD by 50%, reinvest it in low-income housing, increased mental health resources, assist victims of domestic violence and victims of sexual assault, improving inequities in education and supporting black and brown citizens. We are so off track, we expect police officers to handle these issues for our city. We've seen abhorrent acts committed by police officers against non-violent protesters,

[4:05:27 PM]

protesting against police brutality. We've heard emotional stories from those calling in today. You know what is right. The time is now. Defund APD by 50% this year, reinvest this those you claim to serve, remove chief Manley. Thank you very much for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Rocky agrag II.

>> Hi. My name is rocky, I'm speaking on behalf of measure. The city budget is a public man test oh of values we hold. As a proposed budget currently stands we're going to can the I know to live in inequitable racist Austin with the same institutions including APD that oppressed communitieses of color and perpetuate a lack of investment in community led innovations. If the budget is passed as it currently is, we're going to continue to see the violence and killingses of unarmed killing that data reports show have only been increasing over the past few years. The majority of people APD have killed have been

[4:06:27 PM]

[indiscernible]. We'll also get to spend more money on lawsuits and payments related to policeman's misconduct issues. The current budget means that you all are complicit in these outcomes. What if we chose to do things differently? What if when members are dealing with crisis related to mental illness, they were welcomed by

[indiscernible]. We have model to say look at that would work so well in so many other cities across the country. What if we chose to protect our communities from homelessness? We can fund in housing programs. The budget as it currently stands supports armed forces, very people we don't want to protect. The proposed budget funds military residents that go to war against their own members. Our values of being an equitable city, safe for all, and being a positioncive city that thrives on innovation and creativity. We want to end racism, public health crisis that has plagued the city and the nation since its

[4:07:28 PM]

inception. We need a budget that reflects progression of policing to a focus on community wellness. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> To all the speakers, if you have not pressed 0, please do so at this time. Thank you. The next speaker is Nicole dida.

>> Hello. Sorry, y'all. Hi. My name is any will could. I live in district 4 and I am asking you to defund APD by 50% and invest in real solutions. The rise from equity office and Austin public health low-income housing. I have lived and worked in Austin for a little over a year and in that short time and have it's become apparent that Austin's race history continues to persist, as clearly seen in the recent offensive budget proposals. I don't know the extent of the impact this history has had on long-term residents, but

[4:08:28 PM]

in a year I have seen enough already. I can't imagine that you all are not tired of hearing your residents asking you to defund APD by now. The public's voice is loud and the message is clear. And so now y'all are faced with the question, are you going to listen to your residents and represent them accurately? Thank you.

>> Danielle Peterson.

>> Hi, city council members. I live in district 6 and I'm calling to express my dissatisfaction with the current budget proposal. We need to defund APD by at least half and reallocate those funds elsewhere in our community that needs us. That means putting that towards aid, desegregate and support communities of color and also help against the homelessness community and get them

[indiscernible] Housing. It's incumbent that we listen to our communities

[4:09:30 PM]

of color that we have so long [indiscernible]

[Audio problems] As a society [indiscernible] Thank you so much for your time --

>> Mayor Adler: Can you speak closer to the microphone? You're going in and out.

>> Oh. I yield the rest of my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Thank you.

>> Melissa tester.

>> Hello. My name is Melissa tester and I'm a resident -- Austin are not in district 9. I'm calling to express my dissatisfaction with the the current budget and like many people have talked about today, it's just a - it's just lip service to greater change. And if mayor Adler and city manager cronk, if

[4:10:30 PM]

you really are trying -- are you listening to us? If you're listening to us, you will hear that that is not enough. Many callers have talked about, you know, keep Austin weird and how -- how to adhere to that and make our city great. Austin -- most of you must know,

[indiscernible] Racist principles, segregate people of color. This is more of the same. And it has to change. We're at a juncture in our city that's changing rapidly. We need to consider what kind of city we're going to be. I ask that you defund the police as people have said, put money into social services, put money into helping people who have been affected about I the virus, who have to work, but can't work, help people who are homeless, instead of putting them in jail, put people, trained mental health professionals, in response to non-violent --

[4:11:30 PM]

non-violent crimes, that can help people with mental health problems, not put them into jail. This is what our city needs. We need social services. We don't need more money for police. I yield the rest of my time and I ask that you please listen to your citizens. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Taylor Barnett.

>> Hi. I'm rant of Ann kitchen's district and I'm here to call on city council to

[indiscernible] Any budget that does not come close to the hundred million dollars the community has called for. The proposed budget by city manager is irresponsible and disrespectful to the citizens of Austin. I see people ask me, a white woman, who is going to protect me with less policing? And in

return, I say there is no safety for all until the safety for the blacks, Latin X and other people of color in our community. I don't want my white

[4:12:32 PM]

womanhood used against me, based on their race, housing situation or mental health. Let's truly reimagine policing in Austin and move that budget to things that could be more effective while doing less harm in our community. The president of Austin ems association, should honestly be getting more these days than Austin police sayings, say we haven't even added an ambulance in over five years. Ems has continually been overlooked in the budget process. There's duplication of services that can be cut down. Not every call needs police. She said it herself. Many calls from people experiencing homelessness and welfare checks. The community paramedics are more impactful and should be expanded. The number of people APD has shot with mental health issues is unacceptable. There should be more money put towards mental health issue responders, which is still only partially funded in the proposed budget. We should give gun violence task force five million per year over the next five years for funding violence prevention and survivor

[4:13:32 PM]

support, and these are just a few places that the money could be used more wisely. Don't forget public health, library, parks, park rangers, and more. Thank you for your time. I hope you all have the courage and guts to significantly decrease the police budget.

>> Tovo: Thank you.

>> Lauren Nelson.

>> Hello. My name is Lauren Nelson. I'm calling in today to add my voice to the thousands, the hundreds of thousands of austinites asking you to defund APD. The Austin police department needs to be defunded by a minimum of \$200 million. Spencer cronk's current budget proposal is a shameful misuse of public funds. Spencer cronk, your business as usual budget proposal has shown the public that you support the good old white boys club over black lives. I think we have all had toxic friendships in our past this we need to free ourselves from. It is time to let your

[4:14:33 PM]

toxic friendships with APD go. Spencer cronk, it is time to make new friends. The whole world is looking at Austin. All eyes are on you. Make Austin a city to look up to. Invest in your community. Divest in APD. Your constituents collectively beg you to defund APD and actually invest in your community. If you

refuse to defund APD, you are directly communicating to the whole of Austin that you care more about white solidarity than you do about public health, adequate housing, or black lives. Be courageous. Break the cycle of violence, invest in public safety, divest in APD. Thank you. I give back my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Gerald Dubose.

[4:15:34 PM]

Gerald Dubose, if you are on mute, please unmute. Mayor --

>> Mayor Adler: Yes. Go ahead.

>> Thank you.

>> Hello. I would like to say, first off, thank you for being elected officials to spend sometime and listen to us, what we're saying, and given these perilous times, we need to make some decisions. I also want to say thank you to police officers and civil servants who put their lives on the line every single day to protect and serve. I also want to say that we are asking too much of them. They are supposed to protect us. They need help. It isn't defunding, supporting assistance, support the brave individuals that help support society. We're asking them to do too much they're not

[4:16:35 PM]

trained for, they don't have the training to handle and it's not fair or just to them. We need to find a way to help them do their job of protecting and serving, to assist the community, not penalize them. We can easily allocate funds and resources that are set up for success. And success doesn't mean

[indiscernible] Because that isn't protecting and serving, that's force and intimidation. With that being said, we have fallen into a trap of giving power to people out of blind trust to protect us. We need to hold those individuals accountable for when they break that trust. I'm asking to drop funding by \$100 million next year and reallocate those resources into something that will help make our police officers, our protectors, safe. I yield my time.

[4:17:35 PM]

>> Okay. Mayor, we are -- we have one more speaker. We are trying to connect them. However, they keep hanging up. Otherwise, if there are any other speakers in queue and you have not pressed 0, please do so at this time. Okay. It looks like she is on. Jessica lundt.

>> Yes.

>> Mayor Adler: Go ahead.

>> Hi. I would just like to echo the sentiments of many of the city council members before me. Ooh, I'm sorry, can you still hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Okay. I would like to support defunding APD to a further degree, and preferably at a hundred

[4:18:36 PM]

million dollars or more. I think that what they've demonstrated for us is not a good example of public safety, and so many other community options such as health services and harm prevention services would be much more beneficial. I would just like to ask the city council, specifically city manager cronk, to demonstrate transparency. I know that's been requested of them in the past as well, but it's really hard to trust your government when it seems like you're trying to mislead us. So I would appreciate just more consideration of what the citizens are requesting and keeping that in mind and being honest with us. Thank you for your time. I yield the rest of my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Okay. We've got Anna Stewart.

>> Hello. Can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

[4:19:36 PM]

>> My name is Anna Stewart. I'm a mother, a former educator, and I live in district 1. I urge that you reject any budget proposal that does not defund APD by at least 50% and diverts those funds to real solutions, provides funds, equity office, Austin public health, low-income housing. Fire chief Manley. Spencer cronk, you have blood on your hands from managing Minneapolis and you're trying the same thing here. After watching the reforms to Minneapolis that fail horrifically. It's time to step up or step down, racist policies and self-interest of people in power have created an Austin with rampant and growing inequality between races. New policies can be made and money can be reallocated to start creating true justice and equity for all austinites. The tides could be turned if you are willing to take bold action. Clearly, I'm not alone in demanding transformative change. The number of voters who voted for Jose Garza in

[4:20:37 PM]

the runoff election should indicate to you what the majority of your constituents want. Do not listen to the voices wanting to criminalize citizens sleeping or sheltering from the brutal Texas elements. Do not listen to the voices chatting fear, racism, and xenophobia. Do not listen to the voices supporting a police force with well documented racist practices who have harassed, terrorized and killed black and brown neighbors. Those voices do not represent the city we want or claim to be. Those voices are far outnumbered by the voices calling for policies that ensure all races equal access to resources and opportunities, housing, education, health care, healthy food. Reallocation of our tax dollars to support and uplift black and brown communities. Housing unhoused citizens and doing what it takes to take care of each other. Listen to the call. Don't wait to get voted out. I yield my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Mitch Rossen.

[4:21:40 PM]

>> Hello. Can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Hi. My name is Mitch Rosen. I'm a resident of district 9 and I'm calling in opposition of the proposed budget. I've been a resident of Austin for approximately a year now, and in that time I've been appalled to see that the Austin police department does not protect and serve the people in the community, rather they terrorize and intimidate the people, especially black and people of color austinites. It's distressing to me that city manager cronk would propose a budget that barely at all decreases funding to the Austin police department and I would urge the council not to approve a budget that decreases the police department's funding by any less than a hundred million dollars this year. It's disturbing also that this comes at a time when the city and country are facing a health and economic crisis that we've not seen in countless years, the Austin police department should be diverted to health services, mental

[4:22:40 PM]

health services, harm reduction services, homelessness services, countless other things, rather than harming them the way the Austin police department does. Yes, I urge the mayor, the city manager, and city council to do what is right and to decrease funding for the Austin police department. Thank you. I yield my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Mayor, that was the last speaker, but let me make one more announcement in case there are people in the queue. Please press 0 if you have not already. Okay. It appears that that was our last speaker, mayor.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Colleagues, it's 4:23. If we had some time here, in this third batch and second batch, we were pretty much straight up

[4:23:41 PM]

on time, had a little bit of break in the first time. We're now going to key up the next batch to come back at 6:00, so this is our dinner break at this point. We have a batch that goes from 6:00 to 8:00. We have a batch from 8:00 to 10:00. And we have a batch from 10:00 to midnight. Anything anybody wants to discuss before we go to the dinner break? With that said, then we are in recess at 4:23 until 6:00, and we'll call the next batch. See you then.

[Recess]

[6:01:14 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: All right. It is 6:00. We are -- your now back from recess. This is Thursday, July 23rd, 2020. It is 6:01. We're continuing in with our meeting. This is asking for a public comment on the budget generally, but also on the public hearing that's been set for today about rate and fee changes, as well as setting a public hearing for July 30th, 2020. We're going to continue on I paid to remind everybody we're about halfway through the day. Looks like we have three more two-hour blocks from 6:00 to 8:00, from 8:00 to 10:00, and from 10:00 to midnight. We want to tell everybody who has signed up to speak that as we have done in the first half of

[6:02:14 PM]

the day, we're cutting people off pretty much right at two minutes, just because we have to fit everybody within that block of time. That's the only way that we can get that done. I'll also remind everybody, generally speaking, I thought we did a really good job of it this morning, these are emotional issues. Recognize that. Real significant issues for our community. And we know that many people are real impassioned on this issue. We're asking everybody to keep the discussion to the merits of what we're talking about and recognize the different people come to us from different places, from different experiences, different priorities. Especially at this time, given everything else that's happening with this journey, everybody, just try to be nice to other people. That said, the clerk will walk us through this

[6:03:17 PM]

fourth block, as we have done before, I will turn it over to the clerk. If this council has anything --

>> Mayor, I just wanted to add, you mentioned this in the first session, but especially now, as the evening time comes, some of us -- if we step away and our screens are off, please forgive us as we possibly are putting little ones to bed, et cetera, but we will be listening and our staff will be listening as well.

>> Mayor Adler: Right. And for people -- I've got asked a couple questions about this. As you're looking at people in their eyes, the only way for me to maintain eye contact with people that are watching is to stare at the screen dot at the top of my computer. It becomes a really hard thing to do, especially if I look down, I can actually see my colleagues on the -- on the dais. So, clerk, you'll start

[6:04:18 PM]

walking us through the next round.

>> Okay. The first speaker is Marcella Ortiz and she is a Spanish speaker so I will translate as best as possible.

[Speaking Spanish] Okay.

>> [Speaking Spanish]

>> Okay. This is Marcella Ortiz. I am speaking to mayor and council to inform them that we need assistance to pay rent,

[6:05:21 PM]

bills. Okay.

[Speaking Spanish]

>> [Speaking Spanish]

>> For food, electricity, and my -- or families.

>> [Speaking Spanish]

>> In the midst of this pandemic, a lot of hispanic families --

>> [Speaking Spanish]

>> Their bills are accumulating.

>> [Speaking Spanish]

>> And we are extremely worried because once this pandemic is over, our families will be in debt.

>> [Speaking Spanish]

[6:06:26 PM]

>> So it is very important that these hispanic families are provided the assistance required so that they are not left in debt when the pandemic is over.

>> [Speaking Spanish]

>> A lot of our families are currently unemployed, and while still searching for employment, it is very difficult to find something.

>> [Speaking Spanish]

>> And just like all American families, we, too, have a family to support.

>> [Speaking Spanish]

>> [Speaking Spanish]

>> [Speaking Spanish]

[6:07:28 PM]

>> That currently their children are not aware that their finances are not the same as how they used to be.

>> [Speaking Spanish]

>> And that causes a lot of stress for the parents.

>> [Speaking Spanish]

>> It's worrisome because we cannot provide like we did to our kids, our family.

>> [Speaking Spanish]

>> And just like all parents, we will also want the best for our kids and family.

>> [Speaking Spanish]

>> And so I ask the mayor and council and anyone who can assist...

>> [Speaking Spanish]

>> -- To do your best to provide to the families

[6:08:29 PM]

in need.

>> [Speaking Spanish]

[Buzzer sounding]

>> And thank you for everything that you have currently been doing for the hispanic families.

>> [Speaking Spanish]

>> And that is it for now. Thank you. Gracias.

>> Mayor Adler: Gracias. Thank you.

>> The next speaker is Annie dallie Lesch.

>> Hi. I live in district 5 and I'm a member of district 5 for black lives. I support the demands made by communities of color united and the Austin justice coalition to defund APD. I'm calling on city leaders and especially council member Ann kitchen to reallocate a hundred million dollars from APD's budget to affordable housing, mental and health resources, and direct cash assistance to address longstanding

[6:09:30 PM]

inequities based on communities of color. On your website and Twitter page you profess solidarity, and fighting for racial justice, however, you have yet to call for chief Manley's removal, hold police accountable for acts of violence and discrimination, or create policy to equitably distribute resources to make black and brown austinites safe, healthy and thriving. There are long histories of the way liberal white women perpetuate racism and I ask that you break with that and take action for transformational change. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Brianna Johnson.

>> Hi. Can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes. Go ahead, please.

>> I can't hear very well, but if you can hear me, my name is Brianna Johnson. I'd like to thank you for your time today. I know you all have been

[6:10:30 PM]

listening to a lot and you feel -- [audio difficulties] --

>> Mayor Adler: I think we lost you. Hopefully she'll call back in.

>> Yes. We'll call her back. The next speaker is Daniel Iken.

>> Hi. Can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Hi, council, thank you for your time. My name is Daniel Iken. I live in district 1? Natasha Harper-Madison's district. I work with U.T. Developing COVID response for contact tracing, I'm an active community member. I've lived in districts 5, 9, and 3. Mayor Adler, I addressed you in 2017. Councilman Casar, I worked with you trying to elect Beto in 2018. My synagogue is in

[6:11:31 PM]

councilman Alter's district, and councilwoman Ellis, I hope to work with you in the future. I'm calling to talk to you about the budget. First of all, if we want to call ourselves the live music capital of the world, without live music, we need to support our institutions, venues, and musicians, if we want to call ourselves the live music capital of the world. The second concern is the absolute shame of the budget that Spencer Cronk delivered. The community has called for defunding APD and the budget but Officer Manley refuses to listen to directives, the chief accused of racist and homophobic statements, the entire department needs to be changed. We must defund APD by at least a hundred million dollars or even better, 50%. Police complained that we ask too much of them, and I agree. We must take that funding and invest in mental health experts, social workers, affordable housing and those experiencing homelessness. Especially with the pandemic, shifting funds from APD to social services, food, rent

[6:12:32 PM]

assistance is absolutely imperative. The community has spoken. We ask you to please listen to us and put actual action behind your words from last council. City manager Cronk works for council and council works for us. If council doesn't manage Spencer Cronk, we'll vote council out. Have police fire Spencer Cronk, chief Manley, defund APD and invest in our community. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Marena Roberts. Marena Roberts, please unmute.

>> Hello. Can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> All right. I just spent a week canvassing against save Austin now to prevent them lying to voters about a petition to criminalize homelessness, during which they called the police on me three times for peacefully disagreeing with them. For some of our wealthier

[6:13:34 PM]

whiter neighbors in Austin, this is the function of the police, a blunt force instrument used to harass away the black and brown and poor. To me the police need something very different. I have a brother who I haven't spoken to in many years, and the last contact we had, he was homeless. This is why I organize against injustice in Austin and ask you to defund APD by 50% today. Of the 15 most populous U.S. Cities, we have a high rate of police shootings. My brother was treated for mental health disorders and he refuses to seek anyone in our family for reasons we can't understand. We can't help him but he can be helped, housed and cared for. A man with a mental health crisis was shot to death in downtown by APD. Where were the less lethal rounds then and deescalation training? The condolences to this victim's family raining hollow to a person who

[6:14:36 PM]

wonders when I having receive a call from the police straining the circumstances under which at the shot my brother to death. I think of my brother every day, and every day I'm stealing myself for that bleak news. This brutal equation is a reflection of a budget that continues to handle issues of economic inequality, racism, and trauma with policing, even though research and experts continue to tell us policing makes them worse. You have the power to put the money where it will do the most good, rather than squandering it on a permanent band-aid that makes white people feel more comfortable. You can fund public health and social services and lay bricks for a world where I no longer wait on that call. It is my hope you went into public service because you're capable of finding the courage to stop doing what doesn't work.

[Buzzer sounding] Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Stephanie Cunningham.

>> Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Stephanie Cunningham. A full draft of these comments should have been provided to you. Thank you to council member alter for your

[6:15:37 PM]

response yesterday. Five and a half years ago I was widowed when my life partner, a paramedic with Austin county ems died by suicide. I shared my pain and suffering to the commission because I recognized hundreds of other medics, still working under a chief and assistant city manager who did not prioritize their physical safety, their mental health, or the toll that their public service takes on their family. Somehow after all these years, I'm back pleading for the exact same things. The manager's business as urban budget for mastering this time of pandemic, which has not changed since the first draft from February, is unconscionable. There are many more medical calls during this pandemic and they're taking longer due to ppe and decontamination procedures, which are essential to help keep employees safe during this time. While community health paramedics play an incredibly valuable roll in Austin health's system, these are not issues relieved by that staffing alone. One afternoon last week

[6:16:37 PM]

there were no ambulances within 20 minutes of my home in district 5. Y'all know that 20 minutes is far too long in an emergency. How is that acceptable? I suppose this is a bit outside of my -- the remarks I prepared, but I just wanted to add that I love Austin. I've been here for 12 years and as an army brat, that's the longest I've lived in any one place. I'm a proud brought of

--graduate of the university of Texas. But I feel like I've given and lost much to this city. Please don't ask me to give more. We can't continue to run on fumes for yet another year. It's imperative that you fund more ambulances and more medics. I yield the remainder of my time.

>> Mayor --

>> I'm sorry. Go ahead.

>> I wanted the last speaker to know that I've been working with chief

[6:17:37 PM]

Rodriguez and we have some interim steps that will be taken for alleviating some of the challenges for central Austin with the ambulances and I'll be putting forward with several colleagues an amendment next week related to ems and resources.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Karen tenkai.

>> Hi. My name is Karen tenkai. I've lived in Austin six years, I'm a proud graduate of U.T. And I've lived in district 4 for two years now, going on my third year. I wanted to take a second to talk about a department of justice, doj report that showed that, on average, police academies across the nation

spend 110 hours on firearm skills, target practice and self-defense while only spending eight hours on conflict and mediation management. If we take a look at Austin's E checkbook on Austin finance in the general fund of the

[6:18:39 PM]

police department, we can see that out of the \$7.8 million of transactions that were spent on training, \$5.2 million have been on explosives and blasting, just for training. And of those dollars, four and a half million, at least four and a half million have been spent on ammunition, just on training for the Austin police department. Why do we have cops being trained as highly skilled assassins? How much time during training is spent on target practice and bullet shooting while, on average, only eight hours on mediation management? Many of APD's own have said that they've never even drawn their guns in most of their time spent patrolling and answering violent calls. I also want to point out that we can see \$228 million spent by Austin police in this E checkbook, and the data goes back ten years. I want to echo the

[6:19:39 PM]

sentiments of everyone who has spoken before me that has called on you to defund APD by at least \$100 million, and if possible, I would love to support ccu's calls to defund APD by 50%. We need to drive this money and put it towards better mental health initiatives for austinites and put it towards financial options for the hispanic communities that are struggling with paying their rent --

[buzzer sounding]

-- And with bills in general in Austin.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Next speaker.

>> [Indiscernible]

>> Hi. My name is Kerry Bakeley. I'm an eight-year resident of district 3 and a musician in the Austin community. First of all, Spencer cronk, that budget is so insulting and patronizing to so many of the residents of your city. The APD receives more

[6:20:41 PM]

than the library, Austin public health, parks & rec, and ems combined, which is shameful. We demand that we cut the Austin police department budget by 50% and reinvest that money in the real solutions set bite communities of color united. And additionally, work to abolish the police completely in four

years. The rise funds include providing for families in need, especially due to covid, those numbers are larger than ever, paying more attention to the equity office, which is set to hold us accountable, make sure our city is doing what's best for everyone, not just for the wealthy white constituents. Giving more money to the Austin public health department, especially now we see how underprepared we have been for a situation like covid-19, but just in general, like, there's so

[6:21:43 PM]

many people in need that are sick who need our help and can't afford the care that they need. And lastly, and one of the most important things is low-income housing. Our largely communities of color low-income families are constantly being pushed out by these giant high-rises. It's sad. They have nowhere to go in their own city that they've been in for so long. And so redirecting some of those funds to low-income housing. And I disagree with what mayor Adler said at the beginning, that we all have different priorities for our city and our community. Our one priority is --

[buzzer sounding]

-- Keeping the most at had of risk people in our community safe. Thank you for your time.

>> Tovo: Thank you very much. Next speaker.

>> Brianna Johnson.

>> Hi. Yes. I'm -- I'm glad to be back. Sorry I got cut off

[6:22:45 PM]

earlier. I'm proud to be part of this city to hear everyone calling in now I moved here in 2007, I'm a graduate of U.T., I love this city. Up until a 2000 months ago, I fully supported APD. I thought we had a wonderful police department. Every interaction I'd had with them previously was really great, I thought they were there to protect me. And then I started going out to protests, and I saw them attacking completely peaceful protesters, doing absolutely nothing to antagonize them or hurt them, hurt anybody or anything. Nobody was being violent. The only people being violent were the police. I saw lots of people get hurt. I've seen people get arrested who did not deserve to be arrested. Sorry, I think I hear somebody talking, but -- so I just want to say I really hope that you fire Manley and defund at least a hundred million and put those funds to things that really need it, our housing, medics, ambulances and services

[6:23:45 PM]

that will actually help people around here. Thank you.

>> Next speaker is Adam protexter Adam, please unmute.

>> Hi there. This is Adam. I'm an Austin resident. I've lived here 12 years and I live in district 1. I would first like to thank council member harper-madison for all of her hard work. I'm calling today to talk about my concerns with the budget proposal, especially how it relates to police funding. I think while the city manager's outward facing documents appear to promise an \$11.3 million production, a look at page 351 reveals it's only \$150,000 less from last year's budget or just .03% drop. Also, this may seem

[6:24:47 PM]

inconsequential but the images chosen to represent APD on pages 349 and 350 of the budget reimbursing of photo ops of police with children and horses which feels very tone deaf and opposite to the reality we've seen in recent months of using unacceptable force against Austin citizens and peaceful protesters. The fact that it took city council interference to do away with rubber bullets and tear gas after they've been used on citizens is just proof without constituents speaking up, protesting and putting pressure on the city, police brutality runs unchecked by chief Manley in Austin. We need a budget cut of 50% or a hundred million dollars as a compromise for Austin Mr. Is in 2021 and we need to reallocate that money to community programs and infrastructure designed to increase public health and housing working towards the eventual total abolition of the APD as we currently know them. I believe in this. I know thousands of other Austin citizens do as well. We do not deserve our reputation as a Progressive city if we cannot take Progressive

[6:25:47 PM]

and bold steps to set an example in our state and in our country. Budget needs reflect the best interest of all Austin citizens and Austin citizens know police are a threat to public safety, not an asset. I yield the remainder of my time. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Jesse pen dergrass.

>> Hello. I'm a resident in district 7 and a member of Austin dsa. I attended Leslie pool's virtual town meeting on Monday and I learned several interesting things. First, van eenoo, the budget officer for the city, basically admitted that the \$11 million cut from the APD budget is not actually a real reduction in funding. He explained this money was largely already allocated to the department and hadn't been used yet. So they're removing it before it can be used and calling it a job well

[6:26:48 PM]

done. This isn't even a bare minimum of effort, and it doesn't represent an actual reduction in funding to existing policing, which is what the community is asking for. Second, Leslie pool did not answer my question about a commitment to reduce APD's budget by at least 1million. Instead, she spent her time explaining and celebrating the conversation and the process. In particular, she celebrated the midyear budget amendment process, as though she's already decided she will you be arer stamp whatever budget is placed in front of her come what may, as though we are all helpless to the process. The community is not demanding more process when we have centuries of white supremacy to undo and black people are getting murdered in the streets by sworn officers of the city today. We don't need more conversation when real solutions have been in front of you for years. The community demand action and real solutions

[6:27:48 PM]

like the rise fund, low-income health and housing, and now is the time to implement them by this budget. Vote no on any budget that does not reduce APD's allotment by at least 100 million. Ensure that any approved budget allocates that money to the real solutions. Will L.P., district 7 is watching and you're up for reelection this year. Black lives matter. I yield the rest of my time. Thank you.

>> Pool: Mayor, I'd like to just offer -- this is a really great opportunity, and I really appreciate this gentleman bringing this up about the town hall. We did talk about the process in front of us at the town hall, and that is the process at the city. But what we didn't have an opportunity, because we just were so focused on how things work, the inner workings of the city, we didn't have the opportunity really to tell you how committed we are to these changes. That commitment has been

[6:28:48 PM]

clearly, clearly expressed by all of my colleagues on this dais, repeatedly. I myself have put it out into social media publicly, I have made public statements again and again. And we will keep repeating ourselves, and we will be doing the hard work, this heavy lift, the listening to the community, we do hear you. Every one of us on this dais is absolutely committed to the change that you are asking for and demanding. And I -- so I wanted to take this opportunity just to thank you for opening that door so that I could recommit and reiterate and state with all emphasis that that is where I stand. And I would say that it is no different for I was in from the city manager

-- for any of us, from the city manager on down to people in the

[6:29:49 PM]

community, a professional focused on serving this Austin community in the best ways we know how, even when we are in the midst of the most unusual year and significant social upheaval. So thank you so much for coming and making those statements. I truly do appreciate that.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Next speaker.

>> [Indiscernible]

>> Hi. Can you guys hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Awesome. Thank you for giving me this opportunity. My name is

[indiscernible], and I am in district 7. And I also attended the meeting town hall that council member Leslie pool held, and like -- I agree -- I understand what you're trying to say, but you haven't committed to the cause of a hundred million dollars of city APD budget removal and reallocation of those funds. I'd like to start off by saying that I'm a Muslim

[6:30:50 PM]

American who have worked with mayor Steve Adler, you were the first -- I was part of the first group that came and sat with you across the table and discussed the annual -- annual celebration we do with the city of Austin. I also worked with Mr. Flannigan when you came to our mosque and you spoke against -- against injustice and that's how you want to protect the Muslim community. So with that being said, I our community also sent out a letter regarding this social injustice that is occurring to black communities. And anybody can be a Muslim, even a black -- black Americans can also be muslims, and when we speak of injustice being done, it is being done all across the board.

[6:31:50 PM]

You have heard -- you have heard jewish speakers come out and give witness statements saying that we need to defund the APD. You have -- now you're hearing from Americans coming out and saying that you need to defund APD by at least a minimum hundred million dollars. You have Christian Americans, you have every source of background, community members in this Austin city, coming out and telling you guys that this is the time to make a change. This is the time --

[buzzer sounding]

--

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much for participating. Thank you.

>> [Indiscernible]

>> Hi. Thank you for being here and listening to us for hours on end. It's really appreciated. I live in district 7 and I'm against the current draft of the city budget. I'm requesting that the city cut the APD budget by at least \$200 million, which is about 50%.

[6:32:50 PM]

Those funds should be used to provide housing for the homeless population, and investment in health care facilities. I find it ironic that people were out in the streets to protest police brutality and the protests were met with even more police brutality. APD initially pledged to releasing the body cam footage from the protests after 60 days, which would have been at the end of this month. Now the release of the footage has been delayed indefinitely, and they're in the process of approving the city budget without ever seeing the footage. The officers who violated the first amendment rights of protesters are still on the APD payroll. I question their training of APD officers who fired tear gas and rubber bullets at teenagers because they supposedly feared for their safety when it's the officers carrying lethal weapons, due to bad leadership. All of you voted confidence in police

[6:33:51 PM]

chief Manley, but no change has occurred. I'm losing faith in the council to carry out the duty to serve and protect its constituents. Chief Manley needs to be replaced, and if Spencer Cronk cannot make that happen, then our city manager needs to be replaced. We aren't going to take no for an answer. If the final city budget doesn't drastically reduce the APD budget by at least 200 million, you will lose my vote in the next election. Thank you for your time.

>> Kelly Rios.

>> Hello. My name is Kelly Rios. I'm a homeowner in district 4. I'm calling to oppose the budget by city manager Cronk and calling for a reduction in the Austin police department's budget by a minimum a hundred million dollars. The city of Austin prevents itself as a diverse community but I see it failing communities within it, communities of color,

[6:34:53 PM]

low-income and homeless population. We've attempted to work with Austin police department but have been met with resistance at every turn. Change will not come from APD, change will come from divesting in police and investing in the community. There are many less costly alternative responses that could be implemented to replace the police in non-crime situations with little no, no risk to public safety. Reducing the massive budget of the Austin police department would mean the opportunity to diverse these funds to actually serve the citizens of Austin. We could start funding mental health first

responders who could provide crisis intervention more appropriately than the current police response. We could increase funding to community-based harm reduction programs relating to substance abuse and recovery. We could create a department to promote violence prevention, deescalation recourses and assist violence survivors. We could increase funding for equity and civil rights offices within this city. That's not to mention the work that needs to be done to decrease inequities laid bare by

[6:35:54 PM]

the covid-19 epidemic, including investing in public health, ems hasn't been able to purchase an ambulance for more than five years, the absence of low-income housing and homeless population support and technology resources for low-income students. We're living in unprecedented times. I ask you to change for the better for Austin community. So many are doing leg work to provide for initiatives as mentioned. Please mention and help put power and funds behind their initiatives. Black lives matter and thank you for your time.

>> Catherine Eisenhower.

>> Hi. My name is Cathy Eisenhower and I'm a resident of district 9. I'm here to support communities of color united's demands about the Austin public budget, insisting that resources go to provide housing, food, education, and care, including health care to those who need

[6:36:54 PM]

it, instead of continuing to pile inordinate amounts of money into APD so they can use force and punishment to protect white people to benefit financially, legally, educationally, and emotionally from a racist system, and to perpetrate violence against black and brown bodies beaten down by that system. The city council should decrease the APD budget by half and put that money into public health, education, violence prevention, and affordable housing. As a child psychotherapist here in Austin, I have seen the fear and trauma inflicted on families when police show up for 911 calls of parents needing help for suicidal teenager because police are not and cannot be trained to provide mental health crisis response, yet they are often the only option. Defunding the APD and real indicating those funds is not a solution, but it is undeniably a necessary first step. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Drew [indiscernible]

[6:37:55 PM]

>> Hi. Thank you. My name is drew and I'm a local teacher. I live in district 5. Today I'm coming to ask the council to follow through with the budget cuts to APD proposed by the Austin justice coalition and others. I'm backing the ajc and asking for 100 million to be taken out of APD and put into other programs that better serve the community. Let's make APD more efficient and stop primarily relying on them to deal with everything from traffic violations to mental health issues and the homelessness problem. Out of compassion to the community and for APD itself, let's think creatively about policing and look for less confrontational ways to address homelessness crisis, road safety, ways that don't involve an armed officer present to enforce. We're asking you to deflate this grossly oversized budget and refunnel money into the

[6:38:56 PM]

proposed prevention and survivor support, the 10 million that could go to emergency medical services for non-police first responders to provide crisis intervention, and the 38 million proposed by Austin echo to reach functional zero homelessness with the housing first model, emphasis on the housing first model. Thank you for your time. Rest in peace to Mike Ramos and all the love and support in the world to his mother and his family. Black lives matter. Thank you. I yield my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Demi [indiscernible]

>> Hello. Can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Hi. My name is demi and I'm an Austin community member residing in district 7. I want to begin by thanking you all for the unanimous commitment to reimagining Austin's public health and safety. I want to make it clear the journey you've committed to will live or die by this year's budget. The people of Austin have woken up. We've started to

[6:39:56 PM]

understand the power our tax dollars have in creating a community we want to live in and we do not support the vision that Spencer cronk has proposed. I am strongly against the \$150,000 cronk is offering. I'm in support of the 50% cut of APD's budget that communities of color united have proposed in the name of abolishing the police because that is the only answer. Time after time people have proposed reforming APD but reforms don't work. A choke hold means nothing when APD officers have qualified immunity. Body cams don't stop community members from being killed. It can't undo decades of racial violence. The Austin justice coalition has published research available on the website that shows the type of incoming calls APD gets for help. From January 2019 to June 2020, only .6 of those crimes were

violent crimes and a number of those were false alarms. The point of this data is to show again what we have already come to learn. Armed APD officers are largely unneeded. The police as we know it

[6:40:57 PM]

is unnecessary. We must abolish the police and work with organizations such as communities of color united, [indiscernible] And Austin justice coalition who had the answers to put -- of what to put in its place. I urge you to listen to these organizations. They have the answers. They represent us way more than city council does. I will end by saying, like many others, I've been disappointed in Leslie pool's response to this, she's been tepid about encouraging real change. Council member pool, I urge you, do the research about abolition, do not be scared of what you do not understand. Seek answers. Abolition is possible, next, and it will happen with or without you. Thank you.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Ann koole.

>> Hello? My name is Ann -- thank you. My name is Annie koole, and I live in district 9 in Austin. I'm calling to support communities of color united in their proposed

[6:42:00 PM]

real solutions. These solutions are allocating money to rise funds for people affected by covid and increase support for the equity office in the city government. More funds for Austin public health and low-income housing. To accomplish this, I'm advocating for at least a 50% cut to the Austin police department budget for this upcoming year. Austin police department's current budget of almost \$450 million harms the Austin community, especially black and people of color. Austin police department has repeatedly used excessive force and violence. It's shown that Austin police department is resistant to change and reform. It's time to stop funding reforms and paying for equipment for APD. These funds should be used for real solutions that help people, housing, provide financial relief to people affected by covid, decrease the funding for APD by at least 50% and in was in communities instead. Listen to the people calling in and please make real changes in the budget. Thank you.

[6:43:01 PM]

>> Richard

[indiscernible]

>> Yes, Richard

[indiscernible], I will I have in district 1, I'm urging the council to continue to reallocate money from APD, at least a hundred million, and invest it in social programs that have a real tangible benefit for the community, mental health services, other types of health care, housing relief, covid-19 economic relief as Ms. Ortiz mentioned earlier, residents of color disproportionately affected. And then non-punitive methods of dealing with non-violent crimes. Crime is born of poverty so let's deal with it at that level. There's clearly a myth among members of the APD that you must meet those who disagree with you with force, and therein lies the problem, the sheep dog warrior mentality is a self-imposed distinction that's at best a complete fantasy. My colleagues and I participated in the demonstration outside APD a couple weeks ago as we

[6:44:02 PM]

did in the original demonstrations and we were maced again for simply standing there. I also observed APD violently apprehend Mr. Garcia for doing nothing other than filming. This is morally depraved and not okay. It's incidents like this, why we clamor for defunding APD. People will continue to speak on this until it's resolved. Black lives matter and until they matter, we can't rest. That's it.

>> Bethany Carson.

>> Good evening. My name is Bethany Carson and I'm here today as a district 4 resident to support the demands of communities of color united and grass roots leadership. I'm calling on council to vote no on any budget that does not flat defund APD by at least 50% and fund real solutions, including the rise fund, equity office, Austin public health, and

[6:45:04 PM]

low-income housing. We are in the midst of a moment of incredible transformation in our country and this community. For those of us who haven't experienced violence in our current system and narratives that criminalizing systems keep us safe, change can be uncomfortable. But you've heard from hundreds of those people today who want to step into their courage and integrity and to divest from white supremacy. So I ask you to step in with us. This change has already begun. Austin has already taken steps towards decriminalizing the daily existence of people. Travis county has elected a district attorney who has pledged to decriminalize many low level offenses because they unnecessarily target communities of color without making us any safer. These form a huge proportion of our current bookings and there is no reason that APD should continue to be funded to patrol communities in the ways that result in these arrests. We need health and housing instead to bring about this

[6:46:05 PM]

transformation. We must also end harmful programs like the Riverside togetherness project that fund more police presence in black and brown neighborhoods, putting residents' lives at increased risk and driving displacement. We must answer programs such as the Austin regional intelligence center, which today the chronicle revealed has been funding secret citizen Mr. Is who report on their neighbors. So 50% is just the beginning. APD are actors of violence. So to reduce harm, the very least we can do is defund by 50% but we need to phase out APD entirely and place communities most impacted at the forefront of

[indiscernible] --

[buzzer sounding]

-- To clearly keep our community safe.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Next speaker.

>> Jason denowsky.

>> Good evening. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Jason denowsky. I'm an attorney and then

[6:47:07 PM]

resident here in Austin and I'm calling today to express my opinion on the proposed budget. Like many other Austin citizens, I contacted the council on June 4th to register my disappointment and dismay regarding APD retaliation against black lives matter protesters regarding the lack of accountability related to APD's excessive use of force and regarding my expectations for the city budget going forward. My expectation includes a substantial reallocation of APD funds, at least \$100 million, to other departments and city services that could better serve our community. The proposed budget is entirely unacceptable, and I urge the city council to reject it. The budget portrayed canceling planned increases in APD's budget as a decrease. APD's total budget currently stands at over \$400 million. This is money poorly spent that could instead

[6:48:07 PM]

be used to help Austin citizens, such as providing -- by providing aid to those who suffer from covid in the forthcoming eviction wave that will begin next week after the expiration of the moratorium. The city should reduce APD's budget by at least \$100 million. If the manager does not propose a budget that represents real reform, we ask that the city council find a city manager who will. Thank you for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Lauren ardle.

>> Hi. My name is Lauren artel, I was in district 1 and I'm asking you to defund APD by 50% and in was in real solutions. I wanted to finish the quote someone tried to share earlier. This is from a special council session convened in 1865, the year of the end of the civil war, from the mayor of Austin at that time, as reported in the July 7th issue of the local newspaper,

[6:49:08 PM]

the southern intelligencer. The mayor said, quote: The fact that a large number of negroes turned loose by their owners are congregating in and about Austin as also perhaps desperate white men makes it necessary to organize a police source to deal with them, end quote. This is in the context of Austin's first vagrancy ordinance, which was passed three days later as an early local version of the black codes that were instituted throughout the south to recriminalize emancipated slaves. This is how our police department started and you've heard the many reasons why we need to redirect this funding to the rise fund, equity office, Austin public health, low-income housing and a new violence prevention and survivor support department. Black Austin matters and I hope you'll make the right decision for this budget. Thank you for your time tonight.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

[6:50:08 PM]

>> Brian korlesky.

>> Hi. My name is Brian, I live in district 9. I'm today with Austin dsa to demand that we approve a budget that defunds the police department by 50% or more, and instead, invest that money in social services and jocks such as affordable -- affordable housing, et cetera. This was insulting to read, it's very obvious this wasn't taking seriously. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Sarah barber.

>> Hi. Yes. Thank you very much for your time today as you listen to to your comments. I'm a resident of district 1 and I'm calling because the

[6:51:08 PM]

proposed budget cuts to APD does not match what this community believes in. Reducing APD's funding will be the first step towards a vision of law enforcement that this community wants. In fact, in the end, a reduction of police responsibility will make the force more productive and hopefully less lethal. Using alternative types of responses to 911 calls could be more effective and less costly to us taxpayers. Now is the time to make these changes. I personally propose that the APD budget be cut by 50% and put into other sectors such as low-income affordable housing at a percentage that matches our city's wage gap, mental health emergency services, election and campaign funding to start getting money out of politics, our public schools, helping our growing homeless population, and especially public health, since for the next fiscal year, we will be dealing with the pandemic for the better part of it. If more funding is needed via future taxes to ease the impending economic

[6:52:09 PM]

crisis, please raise property taxes. I'm saying this as a homeowner and not sales taxes, as that impacts lower income people unfairly. To close, I'm calling on the council's powers to fire city manager Spencer Cronk, whose salary is outrageously high and we're telling you that we are not feeling the benefits of that investment. Let's show the world Austin, Texas of the future, not the Austin, Texas of the past. Thank you, council, for your time.

>> Haley Campbell.

>> Thank you so much for your time this evening. I first want to state that I deeply appreciate the comments made by every single speaker so far in this time block, and I fully support everything that they have been saying. I would like to state that cutting APD's budget by .03% is a reasonable start to defunding Austin's police department, and I appreciate city council and the mayor's commitment to beginning

[6:53:09 PM]

this process. We must do more. As you have heard this evening, Austin citizens demand that APD's ridiculously high budget be reallocated to services that will help not only our community members and our most vulnerable but also our police department. Our cops don't need to be called out for mental health crises. They do not need to be called out for broken windows policing. They do not need to be called out to interfere with the lives of our large homeless population. Instead, we must reallocate this money towards helping our homeless communities reinvesting in our communities of color, and all the other initiatives we've heard tonight. I strongly encourage you all, city council, and our mayor, to read up on project zero and to consider citywide coordinated coverage for our homeless population through organizations already doing the work

[6:54:10 PM]

such as sunrise church,

[indiscernible] And integral care. One thing that is very rarely mentioned in these discussions about helping the homeless, individuals are housed and they're left to their own devices after that point. These individuals are still extremely vulnerable, still require coordinated care and managed services, just think what the \$50 million that is being requested to reallocate away from APD could do to help those individuals. Thank you very much for your time and attention. I yield the rest of my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> To all the speakers in queue, if you haven't already, please press 0. Thank you. The next speaker is Natalie Goodnow.

>> Hello. Can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Okay. Thank you. Like so many others tonight, I'm calling to voice my disappointment in the budget proposed by

[6:55:12 PM]

the city manager and also to voice my support of community of color united's call to reduce APD's budget by at least 50% and to invest in real solutions, such as the rise fund, the equity office, Austin public health, and low-income -- excuse me -- low-income housing. I am a Latina who's lived in Austin all my life and I'm tired of seeing communities of color, especially black communities, negatively impacted by these systemic injustices, and particularly tired of seeing members of my family die early deaths. I suspect this won't be the last time that I am going to need to call to reiterate these same demands, and I intend to dedicate my testimony each time to one of my family members who has died an early death. Today I dedicate it to my uncle Manuel. He died in his 60s. He lived a life defined

[6:56:13 PM]

by incarceration, probation, parole. He was not a dangerous individual. He was someone who lived his life in poverty. He was someone who was depressed. He was someone who was addicted. He was someone who needed support. If we had made the kind of changes that have been called for today, much sooner, if he had found support instead of police officers and incarcerations, maybe he would still be here today, maybe his children wouldn't be hurting, maybe my mother wouldn't be hurting from his loss. I'll talk to you next time. Thank you. I yield the rest of my time.

>> Jessica Johnson. Jessica Johnson, if you're on mute, please unmute.

>> Hello. My name is Jessica Johnson. I'm a resident of district 9, an attorney in Texas [indiscernible]

[6:57:13 PM]

And a black Austinite. It's time to live up to our Progressive reputation by listening to community voices and getting rid of folks who stand in the way of progress. There has been no accountability, no disciplinary action, no removal of chief Manley -- excuse me -- chief Manley, and now no meaningful reduction to the budget of APD. Not significantly reducing the APD budget would make you, our city leaders, complicit by tacitly condoning murdering Austinites to shooting protesters and medics. Where do we start? The police academy must be shuttered until the practices have been meaningfully reviewed and drastically changed. Additionally, 100 open positions and proposed additional 118 cadet slots must be removed and defunded. Further, the last budget shows that the use of police overtime is not connected to public safety. It can and should be significantly decreased and better managed. However, I also want to address members of

[6:58:13 PM]

council who aren't ready to commit the \$100 million decrease without a plan, but I urge you to consider that it is in itself a plan. The APD will not voluntarily cede any of its functions or power unless it is necessitated by budget restrictions. According to the collection of data on 911 calls, only 21.5 calls involve crime and only .6 of percent of calls address violent crime. They will have no choice but to prioritize addressing only crime to traffic control to we ever checks to mental health calls, we can send better trained and less dangerous professionals for less money. A \$100 million budget reduction makes this shift necessary instead of voluntary. These are the first steps towards truly reimagining public safety. So I implore you, city council, to, at the very least, reject the budget unless it has the effect of --

[buzzer sounding]

-- Preventing the

[6:59:14 PM]

addition of new officers and defunding all existing open positions. Thank you.

>> Cynthia Macha.

>> Hi. My name is Cynthia. I live in north Austin, part of district 7. I'm calling today with Austin dsa to demand that Austin city council approve a budget that defunds the police department by 50% and instead invest that money in social services and jobs such as affordable housing, public health and direct

economic assistance. The police don't have the correct tools to address problems of mental health, homelessness, addiction, or domestic violence in our community. One fact that illustrates this, of the top 15 most populous U.S. Cities, Austin has the highest per capita rate of fatal mental health related shootings. Both Houston and Dallas have some form of a team to send mental health professionals with officers to mental health calls so why can't we? Especially in the middle of a pandemic in a recession, Austin needs defunding APD for public

[7:00:14 PM]

health, mental health first responders, housing programs and social services that support people who need health instead of to be criminalized. We've seen police violently respond to public criticism and protest and demonstrations and we also know that APD racially profiles black and brown austinians from the city's own analysis. Enough is enough. The problem can't be solved by body cams or more oversight. APD has delayed the release of footage in the Ramos murder until after the budget hearings. The proposed cuts released are misleading and insulting. He claims the budget decreases the budget by three million. The nominal decrease is 150 thousand, or 0.3% from last night's budget. This dismisses the demands of community organizers while claiming to re-imagine public

[7:01:15 PM]

safety. I urge councilmembers to divest from police and invest in public safety housing and health.

>> Maria Ochoa vargas.

>> Hi. My name is Maria vargas. I'm a lawyer with a background in human rights, and corruption work. I'm here to support the demands of Austin justice coalition and defunding APD by at least 50%.

[?] What we are currently experiencing as a city, instead of investing money in police, we should be investing money in public housing. And health. And and services that actually help build the community up rather than disproportionately

[7:02:17 PM]

police black and brown communities. In addition, I was shocked to find that on page 501 of the police budget the city council is approving the submission of grants to the department of homeland security. That would go towards the Austin regional intelligence center. This center has been reported to spy on our -- on us and on our neighbors. And as we're seeing the type of violence that the federal government is perpetrating in Portland, we should definitely be on guard of what could happen in Austin. So I

adamantly oppose that the city council approve that grants be submitted to has to fund the Austin regional

[7:03:17 PM]

intelligence center. I yield the rest of my time. Margaret Hal pin.

>> Thank you and good evening mayor and councilmembers. My name is meg helpin, I live in district seven. I'm here to support communities united and grassroots and invest funds in solutions that meet the true needs of our community. Specifically the rise fund, equity office, Austin public health, low-income housing to really begin to remedy the longstanding systemic inequities faced by communities of color in Austin. To city manager cronk, you have heard the ground swell of support from the people of our city to move substantial money away from APD to services and supports that will lift up our community in ways we all know policing cannot. This proposed budget does not reflect those priorities in any meaningful way.

[7:04:19 PM]

We have to do better. To representative councilmember pool, I know you indicated you support significant defunding from the APD budget, I will say this is not what I took away from your town hall earlier this week. I thank you for the commitment you express said tonight. I urge you to be more career and courageous in your leadership. And not vote in favor of the budget unless it reallocated at least \$100 million away from APD for funding solutions we are looking for. Thank you for your time and listening.

>> Mayor larosiliere: Thank you.

>> Jeremy stilt.

>> Howdy y'all. My name is Jeremy stilt. I'm a queer activist, musician and live event producer living in Austin for nearly 10 years. I would like to speak in support of reallocating

[7:05:20 PM]

\$100 million from the police budget to supporting community initiatives. Despite the impact on African-American and latinx communities in Austin, we should put resources to benefitting them first. There are others that can speak on that. As a mucoids I can speak out what I know about best. I heard from many owners that they received no assistance from the city and are in danger of closing by the fall unless something changes for them. I feel like rental assistance should happen soon to help them out. When

we emerge from the pandemic it could be a desperate landscape in Austin with no places for music or expression. We should do more to protect our creative working class. We must do better for the people to make Austin special. A little ad-lib, I am listening to everyone right now. It is so special and beautiful that everyone is speaking out on the same issue.

[7:06:24 PM]

If this is democracy, I hope city council votes the way everyone is reaching out to you to vote. Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Next speaker, catlin Numan.

>> I was in district 1. I am calling to say it is embarrassing that what cronk called out, calling for defund of 0.03%. We would like a real cut, \$217 million. We would like that to help end homelessness, which only takes 8% of the current budget. We could create separate agencies for domestic violence, sexual assault, mental health response, protest safety, communities APD is known to discriminate against. Because right now, APD isn't fit to handle this. It is leading to uncalled for

[7:07:26 PM]

violent crime and police brutality. Changing the union contract and remove chief manly. Reinvesting in the real solutions by ccu and giving every citizen access to food, water, shelter, healthcare, education, jobs, well funded community programs and schools because every human deserves this and it prevents crime. If the Los Angeles police department can cut \$150 from their budget why can we not do the same. Black lives matter. I yield the rest of my time. Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Next speaker, Angelina martin. Go ahead.

>> I am calling to demand you defund by \$100 million. APD has done a terrible job

[7:08:27 PM]

addressing the problems of mental health, drug addiction and homeless that -- homelessness that plagues the city. I have witnessed the situations firsthand. They usually come out and leave everyone feeling less safe. Instead of giving military grade weapons and give them money to assault and murder unarmed people, why don't you provide resources to escape homelessness. APD doesn't do an

adequate job of preventing crime. I don't know a single survivor that found APD safer after the attack. I'm sick and tired of seeing APD profile my black and brown friends. This isn't a conspiracy theory. APD doesn't protect people of color, women or poor people,

[7:09:27 PM]

they only exist to protect rich white men like the mayor and city manager who are a small percentage of Austin population and their budget needs to be reduced to reflect that. Cut APD's budget in half, or else the next murder they inevitably commit will be on your hands as well. Black lives matter, thank you, I yield my time.

>> To all the speakers on the line, if you haven't pressed 0, please do so at this time. The next speaker is Sally sallenski. Zellenski. Sorry.

>> Good evening, city council members. My name is Sally zellenski. I was born and raised in Austin. I care deeply for my city. We claim to be a forward thinking bastion, I seen our city fail people of color and most vulnerable citizens over and over.

[7:10:28 PM]

Don't let this be another failure. The budget put forward is insulting and unacceptable. Not nearly enough was reallocated despite the overwhelming outcry from constituents to do so. I believe we need to defund the police by at least one hundred million and put that money towards programs that will uplift and sustain the community. That money can go towards the rise fund, equity office, Austin public health and low-income housing and reallocate to resources for those struggling with food security, mental illness, addiction and homelessness. Police should not be dealing with these issues when they're poorly equipped to do so. I prefer the budget go towards helping the community rather than a racist and violent institution. Austin can and should do better. Thank you for your time.

[7:11:33 PM]

>> Jimmy Thomas.

>> Hi, can you hear me.

>> Yes.

>> Good evening my name is Jimmy Thomas. I'm a resident living in district 3, I'm calling to express my support of organizations such as Austin justice coalition to defund the Austin police department. By at least 50%. I've lived in Austin my entire life. And Spencer cronk is a disgrace as a city manager. It is

disgusting you sit up there supporting APD that places black and brown people in serious danger as you deal with so long. I support the defunding of the police department by at least \$100 million or more so 50%. We should direct this money to reforms for mental health eithed calls, house homeless, treat drug addicted and support victims of abuse. The eyes of Austin are you on cronk. Your days are member. City council's response has not been drastic enough. If this does not decrease the budget by 50%, we will vote

[7:12:36 PM]

those city council members out. We will continue to take to the streets until all black lives matter. I want to be proud again to live in Austin. Lead the nation and show other cities that we can defund the police and have safer communities because of it. Thank you for your time tonight you have an extremely important job in the livelihood and safety of our minority communities is in your hands, sponsor cronk you have blood on your hands, I don't know how you sleep at night. Vote no to any budget that does not defund APD by at least \$100 million. Thank you.

>> Maxine mcquarter.

>> Can you hear me?

>> Yes.

>> Hello, my name is max. I'm a lifelong resident of Austin. I have attended black lives matter protests almost dealer

[7:13:38 PM]

-- daily over the last eight weeks. APD uses dozens of horses and bike cops along 50 or more riot gear clad officers. All to arrest one single individual. Conversely, I have witnessed the laziness displayed by APD. Officers playing on their phones or texting. As well as chatting up their friends instead of protecting and serving. APD does not deserve their \$400 million budget. And the recent 11 million budget cut was not enough. Pocket change scattered between the office of police oversight, housing trust fund and civil rights office and more is not enough. This strikes the public as a publicity stunt meant to save face and not a productive plan to foster the growth of our community. We the people will not stop until APD's budget is cut by at least \$100 million with the money going to proactive measures of crime reduction, suching funding lower income

[7:14:39 PM]

schools, increase in affordable housing instead of the reactive policing model we have now. Thank you -
- we have now. Thank you.

>> Jason Derra Cinna.

>> My name is Jason D. We're calling for the defunding of police by 50%. We know the data detailing how little APD spends on calls addressing violent crime, wasted funds such as \$2 million in cameras we cannot see the footage of. We know the stories of how police rioted when we asked for accountability and end to impunity. They should not be addressing problems of mental health, homelessness, addiction or domestic violence. In the middle of the pandemic and recession, Austin must shift to housing help and people that need help instead

[7:15:39 PM]

of criminalizing them. Let's talk about what we deem as criminality, let's talk about trickle down criminality in which people are paid starvation wages from employers all the while millionaires are billionaires during the pandemic. What are the actions of criminality in a community that takes to exploit us with starvation wages, selling off houses for development, vanity projects in one of the lowest income brackets and most overpriced police in our community. These are violence, too. If we are concerned about how to deal with crime, we must look at the root problem of criminality in the community. Lack of resources are what leads to conditions that produce crime we're concerned about. This is why it is imperative to seize this moment, do what is smart, and just to lead. If you lack the moral fortitude to represent us the way we demand by defunding APD in half, we will replace every one of you until we get

[7:16:44 PM]

desired results. Cowardous is less -- is also violence. Fire crunk, black lives matter, thank you.

>> Catherine Dutcher.

>> Can you hear me?

>> Yes.

>> I go by Stellar. I'm here in support of communities united. We ask defunding of APD to shift the money to real solutions to decrease the need for police in the first place. We need to give the equity office the money it needs to do the job it needs to. We need to beat this pandemic and invest in low-income housing. This is a start to shifting for the long running communities of color in Austin. I would like to say this public comment process is

[7:17:46 PM]

inaccessible to most of the members of the groups that are most directly impacted by policing and budget impacts. Which means it is undemocratic. Many people in the communities do not have flexible work hours or consistent phone access. I acknowledge the challenges that are posed to you all because of the pandemic I ask you to acknowledge the ways this comment process is failing and take immediate action to make it more accessible to these clients. Thank you I yield my time.

>> Thank you.

>> Robert foster.

>> Hello. Dear councilmembers, my name is Roger foster, I work in public school in d4. Volunteer and bring back

[indiscernible] And helped take down the proconfederate items at the university. Long story short, I'm from a

[7:18:46 PM]

family that dedicated our lives to making the city a better place. The best way to help to amplify the worker defense projects demands to defund APD and firemanly. Don't feel bad about defunding before. It exists now. Do it and lead the charge. Don't put the burden on Greg, Natasha, [indiscernible] Put enough burden on the communities of color. It is our turn to shoulder the burden as true allies. One question is will you go down in history as a great ally to communities of color in Austin and commit to defunding the police by one hundred million and firing manly. Or will you go down as a white moderate that we're warned about and stands in the way of progress. Fierce enough to organize a peaceful March with 538 of

[7:19:47 PM]

your constituents currently interested in marching on your house to make noise for our communities of color. Please commit to defunding by one hundred million and firing manly by Saturday at high noon. Gosh, I always wanted to say that. We will happily call off the March. If you side with the police against your neighbors you will leave us no choice but to do as John Lewis said, get in good trouble, necessary trouble and help redeem the soul of America. Thank you for your time.

>> Thank you.

>> Jordan middle brooks.

>> Hello. My name is Jordan. I'm in district 1. I'm here to support the initiatives led by Austin justice coalition to defund APD by at least 50%. I have been very disappointed to see not only the misinformation about the

[7:20:49 PM]

defunding, but also the lack of defunding. This would be much better served to our social services such as focusing on homelessness, domestic violence, affordable housing and providing meals and healthcare to those that are disproportionately affected minority communities. I would also be interested in joining future marches and will be voting you out if you do not make these changes. I yield the rest of my time.

>> Thank you.

>> To all the speakers in queue, if you haven't already, please press 0 now. Thank you. The next speaker is Brad

[7:21:52 PM]

remove.

>> Can you hear me?

>> Yes, I live in district nine. I would like to share a story about the call to defunding. I saw it was APD, it startled me, and I forgot to put on the mask. The officer told me the roommate called the crisis hotline. Could not tell me the call was made and seemed concerned about the roommate's safety and was not trained in how to handle the encounter. A man with a gun not wearing a mask not sent to my home. How is this an appropriate response? How am I supposed to work with the system to address needs of my roommate who is dealing with mental distress. I'm grateful I am white and sober when the police came to my home. The encounters have great potential to go wrong.

[7:22:52 PM]

What if I reached for the mask that was on the windowsill when I realized I didn't have it on. Again, an officer came to my door with no mask and gun holstered at his hip at a time of protest that had him on edge. Reallocate from police and to other programs. Black lives matter, I yield the rest of my time. Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Cadigiiia allim.

>> Hi, my name is caddidgia Alim, I'm a resident of district 9. I'm a 29-year-old that moved to Austin from Birmingham, Alabama. I expected something different in Austin, sadly I experience the same.

>> Mayor Adler: Can you speak closer to the microphone.

>> I don't know if you heard

[7:23:52 PM]

what I said. I will speak from where I finished. I'm a 29-year-old that moved to Austin from Birmingham, Alabama, like I said before, I expected something different here in Austin. Sadly I experience the same levels of systemic racism here that I experienced in Birmingham, Alabama. I am angry with the level of effort people of color have to go through just to get basic level treatment. If people of color now are experiencing small percentage of what my previous generation had to experience in places like Austin, I don't know how they did it. But now is your time to make it better. I am here to support the request to defunding Austin police by 50%. I'm here to support the request to remove chief manly. I'm here to support the reallocation of funding into affordable housing, homelessness and mental health

[7:24:54 PM]

programs.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> The last speaker for this slot is Josh Levine.

>> Hi. I'm Josh. I live in north Austin. I have always believed you could tell a lot about a person, community or city by how they spend their money. This proposed budget says so much about who we are. It is really not pretty. Is this really the best we can do? In this moment of reckoning and transformation? Is this it? You know what really pissed me off. After Mike Ramos was murdered and George Floyd was murdered and tens of thousands of people rose up to demand justice and millions more witnessed the cruel and excessive force police have been using across our country with zero accountabilities, tens of thousands of others were sick, dying or dead from

[7:25:56 PM]

covid-19, the APD couldn't even bother to wear masks at the protests they were supposedly protecting here in Austin, Texas. Everyone else at the protest was wearing masks and APD were not. Pretty much universally. The culture of police in America and the Austin police department in particular, is deeply broken. They made it clear they're not here to protect us and black and brown communities have made

it clear they're doing the opposite of protecting them, doing so much harm. I support the demands of communities of colors and grassroot groups to defund APD by -- by 50%. Every penny would be better spent in any other department for that matter, thank you.

>> If there are any speakers in queue and if you haven't pressed 0, please do so at this time.

[7:26:56 PM]

Thank you. Mayor, that was our last speaker for this batch.

>> Mayor Adler: Ok. Ok. Should we come back at 8:00 item if we came back at 7:45 will people be in the queue.

>> Yes, we will be ready at 7:45.

>> We will start then at 7:45. Alex, we'll take a recess now, 7:27 to 7:45.

[Recess]

[7:46:23 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: Do we have anybody in the queue thus far?

>> Yes, we do.

>> Mayor Adler: Just a sec, before we do. I will reconvene the meeting at 7:46. Today is July 23, Thursday. This is a special called meeting. We have two items in front of us. It is the budget generally. It is also to set a public hearing, receive public comment on proposed rate and fee changes for Austin resource recovery on the 20-21 proposed budget, suggested date is July 30th at city hall. We have -- I want to remind everybody that we have been doing this in batches so people don't have to just sit on the phone all day. But that means then that we have to get everybody in and out within a certain period of time. Everybody is getting two

[7:47:24 PM]

minutes and we're literally thanking people at the two-minute mark. I apologize for the abruptness, but know that that will happen. I want to recognize that we're in the evening. Councilmembers -- some have taken care of little kids and the like. We may have councilmembers both in and out. It is hard to do a 13-hour day, we're trying as best as you can to stare at a green dot at the top of the computer. Most people look down to see the faces on the computer. Obviously not making eye contact at that point. And this is something that is emotional issues, strongly felt. Strong positions. We're just urging everybody to

recognize that while we have different priorities and different directions, perhaps, somewhat of us, we're all

[7:48:24 PM]

trying to do what we see as best for the city. And given the time that we're in, just getting everybody to try to be nice. Colleagues, do you have anything before I recognize the clerk? Clerk, do you have anything for us or for the group?

>> Yes, we do. For all of the speakers, if you haven't already, please press 0 now. Ready, mayor?

>> Mayor Adler: I'm ready. Go ahead, let's get started.

>> The first speaker is Eli Winkelman.

>> Hi, sorry. Sorry. I was muted. I apologize. It is Elie. I grew up in Austin. I have been out at a lot of the protests. I did not go with any sort of attitude toward defunding the police or abolishing the police. Everything I have seen has

[7:49:25 PM]

pushed me in that direction. I want to say I cannot believe at the stall or lack of vision of Spencer Cronk and his trying to -- did he think we would not look at it. He and many have to go. Their positions have to be reformulated. Now I would like to quote the Cinderella film, ever after, where Danielle played by Drew Barrymore. This is something I learned in high school. If you suffer your people to be ill-educated and their manners corrupted from infancy and you punish them for those crimes to which their first education disposed them, what else is to be concluded that you first make criminals and then punish them. We need to invest in people, not in punishing people. It is completely clear from me

[7:50:25 PM]

conversations I and others have with officers, the cops and the PD in general have no idea what we're protesting about. Others have said on this call, APD met protests against police brutality with police brutality, this whole system has to go. I want to add that seeing everything I have seen. When there are problems the protestors take care of each other. When there is chaos the cops started it. You can see it on the videos of Austin. I recommend if you haven't seen it, watch the eight-minute compilation of police violence across the country. It is terrifying. I hope we will do something different in Austin.

>> Zack Mchawka.

>> I live in district five,

[7:51:28 PM]

I'm calling as a concerned citizen. With the systemic corruption, I'm calling to voice the approval of a budget that funds the police department by no less than 50%. Instead we move that to social programs to raise the floor of social welfare, and reduce the inequality of modern policing and present industrial complex. The proposed budget by the - highest paid civil servant is insult little. This is the best he can do for \$350,000. We're getting ripped off and he should be fired post haste. We want people running it that wants the best for it. And not someone adding another notch to their linked in page. Now is the time to look for alternatives for police handling force that can be better handled with empathy. Police are not trained to

[7:52:29 PM]

handle mental health crisis situations, homelessness. Our friends or neighbors should not be teargassed or shot at for speaking out against the injustice of police brutality. Citing the recent protests in downtown Austin, there is more injuries than the police have presented. Some of these have been extremely serious injuries such as Anthony Evans and lives permanently altered for the worst. APD is arresting protesters weeks later and writing thank-you cards to themselves while the chief stalls on disciplinary actions. There is no reason for our tax dollars to support this system. We cannot accept this as the norm for one moment more. We need to change where we spend our tax dollars, black lives matter, defund APD.

[7:53:33 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Elizabeth Moffat.

>> My name is Elizabeth Muffet. I live in district 8. I went down to protest peacefully. The protestors were peaceful. The violence was from cops, they knocked me down, beat me with a bike and pepper sprayed me. If that is what cops have the bikes for, they should definitely be taken away. We want to support the demands of community united and grassroots leadership. Defund the Austin police department by at least 50%. And invest the money in re-a-l solutions, rise fund, equity office, Austin public health, low-income housing solutions, solutions that begin to remedy long-standing inequalities faced by

[7:54:34 PM]

communities of color in Austin. I'm also here because this public comment process is inaccessible to most members of the group who are directly impacted by policing and budget inequalities. They don't have the flexible work hours, consistent phone access or face other barriers to participation. I ask city council recognize the failures of this phone access and make it more accessible to these communities. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Jacob palmer.

>> Hello my name is Jake palmer, I'm a clinical specialist working for Austin Travis county E.M.S. I'm calling today as a resident in district 8 and not speaking for my employer. I would like to thank my city council representative Paige Ellis and other city council members that are fighting to support Austin E.M.S. Austin E.M.S. Serves a vital

[7:55:37 PM]

role caring for citizens. I support the minimum position of four full-time ambulances to the city budget. It will help make up for the decades of underfunding. The balances were desperately needed before the pandemic where Austin had units ranked as some of the busiest in the nation. This is not a list to be on. We have no surge capacity in the event of a disaster or pandemic as evidenced by over 20 minute response time, life-threatening emergencies, most south Austin vehicles available July 13, and single city balance on Friday July 10 at 4:30 P.M. This is unacceptable. None of us could have foreseen the pandemic challenges going into this profession. The medics are putting their lives at risk to care for you every day. Now they're begging for your help. Thank you for your time stay safe at home, wear masks in

[7:56:37 PM]

public. Black lives matter.

>> Catherine G.

>> Hi, my name is Catherine, I live in district nine. Hearing all the commentators today, I think it would be easy to think that everyone that is calling in is an activist. How could you explain this sheer number of people? I can tell you, I'm not an activist, I have never been involved in city politics before, except to vote. Instead, I like many other austinites am becoming aware. Aware of how brutality affects people of color and protestors in our community. And aware of the gross amount of our city budget APD consumes. The average city spends 8.7%, Austin runs close to 10. The numbers, the difference on what we spend adds up to

[7:57:38 PM]

\$100 million. So that radical \$100 million cut, that would bring us close to being average. I don't know about you, but I don't want to live in an average city. I want to live in a city that is leading on issues of social justice and equity. It is the two hundred million cut that would place Austin in another level. I agree with the other callers it is insulting. Police push for substantive reallocation of funds to deeds that others allocated. Councilmember Tovo, I especially urge you. Thank you all. I know it has been a long day.

>> Mateo

>> Mateo Clark. Mateo Clark, if you are on

[7:58:39 PM]

Mute, please up mute your phone -- please unmute your phone.

>> Hi, can you hear me now?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Okay, sorry. Thank you, mayor, council, city manager. My name is Mateo Clark, I'm a member of ACSME local. And I'm a dues paying member. Today I'm speaking in a personal capacity as a resident of district 1. I'm here to support the call from local organizers to defund the APD by at least \$100 million. Last month I was incredibly proud of my city when the words Black Austin matters and Black artists matter were painted proudly on Congress Avenue and historic East 11th Street. But when I reviewed city manager Cronk's proposed budget I found little evidence that Black Austin actually matters to you, Mr. Cronk. Paired with your defense of Chief Manley and the systemically racist police culture he leads I now view these yellow words as an

[7:59:40 PM]

empty promise and a shameful distraction against the demands of our community. I've never felt so disappointed by my city leadership. You've heard a lot of great ideas all day on better ways to use this money than on the deeply flawed policing system. One idea I haven't heard yet is a locally managed reparations fund like Chicago. Your peers in Evanston started with \$10 million to fund housing assistance and relief initiatives for their African-American residents. At one point in Austin's history, it was home to multiple freedom colonies until the racist city plan of 1928 and the racist federal red lighting policy of

colored communities. Please stop attacking our communities and help our city grow equitably in investments in health and safety and not police, violence and waste. Black lives matter.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Elizabeth cosolino.

>> Hi. Can you hear me?

[8:00:43 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Hi. I'm a resident of district 9. I'm calling to demand that we cut funding to the APD by at least 50%. The proposed budget doesn't actually reduce funding at all. The APD has committed violence against peaceful protesters using tools made for war. And our tax dollars should not be going towards weapons that are used to kill and maim unarmed austinites. Cut their budget in half. We're in the middle of a recession and pandemic. That \$200 million could go much further if we used it for housing and public health. Not for city sanctioned violence. This budget is insulting to the thousands of residents who asked the city to defund the police. If city manager cronk doesn't understand that let's get a new city manager and we need a new police chief by the way also. People are really suffering right now. And we can do the right thing. If we reallocate these funds. Thank you, black lives matter. I yield my time.

[8:01:44 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Ryan rossure.

>> Hey there. This is Ryan. City council district 5. I guess I'm calling in support of the defund movement. I mean, I think that the police fundamentally only understand the language of violence and they have demonstrated that really broadly and repeatedly over the last couple of months. And obviously we can't respond in kind, but I think you can speak with force by removing budget from them in a way that is really going to stick. And it has to be at a pretty high level of defunding out of the budget for it to -- for it to stick. I mean, it has to be enough that everyone is a little bit shook by it and they think about it the next time

[8:02:45 PM]

that they're going to beat someone or illegally arrest someone. I mean, you've heard a lot about the abuses today. But look, I want to pivot really quickly because I think we have a significant amount of defunding -- with a significant amount of defunding you can have a pot of north Austin can be used for community good. I want to highlight the work that the Austin-Travis County Food Policy Board has done to give you a set of very actionable recommendations for how to improve the food system and how to take care of people who are acutely in crisis now because of the coronavirus and loss of work and disruption of their daily habits and people who have been acutely in crisis for weeks or months or years or their entire lives because of being affected by historic lack of investment into their area or education

[8:03:46 PM]

differences or health care outcomes that are different by geography, by race. I'm going to try to follow up with all of you individually to talk more about those recommendations.

[Buzzer sounds] Somehow I don't think it will stick right now. Thanks for your time. Take care.

>> Mayor Adler: Ryan, thank you.

>> Mara Kinney.

>> Hi. My name is Mara and I live in district 4. As a social worker working with youth in Austin, I see daily the ways that our defunding of services that lift up our laterally marginalized communities has resulted directly at the hands of police Andrew Rivera high rates of -- and high rates of COVID-19. It's not working and time to try something else. That something else is to take the significant financial faith we've been placing in the police department and place it elsewhere, into the hands of those who standard systemic injustice, trauma and public safety for all Austinites.

[8:04:49 PM]

I am here today to lift up the demands of communities of color united and grassroots leadership and ask you please to defund APD by at least 50% and invest the money in real solutions, real standing for real, the rise fund, the equity office, Austin public health and low income housing. And I wish to add finally what I know has been expressed already tonight, which is that the public comment process is inaccessible and most importantly to those who don't have flexible work hours or consistent phone access. And I ask that city council recognize this and please amend it immediately to make it more accessible to those communities. Thank you all so much for your time.

>> Bob Libell.

>> Hi, thank you. My name is Bob and I'm from district 7. I'm representing myself today, but have been a criminal, legal and immigration reform advocate in Austin for many years. And I think we've never seen

[8:05:50 PM]

a moment like this. Over the last few months we have seen the national reckoning with racist institutions, including the deep legacy of racism here in many parts of Austin, but especially in our criminal legal system. We have also witnessed police violence like many of us, including and especially those of us who are white, have never seen before. The killings of Mike Ramos and Javier Ambler by police in our community shocked our community's conscience. My wife and I were at the protest the weekend that Austin police fired rubber bullets and other munitions into the crowd in June, maiming Justin Howell and Brad Ayala. I know you have heard it many times today, but now is the time for bold, transformative change. The community has clearly told you over and over and over today and for the last several months that that means reallocating significant funds from \$100 million to \$220 million

[8:06:51 PM]

from policing to other public health and safety programs like housing, replenishing the rise fund and mental health programs. This is not a time to accuse we he is so the way things have always been. It is not a time to start a conversation or defend minor tweaks to the completely unacceptable budget presented by the city manager's office. This is a national moment of reckoning with a deeply racist system. It is time town ewe have include say that black lives matter and to back that phrase through the moral document that is our city budget. Thank you.

>> Warren Berkeley.

>> This is Warren Berkeley. I'm in district 5 with the Austin justice coalition and I just wanted to say I'm tired of sitting here asking y'all to invest in the community. It's not like it's the first time. We've been doing it for years. And every time you guys

[8:07:51 PM]

throw your hands up APD say oh, we can't find the money, where is the funding, and we watch you give more money to the cops? We just did that a month or two ago? I mean, Cronk and Manley, every time we ask them to step up to the plate they run and hide. Manley will scream all day about George Floyd but won't even say Mike Ramos' name, which is a pattern of behavior for him. So that's all I've got to say.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Katherine Mcardle.

>> Hi. My name is Katherine. I've been an Austin resident for eight years and I live in district 9. I support the calls for cutting at least \$100 million from APD's budgets and reallocating it to civil led public services in order to achieve actual public safety for all. The proposed budget reduces APD funding as compared to last year by only \$150,000.

[8:08:51 PM]

As you've heard throughout the day today this is not what the community meant at protests and emails and phone calls and in meetings like this when we have repeatedly called for reimagining public safety by divesting from APD. And council, I hope it is not what you meant last month either when you verbally committed to the same. It is egregious that city manager Cronk and his office used the name reimagining public safety when unveiling this proposal. A 150,000-dollar reduction is maintaining the status quo and does not live up to the equity and justice that many of you have said. You need to go beyond reworking the budget. You know that a study by AJC showed that two-thirds of police time could be better served by non-police resources. You know you can also stop paying for APD overtime, the need that can be reduced by eliminating many duties of APD where they're either not needed or not qualified. Such as homeless, domestic violence, substance abuse

[8:09:51 PM]

treatment and traffic duties. With all of the specific resources todayed from organizations over the years you cannot claim you need more time to figure out how to do it. You have been given concrete suggestions. Divesting from APD and investing in community services needs to be now and not in future years. I want to remind you of a caller's story earlier today. She said when she was a victim of domestic violence there was nowhere for her or her son to go. APD asked her to stay with her abuser until she had somewhere to go. You have the opportunity to change that with this budget so do not forget her story or similar ones when amending the budget. Thank you for your time.

>> Thea Woodruff.

>> Hi. I live in city council district six. I've called in today as many, many others have to support the demands of communities of color united

[8:10:53 PM]

and grassroots leadership to defund the Austin police department by 50% and transfer the money to real solutions in other words, the rise fund, equity office, Austin public health and low income housing. To begin to remedy the long-standing inequities of communities of color in Austin. I'm here as others have mentioned because this public comment process is inaccessible to most members of these

groups who are directly impacted by policing and budget inequities and do not have flexible work hours, consistent phone access or face other barriers to participation. I ask that city council take immediate action to make this comment process more accessible to these communities. Thank you.

>> Sharon maneono.

>> Mayor Adler, councilmembers, thank you for this opportunity. I live in district 4. I'm here to support the demands of communities of color united and grassroots leadership to reduce the police budget and invest the

[8:11:54 PM]

the money in real solutions. And I too would also ask that the council recognize that those who are most directly impacted by policing and budget inequities often face barriers to participation in meetings like this. And take immediate action to make the process more accessible to those most affected. In the midst of a pandemic and social upheaval, as we radically rethink our systems and institutions that no longer serve us as they are, Austin has an opportunity to be a leader and ahead of the curve when it comes to rethinking public health and safety. We call ourselves a liberal and Progressive city, and it's time to put our budget money where our mouth is. Thank you for your time.

>> James Donnelly.

>> Yes. Can you hear me all right?

>> Yes, go ahead.

>> Wonderful, thank you. I am James Donnelly, I'm a

[8:12:54 PM]

district 1 voter and organizer with the industrial workers of the world. I don't need to reiterate upon the hundreds of voices insulted by cronk's laughably negligible budget cut in the face of an irrelevant responsibly high 4.4-million-dollar budgets. For decades renowned psychologists and sociologists have provided studies with a correlation between poverty, socioeconomic resources and crime. In the face of that data I compel this council to divest at least 50% of funds from APD and that these funds be immediately reallocated towards better equal opportunity schooling, affordable housing, mental health and rehabilitation services. Social welfare and a litany of other community resources that will better the material conditions of the historically marginalized communities that this council is I hope in good faith claiming to listen to. I'm not threatening to vote you out. We aren't. As this recent election has

[8:13:55 PM]

shown we're already doing that. Right now we have set the bar at a pharoah bar of harm reduction. Thank you. I yield my time.

>> Alison tune.

>> Hello. My name is Alison and I live in city council district number nine, Kathie tovo's district. I am here today to support the demands of communities of color united and grassroots leadership to defund the Austin police department by 50% and invest the money in real solutions so that the acronym, in other words, the rise fund, the equity office, Austin public health and low income housing, solutions that begin to remedy long-standing inequities faced by communities of color in Austin. The proposed APD budget cuts put forward by Spencer cronk is not enough, it is weak and it is clear that it did not consider what people have been calling in and talking about to you for hours today and for weeks,

[8:14:56 PM]

months and for long time organizers years in the past. I'm also here because the public comment process is inaccessible to most members of the groups who are directly impacted by policing and budget inequities and do not have flexible work hours consistent phone access or face other barriers to participation. I would also like to add that it's exhausting to wait in exaptation for two minutes to talk. I ask that city council recognize the failures of this comment process and take immediate action to make it more accessible to these communities. Thank you.

>> Stephanie lane.

>> My name is Stephanie and I -- and I live in district 10. I call for the demands of communities of color and grassroots leadership to reduce the city's police budget by half and allocate the monies to the rise fund, the Austin equity office, low income, public health and low income housing.

[8:15:56 PM]

The money distributed to those four hours is a start to creating an equitable Austin for all residents. I would also like to mention the city council and ask them to recognize that this process has not been as easily accessible to all people in our community. Pardon me. The comment process truly required my flexibility and my ability to be available for a good portion of time, which a lot of people don't have during work hours. I hope from this point forward the city council fixes the multiple barriers in this process. Thank you.

>> Austin Amos.

>> Hello. My name is Austin and I live in district 9. I wanted to comment about my disapproval on the new budget, specifically I want to draw attention to a few key members numbers. The new budget calls

for an 11-million-dollar reduction in the police budget. \$11 million is not enough. In the grand scheme of the

[8:16:57 PM]

total police budget, \$11 million is only a 2.5% reallocation of approximately \$434 million still allocated to policing. The city manager claims to achieve transformative change with the proposed budget. Is 2.5% truly transformational or merely a symbolic gesture. They say it dares to rethink the public safety system. Is a 2.5% reallocation from policing truly brave in rethinking a new system or is it one of the exact small incremental steps that the budget itself purports to avoid taking? The 2.5% is the budget equivalent of renaming a road mlk boulevard in an historically black district. \$11 million sounds brave,

[8:17:57 PM]

yet it fails to imagine a world with equity and equality at the forefront of how we allocate our budgets. Now is the time for the city council to act. Now is the time for the city council to pass a budget that reallocates at least 50% of the APD budget. Substantially more than the proposed 2.5%. Thank you.

>> Rachel Thompson.

>> Hi. My name is Rachel Thompson and I have lived in district 9 for four years. So this is especially for councilmember tovo. And I'm just going to kind of echo what other people have said and say that I'm calling to ask that the council reconsider the budget and cut more from APD to be put towards social service based solutions. The police should not be asked to be social workers and they shouldn't be asked to address iss of mental health, homelessness and addiction. This is an amazing chance for Austin to rise up and mute the moment that we're in in our country and so I

[8:18:57 PM]

just ask that you go back to the drawing board as the current iteration is frankly a little insulting. But thank you so much for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Larry Beckham.

>> My name is Larry Beckham. I live in montopolis in district 3. I have lived in Austin since 1988. I will join my voice in the hellish chorus and mark the precise nature of our fear. I'm calling today with Austin dsh and demand that the city council approve a budget that defund the police by 50%. We give our police an impossible job. We need more public health,

[8:19:59 PM]

mental health responders, housing programs, and social services that support people instead of criminalize them. I live in section 8 housing. I had to win a lotto to get in line to wait two and a half years for a voucher. I have a cherished loved one sleeping in the woods in a tent, their mental illness left untreated. The cuts by city manager cronk are misleading and insulting. The killer of Mike Ramos must be in jail, not on the streets with a badge and gun. My words are but a whisper. Your deafness is a shout. I may make you feel, but I can't make you think. Change this. The time is now.

[8:21:04 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Brian Fitzpatrick.

>> Mayor Adler, city manager cronk, members of the Austin city council, my name is Brian Fitzpatrick. I'm a 26 year veteran paramedic with the city of austin-travis county ems. But these views are mine as a citizen of Austin district 6 and do not represent those of atcems management. I've seen firsthand and lived through the consequences of failing to properly fund an ems system. In the absence of frontline ems response assets in the city manager's proposed budget during the time of a national public health crisis borders on recklessness. I urge you, mayor Adler, city manager cronk and the members of this Austin city council to fund additional frontline ems assets, both ambulances and personnel, so that these people who provide exceptional pre-hospital care to the citizens of Austin may continue to do so and do so in a manner that your

[8:22:05 PM]

constituents, including me and my family, deserve. Thank you for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Sukia Mahan.

>> I'm the board chair of Austin justice coalition and member of district 9. We know for a fact that the police structure is a symptom of racism. A deliberately engineered disease built side by side with chronic poverty, insubstantial health care, underfunded schools and workplace cultures that too often wall out black and brown qualified people. The current movement calls for a wholesale rethinking and shift to replace the existing policing system with something new. A speaker this morning from the greater

Austin crime commission insisted that we need racist policing to maintain safety and order and that we've asked our

[8:23:05 PM]

racist policing construct, and I quote, to do everything. And he's right on that last point. Instead of investing in our communities, we've invested in police to penalize poverty and the social shortfalls that accompany it. Shortfall does not mean police. It means we all have the social supports and policies to eliminate poverty and bring routine and predictability to our everyday lives. I want to thank everyone who has spoken today. It's amaze to be seen to everyone who is new in the struggle, welcome to the fight and let's continue to stand together. We can't go back, right? Now that you know what we know and we've been fating against, we can all agree we can never go back. Right? And we can all agree that justice is the next normal. We can all agree to refuse racism and the structures that sustain it. We can refuse to force black citizens to endure racism. We can refuse to condemn black people for the consequences of racism.

[8:24:05 PM]

We're capable of navigating this shift. We're capable of centralizing human dignity as our organizing principle. I yield my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Jeremy Muniz.

>> Hello?

>> Yes, go ahead.

>> Thank you. Good evening, members of our city council. And thank you for your undivided attention. My name is Jeremy Muniz. I live in district 4 and I am here today speaking to you from the comfort of my home, and not the chambers which usually host city council meetings in open forums such as this, because today we face the challenges of a plague ha has sweat its way across the ocean and every corner of our country. We have noticed greater

[8:25:06 PM]

increase in economic disparities all across the nation. According to a document posted in the austintexas.gov website on October 10, 2017, titled a closer look, child poverty, 58,111 children lived in poverty as of 2015 and the survey conducted by American community survey. That same year the united

States census bureau documented that 921,545 people lived in this city. That means 6.3 of that population was a child living in poverty. Of those 58,111 children, 70% are black or Latino. According to those same documents. Black and Latino children are five to six times more likely to live in poverty as opposed to white and Asian children. The reason I bring this up today is because we've witnessed the people of this city March, speak and demand that this city take a lead in the changes necessary to bridge the gaps of racial inequality. With that I would like to discuss these three key

[8:26:06 PM]

points. Poverty and its effects on the population experiencing it. Police conduct and budgeting. And finally, potential solutions to these problems in the form of public services. According to a study presented to the Texas standard, one in six people living in the Travis county area are living in poverty. When my sister was 18 years old, four years ago, two weeks after she graduated from high school in the Rio grande family where the cost of living is relatively cheap --

[buzzer sounds]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much for participating. Next speaker.

>> Brianna arrenendo.

>> Hi. Can you hear me?

>> Yes.

>> My name is Brianna and I live in district 3. I'm very disgusted with city manager Spencer cronk and his proposed budget. Cutting the APD by only 150,000 is unacceptable. This proposal is an insult

[8:27:07 PM]

to the community P I am against Spencer cronk and his proposed budget. APD is delaying the release of videos of officers killing Mike Ramos, Javier ambler and APD has been killing so many people of color. APD definitely needs to be held accountable now. Fire chief Manley and fire Spencer cronk now. I also want to say as well it has been 50 plus days of protesting and the police have been using excessive force on us, violence on peaceful protesters petitioning against police brutalized. APD, tear gassed, pepper sprayed us, using horses as weapons, vans, snatching us. And I have seen many other protesters wrongfully arrested. We demand you to defund APD by 250 million and put the funding into the community and public health, homelessness, low income housing, house the homeless now instead of criminalizing

[8:28:08 PM]

them. We do not need police overpolicing black and brown communities. Also instead of building expensive condos and apartments house the homeless now. We demand you to take action and demand you to defund APD now. A black lives matter.

>> Adrian dunes.

>> Hi, my name is Adrian, I live in district 5. First of all, I wasn't here for this, but please get the ems some more ambulances. It's a pandemic. They need some help. I didn't even know about that. But I am here to speak -- I spoke at the previous budget meeting. And after hours and hours of testimony there and what the public understood is a unanimous vote to cut funding by \$100 million to APD, Spencer cronk produced a laughable budget. The through-lines for cronk and Manley is the exact

[8:29:09 PM]

same. They disregard your constituents wishes as well as your owns on a consistent basis. Manley refuses to fire the officer who murdered Mike Ramos in cold blood and the police officers who committed war crimes against your own citizens during a protest. Cronk refuses to fire Manley although you've all expressed a desire for him to resign. Claiming black Austin matters downtown didn't stop racism in the police department. Let's do away with lip service and get down to meaningful change. I know you've been listening to hours and hours of testimony here and I am in total agreement that the budget of APD should be redistributed to help predominantly communities of color, our homeless population and our fellow austinites who are really suffering through this pandemic. The long and short of it is this, your city is hurting and you have the power to fix it. It's not what

[indiscernible] A lot of the efforts that is moving this council toward in terms of racial justice is falling on its members of color. So I'm looking at you, Steve and Leslie, Paige, Kathie, join in or get out.

[8:30:10 PM]

If you do not defund the police department by at least 50%, you are showing that you do not work for your constituents, but you work for the police -- for the police. Unqualified immunity in officers allow officers to carry their own liability insurance and let the constituents know you work for them. Cut the police department by 50%. Fire cronk, fire Manley, black lives matter. And congratulations mayor pro tem, we're all excited to have you as the county attorney.

[Buzzer sounds]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank

>> Mickey lipstru.

>> Hi. I'm a resident of district 9. I see you all, tired, weary, sick and tired of listening to sick and tired constituents. How easy it is --

>> Mayor Adler: Cutting closer to the microphone? We can't hear you.

[8:31:12 PM]

>> Can you hear me now?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Okay. I see you sick and tired of listening to your sick and tired constituents and how easy it is to shut everyone out. I invite you now to return to your bodies that you may feel the anguish, the rage, the pain of your people, burdensome as that may be. You have been elected to bear the burdens of your people. Bear them now. Labor in love to hear our message. The message that has been repeated over and over all day, all week, all month, and for many, all across the years. Hear us. Do not harden your hearts that our words might bounce off their resolute walls. Receive our message with open hearts and open minds. The time for change is now. Join us. Imagine with us.

[8:32:12 PM]

Create with us. Make history with us. Wake, you weary souls. Rouse from your slumber, from your listlessness. Wake and see. Be hold the beauty of a people united, speaking in one voice, singing songs of struggle and freedom. Let our music move you. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Christian manm. Manmn.

>> Hi. This is Christian Mann. I'm a film producer and I live in district 9. I'm speaking today like the others to strongly urge you to defund the Austin police department and defund it by at least \$100 million. That is a lot of money that should be going into the community to actually make us feel safer. That money should be going into affordable housing, police oversight, our beautiful

[8:33:12 PM]

parks and trails, Austin public health, mental health services, et cetera, et cetera. Instead of overfunding the APD, which is what has been happening and seems to be the current plan for this upcoming fiscal year. It's my understanding that city manager Spencer cronk has proposed to defund the APD by 0.03% while cutting the community development program by 85%. This is not acceptable. We are demanding a

\$100 million divestment from APD, into bettering our community. Not only does this make black people safer but enriches our entire community and makes our city stronger overall. I'm encouraged by the introduction of the reimagine public safety task force but am eager to learn what this actually means for black lives and what we are asking for. We need real and specificity change as every day that goes by without it we're risking losing another unarmed black person at the hands of an overfunded police

[8:34:13 PM]

department. We the residents of Austin will not be satisfied until action is taken to defund the APD by at least 100 million. This is what is bet for our community, especially people of color. It's what we want. Please do the right thing here. And thank you for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Heather Frederick.

>> Good evening. My name is Heather Frederick. My pronouns are they, them. For the past eight years, I have lived, voted, and worked in district 9. Kut reported on July 7th that schools in Travis county are the most segregated in the state. In 2018, city council adopted six strategic outcomes for the city's 2023 priorities. Among those were safety, economic opportunity, and affordability, and government that works for all. We need affordability and accessibility to quality health care services, enumerated goals for the city. I'm on this call tonight

[8:35:14 PM]

as many others to urge the city council to listen to the needs of our community as outlined by communities of color united, grass roots leadership, Austin justice coalition, and undoing white supremacy Austin. To make real progress towards your own state of strategic outcomes of safety, economic affordability and government that works for all, the city of Austin must defund APD by at least 50% and invest those savings in real solutions, the riots fund, the equity office, Austin public health and low-income housing. It's far past time for we white residents of Austin to amplify the voices of our neighbors of color. It's vital y'all take immediate action to make it accessible for budget inequity. We must be on the right side of history. Black lives matter. I hope every police officer in our city will be required to listen to these 13 plus hours of testimony to hear how the citizens of Austin feel and that they start looking for new jobs. Thank you.

>> Ali papa?

[8:36:16 PM]

>> Hi. My name is Ali papa, a resident of district 7. I reject [indiscernible] And support calls to reallocate 50% of APD's budget to real solutions, which I'm sure you've heard enough about already today so I'll leave the facts and figures to those best you've had to speak on them. To the mayor and the council and especially to my council member Leslie pool, I'll leave you with this. I understand the road ahead to reimagine public is he safety and health is unprecedented and will present challenges. You can tackle it two ways. The first way, dragging your feet, impeding any push for progress by going on and on about what you can't commit to, what you can't reasonably change within time constraints or any other excuse I've heard crop up from the majority of

--moderates on our council. The second option, tackle the possibilities for how you can literally shape the future of this city for generations to come when you choose to fund public health and housing over a militant police

[8:37:17 PM]

state. Respectfully, if you find yourself unable to set aside any prepare days agos to get over whatever days -- any trepidations, what is holding you back, it's time to step aside. If this is what you imagine your career in local government to look like, if you never imagined having to make such hard decisions under immense pressure from your constituents and you find yourself unable to handle the reality of the situation, I'm sorry to say you're not what the city needs. This is a moment of history that will define you forever, you can impede progress or get on with doing the necessary work to make the city better. And it will be better. We will elect leaders of local government and tackle this issue with determination to create radical overdue change. If you fail to meet our cut and dry expectations when you finalize this budget, expect us to get into what the great John Lewis would call good trouble. At your doorstep, on the steps of city hall, all all over Austin until we

[8:38:17 PM]

can get leaders to stand up for all of Austin. Black lives matter, thank you for listening. I cede the rest of my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Dakota Haynes.

>> Hello. Good evening. I think it's been a long day for y'all. This is probably going to be a little bit different than everybody else I've heard speak so far. I've never gone to anything like this, but listening a little bit this morning, the calls for defunding the police by a hundred million or 200 million, and then in district 4, my councilmembers, you know, support of that, I just -- I can't understand that. A caller earlier said \$200 million decrease to lead the way in public safety. I mean, whose safety? If you honestly think decreasing the police budget by 50%, when Austin's murder rate is

[8:39:18 PM]

rising this year, actually, if you think that's a good solution, I really don't know how much common sense you have. That's laughable. I actually think the \$11 million cut -- I think that's reasonable. I actually am not upset at this budget. The property tax increase, you know, I'm not a big fan, but it's Austin. I think the homeless -- the historic spin on homelessness services, I think it's excessive. I think the camping ordinance has been a disaster. I think it really just discourages homeless people utilizing affordable shelter. And so I really don't think that's a good idea. But the majority of the time, I -- you know, spent here, I just want to, you know, support the -- you know, a reasonable solution to police reform.

[8:40:18 PM]

You know, more training, absolutely. 100% support that. You know, I think officers can become officers way too easily. I think they need, you know, deescalation training, absolutely. But decreasing a budget by 200 million, all that's going to do is hurt --

[buzzer sounding]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Thank you. Next speaker?

>> For all the speakers in queue, if you haven't already, please press 0 now. Thank you. The next speaker is joules Mandell.

>> Hello. My name is joules Mandell and I live in district 9. I'm here today speaking on behalf of Texas rising, a youth led statewide organization that's dedicated to building the power of young people of color and fighting for social justice. The current budget proposal is unacceptable. We stand as communities of color united and grass roots leadership in demanding that the Austin police department be

[8:41:18 PM]

defunded by 50%, that the money is invested instead in real solutions, the rise fund, the equity office, Austin public health, and low-income housing. Young people are paying attention, and they no longer stand for a so-called justice system that targets poor communities of color. This is why young voters showed up to the polls in Travis county in record numbers in this most recent primary runoff. That's why a candidate like Jose Garza, who has a new vision of real justice, won the D.A. Race in a landslide. We are only going to keep voting in larger numbers for candidates that actually uphold antiracist policy making. A system of policing that was created as a means of upholding white supremacy cannot continue to exist. Members of the council, I'm urging you to take immediate action to redistribute funds

if APD that can instead go to vital services like public health and education, which actually make our community safer. Black lives matter. Thank you for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

[8:42:20 PM]

>> Austin Dell. Austin Dell, please unmute.

>> Thank you. My name is Austin Dell. I am a resident of district 4. The budget proposed by cronk is frankly pathetic and deceitful and does not represent the future this city needs, honestly. Even if we did the positive high rate of 2.5%, in equality it's only \$150,000. During this unprecedented time where local politics matter more than ever, and there's a real big spotlight on every city, including ours. I do hope our city council members understand that and understand that this vote matters a ton for not just me, not just political activists but every single citizen within this city.

[8:43:20 PM]

We need to defund APD. It's not about making -- it's not going to make the world more dangerous, it's going to help communities drive instead of watch this great city dismantle itself through budget constraints as we pour more and more money into police officers. That's really all I have to say. I know you guys have had a long day. I thank you for your time. Remember we are all watching and not only our votes matter but the way your votes -- the way you vote today is going to matter a huge deal to everyone. Thank you for your time.

>> Tovo: Thank you.

>> Ali zittner.

>> Hi. My name is Ali. So, I've honestly never spoken at a city council meeting, and I've never voted or gotten involved until this last year, but I've just been driven to action by the recent

[8:44:21 PM]

events of the world and the state and the city of Austin. I was just really upset by -- I'm disgusted to see how APD has handled everything and treated the citizens they're sworn to protect. The city just isn't faced without reform, I think there needs to be a real change. With that said, I was extremely disappointed to see the proposed budget cut for APD. I wanted to see APD defunded by 50% and the budget reinvested into real solutions, ending homelessness, creating separate agencies for mental health response, domestic violence, sexual abuse, et cetera. I'd also like to see APD demilitarized and

chief Manley removed from the department. And just finish off by saying that while I am angry and here today to demand justice, it's because I truly care

[8:45:21 PM]

about the city of Austin and every life that's in the city of Austin, and I honestly believe that defunding APD will keep more people safe, and it's just the right thing to do. Thank you guys for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> And black lives matter.

>> Mary meams.

>> Hi. I just want to make sure you can hear me.

>> Mayor Adler: Yes. Go ahead.

>> Okay. Thanks. Yeah, so it's been a long day, but I live in district 3. I've lived here for 15 years, and I just -- I mean, y'all know what you need to do. You've heard it all day. You need to change this budget so that social services, and especially ems -- come on, during the pandemic, are getting more money, and that cops are getting less. I don't want my police

[8:46:22 PM]

out there not safe, but they don't need, you know, army rated weapons. I don't want them doing overtime, but, like, y'all are not stupid. So make the budget work. You'll have less money, but it's like, you know, pay the police, fire the ones who are not acting like police, and, you know, don't arrest people for, like, traffic crimes or drug crimes, like, focus on more violent crime or whatever. But, yeah, like this isn't like we don't want cops, this is just like cops is not the answer to everything. So listen to your citizens. This is a city that's supposed to be forward-thinking, and Progressive, so you need to act like it. Thanks.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Radney wood.

[8:47:26 PM]

>> Good evening, city council, mayor, city manager, my name is Radney wood. I'm a 15-year resident of Austin and resident of district 9. I want to thank everyone for your service. I recognize it's been a long

day and I know that while we don't always agree, that you all are doing your best and you all believe you're doing your best for the city. And so I appreciate that. I am here today to request a cut in the police budget of at least 50%. You know, I view our budget as a moral account of who we are as a people. And right now, we're spending over one in three dollars in policing ourselves. You know, if you compare that to other major cities, we're grossly out of line. If we spent 6% like New York City does, or even 16% like L.A. Does, we'd be spending less than 200 million a year. So I think part of the narrative, we need to break away from this -- this number that's been there, in the 400 million range. It should be much lower.

[8:48:26 PM]

And, you know, you all as city council presided over the largest economic

[indiscernible] In our city's history. But you know money is not what makes our city great. We are not the collective revenues of our hundred largest employers. Let's take this money that we've been able to gather because of this economic Boone and -- boom, and reinvest it. Address climate change, gentrification and police brutality. Being on city council, grant you, has power. And as mlk said, power without love is reckless and abusive. And justice at its best is the loving correction of everything that stands against love. When I look at this budget, I don't see love. I implore you to look at it through that lens. I know you're all good people. I know you want to do what's right. Think of it through that lens. You hold such an important key right now for our city, for the members of it. I know -- I've heard a lot of great things come from people, but it's time to put into action.

[8:49:27 PM]

Let's cut the budget. Let's reinvest in our city. Let's -- you know, let's give justice for Mike Ramos. Let's help end --

[buzzer sounding]

>> Thank you so much for your time.

>> Lisa Buehler.

>> Tovo: Thank you.

>> My name is Lisa Buehler and I'm the mother of a young black son who has paranoid schizophrenia, and he is currently caught up in the criminal justice system in Austin. When on his medication, he is a working, tax-paying member of society. I want to offer a few words on the subject as it is deeply personal to me. Once an individual with mental illness is caught up in the criminal justice system, it's a trap. Police are not qualified for this responsibility. They also don't have a great track record of deescalating situations with mentally ill people who are 16 times more likely to be killed by

[8:50:28 PM]

police officers. One in four people killed by police in 2018 had a serious mental illness. And when mental illness intersects with racial prejudice, it's a sinister combination. If Austin said the criminal justice system is the mental health system for black men. This is the only medical illness that we use criminal justice to respond to. When someone has a heart attack or a stroke, we don't send the police to help them. Law enforcement aren't trained to be mental health professionals. When police enter tense situations, mentally ill people may not be able to respond to the officer's direction -- directions and get agitated if they feel like they are being cornered. Police officers' lack of understanding of the deficits that go with psychiatric illnesses make it more likely police respond with

[8:51:29 PM]

deadly force. Even when people survive the interaction with police, they end up in the criminal justice system where a grim reality faces them that they may not fully understand. This is where the variance of mentally ill confronts the failure of our mental health system. It's like a funnel. No matter what you do, no matter what interventions you try, no matter how much you understand about the illness's medical condition --

[buzzer sounding]

--

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much for your participation. Next speaker.

>> Sarah Hay.

>> Hi. My name is Sarah Hay and I'm a resident of district 10. I'm also a volunteer with the Austin justice coalition. I want to echo and support the hundreds of testifiers who spoke today and almost 1500 exponents to the city's budget tool, telling the leaders of this city that their priorities lie with funding equal solutions to improving public safety. It's quite something to

[8:52:30 PM]

witness our city manager so blatantly go against the months and years of activism from individuals, organizations, and protesters to divest from the Austin police department. I wholeheartedly reject this budget and call on each of you to defund APD by at least 100 million and reinvest that critical funding to make Austin safer. There are those that claim the police deter and prevent violent crime, that's simply not the case, especially here in Austin. Confronting the protesters, shooting tear gas into peaceful

crowds, killing unarmed civilians like Mike Ramos, and shooting young teens with rubber bullets are insights to a much larger truth about policing. A racist institution will always produce racist outcomes. APD has a history of inflicting violence upon the very communities they claim to serve. Families and children going hungry for lack of access to food is violence. Black and brown families in businesses being forced to leave Austin due to gentrification is

[8:53:31 PM]

violence. Diminishing access to affordable housing to low-income people is violence. Incarcerating individuals for low level drug possession and criminalizing homelessness is violence. APD has and continues to be a primary agent of state-sanctioned violence. Don't allow this council to be complicit in this violence by refusing to fund the resources our communities so desperately need. Here in this moment, this council has a chance to fundamentally will I change

--fundamentally change the fabric of Austin. The eyes of its citizens, this nation and history are fixed upon you. I implore you to do the right thing. Thank you for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Amanda Rawlick.

>> Good evening, mayor and council, my name is Amanda, I live in district 7. I'm also an employee of the city of Austin, but I'm speaking only on behalf of myself today. I'm here to support the demands of communities of

[8:54:32 PM]

color united and grass roots leadership to defund the Austin police department by 50% and in was the money in real solutions. The rise fund, equity office, public health and low-income housing. The current proposed budget is not acceptable. Cities spend tens of millions of dollars in lawsuits over police violence and killings, and the city of Austin has mortgaged the cost of those payouts. The city council has adopted sd23, that outlines a shared vision and six priorities, strategic outcomes, focused on economic opportunity and affordability, mobility, safety, health in the environment, culture and lifelong learning, and most important, government that works for all. Without a divestment in our police department and reallocation and life-affirming services, the likelihood of achieving your vision is impractical and feasible

[8:55:32 PM]

and quite simply hopeless. Help us to get the community we envision for all of our brothers and sisters, not exclusively exclusively for those are inherited power, the time to sit through this process like the one we're sitting through right now. Thank you for pushing hard and fearlessly on this budget towards transformative change. The time is now. Black lives matter.

>> Winnie Sia.

>> Good evening. My name is -- can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes. Go ahead.

>> My name is Winnie. I'm a small business owner here in Austin, resident of 12 years of district 4. This is my very first time speaking at a city council meeting so thank you for your time. Now is the time for Austin to make a stand as the Progressive city it claims to be. We need to stand on the right side of history, make radical change, and

[8:56:33 PM]

defund the Austin police department by at least 50%, as the very first step towards investing in our community. In agreement with many of your other colleagues in the feedback sir, I would like to request that city council make drastic reallocation of the city budget away from the Austin police department and instead redirect those funds towards affordable housing, Austin public health, mental health services, educational programs, arts programming, renewable energy and countless other investments that we can do to make our community better for all of the citizens that live here, in particular for communities of color who have been disproportionately and intentionally negatively impacted by Austin's very long history of racist policies. The Austin justice coalition's recent analysis of the Austin police department calls for service has made it widely evident how much of APD's time is spent addressing non-criminal activity, including false alarms and mental health crises. The police should not be asked to address issues of mental health, did I and homelessness if they are only trained to treat these conditions as criminal, and we should look to supporting these

[8:57:33 PM]

communities when they need our help the most instead of punishing them. The covid-19 pandemic has only further magnified the inequities of our city, county, state, and across the country with blacks, Latinos, and suffering higher rates of infection as well as higher rates of unemployment and addictions, and this is something that you yourself, mayor Adler, have pointed out several -- of your Facebook conversations are on the disproportionate effect on our hispanic community. So I implore you all to do the right thing. The steps we need to take have been very clearly outlined by organizations including the Austin justice coalition, communities of color united, I insist that we begin taking tangible action. Only with these real changes can we begin to undo our city and country's racist history. Thank you for listening.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Amenity Applewhite.

>> Can you hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Thanks. Good evening. My name is amenity

[8:58:34 PM]

Applewhite, a city employee speaking today in a purely personal capacity. I'm exceedingly sad to say I'm in council member harper-madison's district 1 constituency. Thank you, council member for your tremendous fortitude and wisdom. I'm here to list the demands of the communities of colors united and grass roots leadership to defund the Austin police department by 50% and put that money towards the rise fund, equity office, Austin public health and low-income housing.

>> Mayor Adler: Would you please get closer to your microphone so we can hear you better?

>> Sorry. Now I would like to read a poem by raffle

[indiscernible], that powerfully articulates a single story of a single incidence of police violence. It's called the small

[indiscernible] A small needful fact is that

[indiscernible] Garner worked for some time for

[8:59:36 PM]

the parks & rec horticultural department, which means perhaps with his very large hands, perhaps, in all likelihood, he put gently into the Earth some plants, which most likely some of them, in all likelihood, continue to grow. Continue to do what such plants do, like house and feed small and necessary creatures, like being present to touch and smell, like converting sunlight into food, like making it easier for us to breathe. Again, I implore you to meet the demands of the community of color united and grass roots leadership, defund the Austin police department budget by 50%. Thank you for your time..

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

[9:00:37 PM]

>> Ana Eisen beg.

>> Thank you, my name is Ana, I'm a constituent of district 9. I was also disappointed to see the \$11.3 million allocation. But I also clicked into the page reimagining public safety. Unfortunately what I found there was a mere 1.1 million to increase the capacity of mental health service, family violence programs and immigrant legal services provided by Austin public health. And my problem with that is that if you want to make this work, if we want to reimagine what public safety is, then we're going to have to give the services that would provide that, Austin public health, the resources they need. \$1.1 million is not sufficient. I'm specifically focusing on Austin public health, because I know underneath that deposit we also have epidemiology and public

[9:01:38 PM]

health preparedness. Which as we did deal with another pandemic, besides racism, that would be covid-19, we need to fund Austin public health even more. I think we have a really good opportunity here to take that money away from policing and put it towards public safety in a way that would encompass both mental health as well as epidemiology and the pandemic that is hitting our city specifically so hard right now. With that I yield my time. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Kelsey Carroll. Kelsey Carroll? Please unmute.

>> Sorry about that. Good evening, council. My name I also Kelsey Carroll, I'm a member of district 2. Today happens to be my

[9:02:39 PM]

30th birthday and my wish for the city manager's office is to fire chief Manley and for you to defund the A.P.D. By at least

[indiscernible] To be invested in other civil services. I implore you to examine the moment. Demands of those black and brown citizens who have been fighting for this for decades. Disguising the reallocation of a planned decrease to a.p.d.'s budget is a hard nose cut and [indiscernible] Progress is honestly an insult. In actuality, compared to the 2019 budget, the proposed decrease amounts to measly \$150,000. Do your duty as public servants and listen to your constituents. The protests, the petitions, the overwhelming increase of local government participation. Everyone's eyes are open now and laser focused on you. Meet this moment head on and

[9:03:39 PM]

commitment to making impactful change. Also, putting Manley on a task force to reimagine our public safety system is laughable. When it is proven that he has perpetuated a culture of racism and misogyny the department. We want you to fire him, not empower him.

>> Mayor Adler: Happy birthday, thank you.

>> Iris Sigmon.

>> Hi. Can you hear me??

>> Yes, go ahead.

>> Okay. Hi, my name is iris,

[indiscernible], I live in city council district 1. I'm here today to, like many others, to support the demands of communities of color united and grassroots leadership to defund the Austin police department by 50% and invest the money in real solutions. Solutions that begin to remedy long standing

[9:04:41 PM]

inequities faced by communities of color in Austin. I'm also here because this public comment process is inaccessible to most members of the groups who are directly impacted by policing and budget inequalities. These folks may not have flexible work hours, may not have consistent phone access and may face other barriers to participation. I ask that city council recognize the failures of this comment process and take immediate action to make it more accessible to these communities. Finally, I want to speak as a white woman to the white folks in the room. If you are a white councilmember and you claim to support black lives, listen to the people who have called in today. Listen to the community organizations I just mentioned. If you don't understand how defunding the police keeps people safer, they are telling you. Listen to what the black, indigenous and people of color members of your community are asking you to do and do it. Even if it's hard, do it. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

[9:05:43 PM]

>> Matthew fox.

>> Hello. My name is Matthew fox. I'm a resident O the far south side of district five here in Austin. I would like to speak today against the current proposed budget. The police department currently receives a disturbing 40% of general revenue which could be drastically reduced and reallocated to other services in the community who are continuously fighting for funding, libraries, mental health services, other community focused department who are truly working with our city's best interests at

heart. I support Austin justice coalition's call to cut the A.P.D. Budget by a minimum of \$100 million, I would like to see this process started in the

[indiscernible] Implementing y'all's own previous directive roughly \$23 million allocated unfilled A.P.D. Positions out of the police department. Your directive has been clearly disregarded by city manager cronk which is sun acceptable. Since January last year,

[9:06:45 PM]

2019, more than two-thirds of the police time spent on calls were entirely unrelated to crime and would be better directed to services that would greater benefit from that funding that could be allocated from A.P.D. One example, unnecessary military maintenance and disproportion in addition treatment against our black and brown neighbors are all clear indicators of how A.P.D. Misused or wasted its current resources and could easily afford decreases in both funding and scope. Thank you for your time tonight. Black lives matter. Have a good rest of your evening.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> For all. Speakers in the queue, if you have not yet pressed zero, please do so at this time. Thank you. The next speaker is Kathryn Hoffman.

>> Hi. My name is Kathryn Hoffman. I live in district 4. And I'm a public librarian. Specifically I'm a public law librarian. I have seen firsthand the

[9:07:45 PM]

lack of support this community provides to people experiencing homelessness, people who are struggling with mental health issues. And people who have experienced violence, especially sexual violence. As a librarian I answer peoples questions and direct them to services. When people ask me who to call for help, often the only answer that I can give is call the police. I have to say that knowing that the police may bring that person more harm than good. Especially if that person I'm talking to is a person of color. We need more options. For public safety and community healing. The police are relied upon for far too many things, while agencies that help prevent crime and actually promote safety must beg and plead to fund their basic functions. We know from Austin justice coalition's recent study that most of the calls police respond to are not crime related. So why do we ask them to do things outside of their job

[9:08:48 PM]

description? The current budget is completely unacceptable. We must invest in alternative safety solutions. We must reallocate at least \$100 million of a.p.d.'s budget and invest in agencies that help our communities, not harm them. We need to stop thinking about what the police department will lose and what the community will gain. Let's be leaders and show the world what we can do. Thank you.

>> James krill.

>> Hi, guys. I'm James Crowell, I live in city council district 7. Shout out to Leslie pool. I'm here to support the demands of the community of color united and grassroots leadership to reduce the budget for the Austin police department by 50%. And transfer that money to the rise fund, the equity office, the Austin public health, and low income

[9:09:48 PM]

housing. This would remedy long standing inequities facing the communities of color in Austin. I'm also here because this comment process is inaccessible to most of the members of this group who are directly impacted by policing and budget inequities who don't have flexible work hours, phone access. Face other barriers to participation. I ask the city council to take immediate action to make this comment process more accessible to those communities. I yield my time. Black lives matter.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Chris Holcomb.

>> Hello. My name is Chris Holcomb, I live in district 5. I am sure that you have heard of the Austin chamber of commerce survey showing that we will lose over half of our music venues by Halloween. That's only three months away. And it doesn't really matter

[9:10:49 PM]

if we can truthfully call ourselves the live music capital of the world. What does matter is that when the music dies, people will stop moving here, stop creating companies here, stop paying taxes here. I highly doubt that I'm alone in deciding to move here due to music and choosing to help start a solar company here or that I'm alone and already seriously considering moving away. Music matters. It influences us in many ways that we don't recognize. It teaches us to use our voice and creativity and that includes economic and political creativity. So why wait on a federal policy that will likely never come? Music venues and music venue owners need a signal that we care for them. Let's lead the effort. Let's get them

[indiscernible] For doing this and bring in more venues. Some vague line items targeting small businesses and creative workers are just not enough. Do your job and save our stages. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

[9:11:51 PM]

>> [Indiscernible] Kataria.

>> Hello, my name is akash, I'm a photographer and home owner in district 2 and I demand that you do the following. Defund the police department by 50%. I have seen the police smashing up protesters in unmarked white cargo vans, arrest and punch journalist Garcia in the stomach while already restrained on the ground. A.P.D. Is clearly using their budget to terrorize our city in the same way that it's happening in Portland. Secondly, fire police chief Manley for his response to the protests. As of June 23rd, over 90,000 people have signed an online petition to fire chief Manley. Third third, release all body cam footage of protesters, especially of that Ryan Jacob

[indiscernible] Badge number

[9:12:53 PM]

8386 who shot a disabled man in a wheelchair from I-35 in the now famous photograph across national media. Fourth, fire city manager Spencer cronk for his weak response to the protests. Before proposing this budget, you knew the police used violence against justice howl and 15-year-old Brad. When black and brown bodies are brutalized it has no effect on Spencer cronk. He failed to create change in Minneapolis where George Floyd was murdered and brought the disease of incompetence to Austin. Defund the police, fire chief Manley, fire responder, release the footage. I yield my time, thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Mayor, that was the last speaker. If there are any people on
-- in the queue, please press zero at this time.

[9:13:59 PM]

That was the last speaker, mayor.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Colleagues, it is 9:30. We will reconvene at 945 when the speakers start arriving for the 10:00 block. That will be the last block we have. It's an equal number of people. So at 9:14, this meeting is in recess until 9:45.

[9:15:36 PM]

A.P.D. And and, A.P.D., A.P.D., A.P.D., A.P.D., Austin police department. >>> >>

[9:45:55 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: Councilmember Renteria had technical difficulties with his computer so he's watching us and following this on TV. The TV stream. That does give us at least six people who are present, and councilmembers pool, tovo, the mayor pro tem Garza along with councilmember Casar and myself. We'll go ahead and convene this. It's Thursday, July 23rd, 2020. It is 9:45, and we are back from recess. This meeting is being held virtually. It is a special called meeting for citizens to give comment on the proposed budget and also to set a public hearing to consider and receive public comment on the rate and fee changes for Austin resource recovery, also a part of the next year's proposed budget. Is the clerk with us?

[9:46:56 PM]

>> Yes, we're ready, mayor.

>> Mayor Adler: All right. I want to remind everybody that we're doing this in blocks today. This is our sixth and final block. We started at 10:00 this morning. We're going to run this block the exact same way we ran the earlier blocks. Everybody has two minutes, but because we're giving people two minutes in a defined space, we are abruptly ending the two minutes at the two-minute point. And I apologize for the abruptness, but it's necessary for we're going to be able to get this done and it is consistent with the practice we've had all day. We tell people that the council has been going at this for 12 hours so far. We have another two hours. We have councilmembers that are needing to step away for family issues and other things. So that just happens. And as I said earlier, councilmember Renteria has technical issues and is watching.

[9:47:56 PM]

Councilmember Flannigan also, but has been with us in person, just not visually over the course of the day. And we remind everybody that it's hard to make eye contact as you look out at the camera all night. The only way to do that is for me to keep staring at the little green dot on the top of my computer which gets to be a hard thing to do as you get to hour three, much less hour 13. So it's much easier just to look at faces on the screen, but then you're not making eye contact. I want to remind everybody that the things we're talking about here today, obviously the issues that are strong opinions, great convictions and emotions involved. We're trying to conduct these public hearings in a way that encourages

[9:48:57 PM]

everybody to participate and if we disagree about how we get from here to there are or even if it's unresolved, I think everybody is concerned with what's best in their mind with their life experience, their lived experience on what's best for the city. And given everything we're going through now, we're trying to urge everybody to be nice. With that said, if no one has anything else, we'll go to the clerk who will take us through our last segment of speakers. Clerk?

>> Okay. So for all the speakers in queue, if you haven't already, please press 0. Thank you. The first caller is Caitlin Gorman.

>> Hi. I'm Caitlin.

[9:49:57 PM]

I'm a native austinite and a resident of district 10 for the last five years. Mayor Adler and councilmember I voted for you in last municipal election. If you read your emails what I've written might sound familiar. Wife worked in area hospitals in the last six years. I've worked with individuals with individuals who are unhoused and unfunded, individuals who have high rates of recidivism. It's my job to give individuals the resources and services they need to discharge from the hospital and survive in the community. Unfortunately these services in Austin simply don't exist. Instead these Austin residents cycle in and out, in and out of the hospital until they're either I am presidented or leave this world. There's no reason for the APD budget to be what it is. Nearly half of APD's budget is for neighborhood policing. I'm asking the council to

[9:50:58 PM]

find community based solutions such as community housing and community health clinics. I read that an eight percent budgets reallocation to make a huge dent in the homelessness crisis in Austin. Seeing the 0.0 reduction that you guys did was a slap in the face to me. It was an insult. It reminded me of when I was waiting tables and a patron would tip 25 cents. It was enough to make sure that they knew they remembered to tip, but not enough to put a roof over your head or food on your table. You have the chance to reflect the values of your constituents. Do something. It's your job to do something. I yield my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much.

>> Victoria Tatum.

>> Hi. My name is Victoria and I live in district 9. I'm calling today to demand that --

>> Mayor Adler: Would you please get closer to your microphone so we can hear you.

>> Yeah, sorry about that. Is this better?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

[9:52:00 PM]

>> All right. I'm calling to ask and support the move to defund the Austin police department --

>> Mayor Adler: Actually, no. Is everyone else muted on their phones? If you're not speaking, please mute. Okay. Now give it another try. Thank you.

>> It's pretty short and brief and I'm sure much of what you've heard already today. I think that the police department doesn't have the correct tools and training to address the problems of mental health, homelessness, addiction and domestic violence and I think the money that we put in the police department would be better spent in other solutions. I especially support an increase in the budget for EMS and more training and funding for mental health officers and mental health responders for that department as opposed to the police department. And I really hope that you have listened today and have taken everything that many Austinites have said and taken it to heart. I know it's been a long day

[9:53:01 PM]

and we really do appreciate -- even though the system isn't as good as it could be obviously, but we appreciate that you're trying. And I hope that y'all have a good night and get a good night's sleep and get to really mull over everything that's been said today and then decide that this budget cut is not drastic enough to reflect what the Austin police department has failed to do for our community. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> John Kilenowski.

>> Hello. My name is John. And I am a clinical specialist with Austin-Travis County EMS. But today I'm calling as a resident of district 2. I'm not speaking on behalf of my employer. First and foremost I want to say thanks for y'all for listening to us. My rep is Delia Garza and I appreciate city council fighting to support Austin EMS. I'm sure you are tired by now so I will keep this short and sweet. Austin EMS has a long history of being

[9:54:01 PM]

understaffed and underfunded. Every year we have at least one ambulance in the top five busiest ambulances in America. This is a level of utilization that means we have virtually no surge capacity in the event of something like a disaster or say a pandemic. This has been evidenced by over 20 minute response times, falling compliance to higher priority and life-threatening emergencies. Some examples of these on July 10th we had a city single ambulance available at 4:30 P.M. On July 13th there were no units available south of the river. Lastly I would like to say I'm a proud director of the board of directors for the Austin ems association and the question I'm asked more than anything else is when are we getting more trucks? Every medic I've spoken on to on this topic says that adding trucks is their number one priorities. It's not about raises,s, benefits and perks are hazard pay, but we want more resources to do our job. Please support adding at least four more ambulances to central Austin as well as ought more com medics to do

[9:55:03 PM]

our job adequately and effectively. Thank you for listening, please wash your hands, wear a mask and black lives matter. >>

>> Thank you.

>> Christina.

>> Yes, my name is Christina and I live in district 7. I'm calling today to urge the city council to reject city manager cronk's current proposed budget because it doesn't reflect the values and priorities of our city. An 11.3-million-dollar cut to the APD doesn't come close to what the citizens of Austin have made clear they want to see. The police department receive 39.9% of the general fund budget in 2020 and according to the propped budget they will receive 39.8% of the general fund in 2021. This is not the change that austinities have been calling for. By contrast the Austin public health budget made up 7.9% of the general fund in 2020 and has only been increased 8.2% of the general fund in 2021. And this is not where our priorities has a city lie.

[9:56:04 PM]

To my councilmember, Ms. Pool, I will be very disappointed if you support this budgets, given your professed commitment to the black and latinx communities in our city. Tonight you have heard an overwhelming call for reallocating a meaningful portion of APD's budget, \$100 million towards services that our citizens cigarettely need. I urge you to please listen to our voices, not because I personally am against the police, but because I am for our communities. I am for our black and brown citizens and this city needs to change and it starts right here with these numbers on paper. Those numbers should speak to where our hearts truly lie. I thank you so much for your time. I know it's been a very long day. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Kendra Garrett.

>> Hi. My name is Kendra. I'm with the Austin justice coalition. It's been -- it's been a long day for y'all so I'll be quick. I want to echo the words

[9:57:04 PM]

from others who have already spoken already. Earlier JP stated that change is trouble trouble and change makes it uncomfortable and it's true. It is the only way to move forward. The ajc along with many other organizations and residents have stated better ways to spend public dollars. Safety means so many things to other people, having enough food, a warm place at night that isn't a park bench or jail cell and having conversations once at a time to diffuse a crisis and to find meaningful resolutions. Public safety can look and feel different and there's no way to the solution. You continue by saying our budget can continue to reflect the tone deaf insistence of the old politics of the American city or it can represent a city becoming a new space where black and brown lives truly matter as space of shelter, healing and one that supports the is community. It's great to be leaving no one behind and it's time to do good trouble so let's do our shots. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

[9:58:05 PM]

>> Janis Bookout.

>> Hi. Given the hour, thank you all for your persistence. This is Janis, directser of performance measurement at measure. We need to distinguish public safety from policing. Public safety is not about the protection of -- is -- sorry. Public safety is about the protection of life, health and property. But first of all life. Nationally, cities with higher spending on policing do not have lower crime rates and vice versa. Spending on policing is also not correlated with lower police violence. Among the 11 largt cities, Austin ranks second for the killing of black people among -- by police despite having a relatively low black population. New York, Chicago, Houston, Dallas and Philadelphia all had significantly lower rates of black people killed by police despite having black populations three to five times higher than Austin. Over time Austin's rate of

[9:59:05 PM]

police violence against people of color is getting worse, not better. And 41% of people killed by police in Austin showed signs of mental illness. That's more than twice the national average. We need a new vision of public safety. The 911 system in APD are not currently equipped to help mental illness crisis and APD has a history of escalation in these situations. In 2019 the meadow's mental health policy institution made six key recommendations for changes including emcot and name as well as 911 training. But a year later none of them have been fully implemented and funding is a major factor. That's why we're asking that funding priorities reelect alternative programs for public safety and we're calling for the creation after community wellness and public safety task force. We need community led focus -- community led program focused on community wellness, restorative justice, trauma informed care, human centered interventions and equity as

[10:00:06 PM]

a means of public safety. Thank you all for your committed service. Thank you so much.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> [Indiscernible] Sigler.

>> Hi. Thank you. Today I'm calling to draw attention to the lack of competence, guidance, and responsibility of both Mr. Manley and Mr. Cronk. The leadership of this city and police department have failed to do their job in holding its members who are civil servants responsible and accountable for their actions. The police department has a history of not giving believe in of the police department due diligence. Most recently with Christopher Taylor and his victim, Mike Ramos. It's lack of reprimand that allows for behavior of disgusting show of unnecessary force. Just less than a week ago when a peaceful protesters got bunched in the kidney, this budget cut is going back into

[10:01:07 PM]

A.P.D. For training and record-keeping. These expenditures should stand alone and not be used for numbers to create the illusion of reallocation. Instead, increase the number of dollars to A.P.D. And reinvest in the community that provides these funds by hiring more than just seven paramedics for the mobile crisis team. Some communities such as mental health authorities support public health, educational resources, animal services, and a

[indiscernible] Center. Please expand on these key points and thank you so much for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Diana reekman?

>> Hello. My name is Diana, I'm a resident of district 7 and a school social worker. I don't have too much to add to the testimony that you've already heard today. The speakers before me have covered all the information that you need to make the right choice. I do know from my work as

[10:02:07 PM]

a social worker that the families and kids that I work with could benefit so much more from having funding for affordable housing, for public health, for mental health support, than having it in policing. I support cutting the and budget by 50% and solutions called for by grassroots leadership. Council member pool, I'd like to express my despite you're unwilling to commit to cutting by a hundred million and this is true of all I've talked to, we were all really disappointed. I hope tonight's testimony will move you to stand with us in creating a city safe for all austinites. Thank you.

>> Francisca Harold.

>> Hello. My name is frannie Harold. I'm a local performer and artist. I live in district 3. You've heard from plenty

[10:03:08 PM]

of folks why defunding the Austin police department matters to them. I'd like to tell you why it matters to me. As someone who hosted the mental health disorder and rape advisory councils I can tell you from personal experience that an \$11.3 million reduction is not going to be enough. Of the top 15 most populous U.S. Cities, Austin has the highest per capita rate of fatal police shootings. I ask that you strongly consider at least a \$100 million reduction as proposed by the Austin justice coalition. Please reallocate these funds into public health, mental health, first responders, housing programs, social services. Y'all help your city. Thanks for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Zachanglen.

>> It is hi. My council member is Kathie tovo, and I want to thank you all for taking these many, many hours to listen to our community. By this point I'm sure that you've heard again and again the statistics

[10:04:09 PM]

on a.p.d.'s time expenditures so I'll spare you the details and get to the point. Only a third of their time is spent dealing with crime. Even if we consider traffic enforcement to be crime fighting, we believed that traditional policing is the best approach to enforcing traffic laws, which I don't believe, so only roughly

50% of a.p.d.'s time is spent on addressing crime. That's -- a.p.d.'s workload should be reduced by half to exclusively focus on crime, and funding should be reduced by half. I understand that's a logistical migraine but it really is that simple. A \$100 million decrease the community has been pleading for is only a fraction of that. It's the least we can do. A start. The money we free up can be channeled into directing the other half of the work to be done by ems, Austin public health, animal services, cronk's new housing and zoning department, communities proposed department of violence prevention and survivor support, and so on. Expecting police to spend

[10:05:09 PM]

half of their time on the job addressing non-criminal issues, which is work for which they're poorly equipped, is not fair to our police and not fair to our residents. Everybody loses from this. I'm sure that this day of public input has made it abundantly clear where our community stands. Rather than spending time and energy to jump through hoops to make a show of listening to the community, only to turn- around and take the smallest possible steps forward, the Austin city council would do far better to spend that time and energy figuring out how to put these demands into action. I yield my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Stacey Maloney.

>> Hi. I live in district 1 and I'm calling in solidarity with groups and other calls, calling for defunding the police by a hundred million or more. I am very disappointed with Mr. Cronk's budget proposal that it does not show a sharp decrease in a.p.d.'s budget. It is not enough. We have watched A.P.D.

[10:06:11 PM]

Repeatedly abuse peaceful protesters and people of color. It's dehumanizing and degrading. Additionally, the culture of A.P.D. is racist as we can see. Larger budgets for overmilitarized police department does not keep us safe. Having housing and

[indiscernible] Safety within our city. How many people do we have to lose at the hands of police before you do something about it? It's time to start taking care of the health and well-being of our community especially going through a health and economic crisis, there's needless violence and abuse, driven by race and fear. I want to see more investment in the rise fund, equity office, ems, Austin public health and low-income housing. If cronk won't reallocate money away from A.P.D., it's time to start looking for a new city manager. Thank you for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Alexandra messenger.

[10:07:13 PM]

>> Hi. My name is Alex messenger and I'm a resident of district 6. This is my first time speaking at a city council meeting. I pretty much echo the testimonies of people here today in my disappointment with the city manager's proposed budget of only 2% or .02%, either way, it's an abysmally low reduction in Austin police department funding. I also agree with the Austin justice coalition proposed reduction of a hundred million dollars as a meaningful start and also to eliminate 230 officer positions, not just 100. Reading over the reimagining public safety document, I think if Austin really wants to make our city safe, then we need to not criminalize people and punish people for just being black, brown,

[10:08:14 PM]

and/or poor in this city and in this country. I really don't think that, you know, police armed with guns, batons, tasers, shackles, and military grade weapons that we've seen at the protests, that's not an appropriate response to traffic issues, mental health crises or false burglary alarms. And looking closer at that document, reimagining public safety, I disagree with the fact that the -- even that \$11.3 million, the largest chunk of that money still goes to police, to self-monitor themselves. I echo speakers before me who I've heard, police historically and continue to be a racist institution, and I don't think at -- any type of oversight or transparency can come from the police department itself. It needs to come from outside. So, again, please go back to the drawing board --

[buzzer sounding]

>> -- To come up with

[10:09:15 PM]

another proposal. Thank you very much.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Rob helens.

>> My name is rob helens and I'm a resident of district 9. I am here to support the defunding of A.P.D. By at least 50% and also the reallocation of that money to underfunded city services that were that will more equitably serve our community like mental health services, crisis intervention, violence prevention, substance abuse programs, food security, and especially affordable housing. Mayor Adler, and my representative, council member tovo, this is dear to you. Echo estimates that 30 million annual investments would achieve functional zero homelessness in Austin. This is less than 10% of the current A.P.D. Budget. Just 10% to fundamentally change the lives of thousands of families and individuals living in crisis. 11% of whom are families with children.

[10:10:16 PM]

5% are [indiscernible], 43% report being attacked or beaten while homeless. Return on this investment would be so far beyond what we get from A.P.D. Buying tear gas, rubber bullets, jetskys, to deploy against us. One Austin safer together is a farce. Anything -- ask anyone living in an object poverty if there's one Austin where they are treated the same as the affluent. Ask people of color if racist, planning and zoning policies have resulted in one Austin for them. Ask Brad Ayala or Justin Howell if they feel safer, ask peaceful protesters if they feel safer when a militarized police officer lines up against them. You heard from the mother of Mike Ramos today. Ask her if she feels together with A.P.D. After they killed her son. Ask the families of

[indiscernible] Or Dave Joseph, Larry Jackson, Bradley, or Byron Carter. Ask yourselves if endless

[10:11:17 PM]

video footage of A.P.D. Officers indiscriminately firing tear gas, rubber bullets, its own citizens that it's sworn to protect looks anything like one Austin together.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> There was an almost unanimous -- thank you --

>> Mayor Adler: Next speaker.

>> Montana STE --

>> Montana steel.

>> City manager cronk, in 2014 when you assumed the position into being city coordinator of Minneapolis, when asked why you wanted the job, you said I have a passion for local government. We have an incredible civic minded an engaged citizenry. I personally have a passion for Minneapolis and a personal alignment with making goals of this city run well. Not just needing to run well, it gets to the equity conversation. The city needs to be thinking about how all of its programs and city services are affecting residents in the most effective ways, that we are addressing the stark disparate that the city

[10:12:19 PM]

has. When you took the city manager roll in 2018 with a salary of \$350,000 annually, did you bring the same passion for the equity of Austin community and building equitable services for all austinites? Are you not also driven by the civic minded and engaged citizenry you have seen here today understand a in

the protests? You may learn that your biggest challenges in Minneapolis for affordable housing, inclusive economic development and police relations, this is clearly still your biggest challenge here and you're being given the opportunity to lead us through a historic moment of defunding the police who have completely broken our trust beyond repair and fund affordable housing initiatives and so many more equitable public house and safety services for our community. Why do you shy away from committing with your own home city council did not. In an interview with the chronicle that came out today, when asked about defunding the police, you said I think it will be important to know the impact of those cuts so we can appropriately assess the expectations of our community. We need a better, more just, equitable cost for

[10:13:20 PM]

this service. Your consensus has been given to you today. We want A.P.D. Defunded by at least a hundred million dollars, and then what is the impact, you ask? For an analysis done of over one million calls for service to A.P.D. Between January 2019 and June 2020 show that more than two-thirds, 66.8% of police time spent on calls for service are unrelated to crime and could be better served by non-police resources. And of the remaining 33.2% --

[buzzer sounding]

-- Only 2.8% of that time was violent. The impact on funding --

>> Sue danuitz.

>> Hi. This is sue danuit simply it Z.I live in district 7. I'm a retired practicing social worker and social work educator. I'd like to speak in favor of Austin justice coalition's recommendation to move

[10:14:22 PM]

money from the police department budget and to move functions that are not really crime-based to other agencies. These are services like mental health services, suicide, homelessness, rape, burglar alarms, many others. And let's put that money into other agencies who have staffs and training and expertise to diffuse rather than escalate these problems. I think that's the key. And as well, put money into preventing those problems, such as with low-income housing, public health, social services, things like that. Thank you for listening.

>> Nick hunt.

>> Hi. My name is Nick hunt. I'm from council district 3. Thanks for listening to us. I'm going to echo a lot of statements from earlier. I'm here to ask for the defunding of A.P.D. After 60 days of protests

[10:15:24 PM]

we've only had -- through being shot and beaten through our own blood, won the right to not be shot by a less lethal round, which we've learned are very dangerous. Nothing else has been accomplished. Mr. Cronk tried to trick us with funding which you've heard about today.

[Indiscernible] Will not move forward with the police murder investigation and museum has started to withhold new evidence that the department is to post, change rules providing trespass and

[indiscernible] In order to arrest us, batons and pepper spray. Arrest non-participating journalists. Please stop trusting these people and taking them at their word, they protect each other first and the community second. Please do something. The public feels let down by the council. We need to move quickly to create any real change. Every day I see myself and fellow protesters let down by the police and council. I look forward to change and please reject this budget.

[10:16:25 PM]

Thank you. I yield my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Teresa lawman.

>> Hi. Can y'all hear me?

>> Mayor Adler: Yes.

>> Okay. Hi. My name is Teresa lawman. I'm a member of district 7. I appreciate you taking the time and energy to hear us out. It's very important. Choosing to not reduce Austin's police department funding by at least 50% will cost us greatly. More innocent lives will be lost, will allow the perpetuation of deeply racist police culture, and harsh treatment of community members will surge. I am a social worker and I have spent my entire career serving those are substance abuse disorders. I've heard countless stories of police brutality, of being targeted, misunderstood, and abused by the justice system. I have watched clients' lives unravel because of

[10:17:26 PM]

society's commitment to punishing addiction, poverty, and race. Almost every client has a chilling police story and staggering numbers of individuals are left traumatized and worse off than before they encountered officers. Social workers like myself, we've spent an egregious amount of time aiding individuals in communities and healing wounds inflicted by the police. The impact of unchecked power and excessive force is something you can help stop. Where we put our money matters. There's no

evidence-based research that shows that pouring money into the police will make our city safer. In fact, the data implies the opposite. Consider investing further in social services and professionals that actually protect our most vulnerable population. A well-known black activist once said, I have no compassion in me for a society that will

[10:18:27 PM]

crush people and then penalize them for not being able to stand up under the weight. Well, let's stop stopping people and start investing in them.

[Buzzer sounding]

>> Please know that we're watching you.

>> Keith young.

>> Good evening. My name is Keith young and I'm a resident of district 4. I'm calling today demanding that city council reject this budget. I take particular issue with suggestion in the budget that can you recall ills can be reformed or turned away. At present these bodies have no interest or capacity for good faith reform. Ignoring the storied history of documented police abuse -- over the past decade, we can arrive at this conclusion by statements from the Austin police association who seems to think addressing substance abuse will kill productivity, or the former district attorney, who after getting

[indiscernible] At the polls, the murders of

[10:19:29 PM]

Javier ambler and Mike Ramos. Time and time again these institutions and people that run them display, if not paternalistic -- these are not the people to be taking your cues from. I want to see the police budget cut by at least 50% and that money invested in public health, mental health services, housing, services that actually prevent crime. This is where your words over the last seven weeks must result in action. You all said black lives matter. Noise the time -- now is the time, do the thing. Continue to solve black lives. Mr. Mayor, city council, thank you for your time. Enjoy the rest of your evening.

>> Steph Lee.

>> Hi. Can you hear me?

>> Yes. Go ahead.

>> Hi. My name is Stephanie Lee and I live in district 1. I'm calling you to urge you to reject the proposal and any budget that doesn't include defunding the A.P.D. By

[10:20:30 PM]

at least a hundred million. This money should be redirected to support social services, schools, public health, solutions for homelessness, affordable housing and mental health health. The data data proves the vast majority of 911 calls can be handled by other departments than A.P.D. That not only would be at a lower cost for the city but would increase the safety for black and brown communities. Anythings to defunding, there needs to be reform across the A.P.D. And officers involved in police brutality must be held accountable. City council, it's your job and duty to step up and protect and improve our communities. Black lives matter. 24 6:00 your timthank you for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Matt Gordon.

>> Hello. My name is Matthew Gordon and I live in district 8. I'm an educator and I've lived in Austin my entire life, in district 8 longer than we've had our current system of government. I voted for you, council member Paige Ellis and have yet to regret that. Thank you to the council and mayor at large for

[10:21:31 PM]

your efforts in serving our city. However, after looking at this budget, something really stood out to me. For the past week, we overwhelmingly move to radical defunding and it has long been known the disenfranchisement of our black and brown citizens, coupled with money, part and parcel of the A.P.D. Section of our city budget. However, I hope after statements made by our city leaders and mobilization of our citizenry, change would be affected. After going over the budget, I notice the A.P.D. Section is decreasing by only a fraction of a percent. Others have he quoted the percentages and number of things but I want to put it in more manageable terms. They're looking to take about \$.15 out of a.p.d.'s wealthy. Last 15 cents out of \$430. I cannot believe that this is an accurate reflection of the citizens' desire for reallocation of police funds or an honest

[10:22:32 PM]

attempt at doing so by our city government. The question is, will the city council, mayor, and city manager commit to a real and significant reallocation of police force funds before the finalization of the city budget. A hundred-million-dollar watermark others noticed today seems like a fantastic start. Thank you for listening to me. I donate the remainder of my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Chris Harris.

>> Hi.

[Indiscernible] In the course to defunding the police. We require an immediate reduction in the size of the police department. This is understood and desirable. Of the 1500 austinians that responded to the we fund budgeting tool, over 90% supported immediate reductions in officers. The data report looking into 911 call data in Austin provides

[indiscernible]. According the analysis, when officers write a report, it indicates a

[10:23:33 PM]

crime may have been committed. If you look at all the call types where officers wrote a report, less than 16% of the time, that accounts for two-thirds of calls and over 43% of police time. This means if we simply don't have police respond to calls where they very rarely find a crime has occurred or even write a report, you can immediately reduce policing substantially without jeopardizing the response to other things. This process of defunding the police must also include a reexamination of what's considered crime in one part of town that's overlooked in others. Part of the racism and class inherent in the institution of policing itself and called by our legislators often simply aligns with social ills related to poverty that in no way correspond to harm, requiring the threat of state violence or state intervention at all. Defunding the police will necessarily limit the scope of policing, any interactions of many vulnerable people in our community have with police. Interactions which, yes,

[10:24:39 PM]

disproportionately result in violence, lead to did he tense, search Andreas, incarceration, and have their own awful sequences. Beyond that, they have huge opportunity costs when you can are what could have replaced it if we had had different budget priorities. Void the traffic stops, social housing that avoid the need to trespass, avoid the overdose, counseling that maintains well-being --

[buzzer sounding]

--

>> Safety and healing. You can do this. The city is watching. The state it watching.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Next speaker.

>> Katrina.

>> Thank you. My name is Katrina. I've been in Austin over ten years. I'm adding my voice to the citizens and organizations like the Austin justice coalition and communities of color united, in asking for long overdue system of change. This can be done in parts there you our city budget.

[10:25:40 PM]

Spencer cronk, I'm looking at you. I don't know that you heard us. We asked you to defund the police. Not take away their

[indiscernible] Fund. It's time that we stop clutching our pearls and privilege, stop fearing the quote/unquote criminals. We need to increase our funding, staffing, and overreliance on police, all the while crime rates have remained relatively the same, at least since 2014. It's time to admit that we were wrong. More police and more funding have failed. Worse, they have exacerbated the problems of racial discrimination and poverty. We need to move money out of the hands of police and into the community in efforts that address mental health, health care, affordable housing, ending homelessness, addressing addiction, EMS, education, and more. Y'all, I'm not the smartest and most informed person here, but I'm listening to those who are, who aim to raise up those in our city.

[10:26:40 PM]

I can no longer say I hope that you will do the same. Now I'm demanding it from each one of you. Do better. And thank you. Thank you for your time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Carol Riley?

>> Hello. Hello, my name is Carol Riley. I live in district 8. I support a very large cut in the police department budget of at least 50%. The city is wasting money by spending it on the police who kill people and don't protect us from crime. They only appear on the scene after a crime is committed, and we don't need police with guns to investigate at that point. What we do need is high quality detectives and investigators who can and will solve violent crimes, including rapes. Almost all the other duties that the police have been assigned to can and should be done by more appropriate staff employed by the city who can respond to domestic violence, emergency

[10:27:41 PM]

medical issues, mental health crises, evictions, homelessness, directing traffic, and many other duties. We need a rapid response team that the 911 dispatchers can send out on these kinds of issues. The last thing we need is to send armed police who aren't well-trained for these situations and will only inflame them. This redirecting of city funds should include a massive expenditure on low-income housing. We have people suffering while living on the streets, and families living in unhealthy, cramped, slum lord apartments. The unemployment crisis we are in will worsen as our country heads towards a major depression. And this will lead to an exponential growth in evictions around and homelessness. We need to city to build low-income housing because the for-profit housing industry will not

[10:28:41 PM]

do it. The city needs to take this on as a major goal and in so doing, resolve a number of problems plaguing our residents. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Kevin persival

>> Hello. My name is Kevin Percival, I'm an educator from district 5. Thank you all I know it's been a very long day. I'm joining all of the voices asking the city council to reject city manager cronk's budget. This is not enough. The and and must be diamonded by a minimum of 100 million-dollars. Under funded services such as public health and social programs. Prior to working education, I worked in transitional housing, [indiscernible] For individuals with disabilities. Interactions between our clients and the police were a frequent source of fear and stress, there are

[10:29:42 PM]

trained professionals in Austin that can respond to many issues handled by the police. Just on this call we have heard [indiscernible] Programs and individuals who worked entire careers to handle situations that police presence often escalates. Interactions with

[indiscernible] Populations with mental illness should not be handled by a police officer. Decrease police funding and find alternative solutions so we can finally work towards a budget that makes the city safer. Austin should lead on this front. Not continue to put lives at risk for fear of change. Thank you for the time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Adam Lowry.

>> Hi, thank you for taking my call. I'm a resident of district 8. And like many before me, I demand that we defund the APD by \$100 million and reallocate those funds to more community based organizations. Defunding the police has

[10:30:43 PM]

been a topic that we've heard about the past couple of months. That I've heard about, across the nation, same issues plaguing police departments. Some of those issues being police unions being too strong, providing too much protection, not enough transparency within the department. A history of racism

within the ranks and unfairly targeting communities of color and also people being scared to speak out against fellow officers misconduct. Spencer cronk, I appreciate you releasing the report done by Lisa Tatum back in November. Not because it yielded any action, but made it clear to me that APD [indiscernible] Exception to any of the issues that I mentioned. No department in the city budget should be giving have much funded with this little transparency. There are a few people on this channel that [indiscernible] Is needed but given how little transparency there is and how much alleged dishonesty

[10:31:44 PM]

which can't be further investigated I don't see how reform is possible. Thank you all for listening and providing this platform. I yield back.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Anne Glickman.

>> Good evening to you all, my name is Anne Glickman, I'm a mother and co-facilitator of truth, racial healing and transformation circles here in the city, I'm represented in district 1. Like so many other austinites throughout the day and night, as it seems, I would like to amplify the demands of communities of color united and grassroots leadership to defund the Austin police department by 50% and invest money in so many other causes, the rise fund, equity office, ems, Austin public health and low income housing, solutions that begin to

[indiscernible] Long standing inequities faced by communities of colors in Austin. I respectfully implore you

[10:32:45 PM]

all to act courageously and devote finally towards working in alignment with transformative racial justice and compassionate community reinvestment. There's so many amazing people in this city and you as our representatives need to join us and help us get this transformative -- to have a city that actually represents us all. That we could be a model for this country instead of being something that's just another shameful police where black and brown bodies are taken for granted and killed in our environment and we all scratch our heads should we defund the police by .2% and we're actually having a call about this. Actually having a call where you were sitting for how many hours to think about if it's actually really okay to have the budget stand as it is and you're not going to do anything. It's actually sort of like -- [indiscernible] It's late, but it's mind blowing. It's actually freaking mind

[10:33:46 PM]

blowing at this point. Like to live in a country that is run by such sometimes like this is just it's crazy. Like this is crazy making. So I implore you to reject this budget. We must do better. And now is the time.

--[Buzzer] --

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Chiranda Robinson.

>> Hello, good evening, mayor and council, this is chiranda Robinson, I'm a resident of district 1. I operate a business that's located in district 4. On yesterday, a group of more than 45 leaders announced the black leaders collective. We are a diverse and broad based group of community leaders in Austin and central Texas and we have joined forces to advance a vision and an agenda for black Austin. It calls for actions and outcomes to improve the black lived experience. We are as leaders know that leaders have a different

[10:34:47 PM]

burden. We have to look at the past, we have to assess our present and determine how today's actions determine the future. So we ask that you, our city council member and our mayor, be bold as leaders. We also ask that you respond to the people who are most affected by the problems. Who are helping to determine the solutions. Such as those solutions outlined by the Austin justice coalition. Members of the black leaders collective care about addressing healthcare, as well as racial disparities in health, education and justice in Austin. And surrounding cities. And so with that in mind, we have questions about how city management can ignore the calls for defunding the police and the reallocation of those funds by the people who most understand the problem. And therefore the solution. Clearly the decisions that were made in the past that we are currently living with aren't working. Can we see that? We want to see real change made in Austin.

[10:35:47 PM]

So as you deliberate on this proposed budget, you have a real opportunity to undo the racism that black people live and experience in Austin every day. And for the remainder of 2020 the collective plans on focusing on building the capacity of our black-led organizations in central Texas and we want black-led solutions implemented and addressed in city budgets, policies and programs and that we ask that you work with us to make sure that black Austin matters. Thank you.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> For all of the speakers in queue, if you have not yet pressed zero, please do so now, thank you. The next speaker is Joshua rila.

>> Hi, Joshua Riley here a free voter. Adler earlier you asked us to be polite, to be nice. This is a two way road.

[10:36:49 PM]

The police are brutalizing and failing us, there be you are failing us, politeness is off the table. Don't talk to us about being polite. Leave the room, Steve, I'm sorry you are so sleepy, when we are being beaten and abused on the street, your job is on the line. This is your job, if you can't hack it, leave. Step up, bebrave. We saw the deception, you underestimated the intelligence of austintexas.gov/budget nights. Who does chronic think he is. This is a book licking Patsy, get out, step down. The 11 million budget change is a farce. A change to an early proposed increase. Not really a cut. We need to reallocate 100 million or better. We need to invest in crime prevention, moving money away from the failed police department. We need to house our citizens, support our citizens.

[10:37:49 PM]

The blood thirsty thugs and the police union needs to be hit where it hurts, the pocketbook. Draft up a significant budget change that matches what we are demanding. Stop murdering black voters, stop brutalizing protesters, listen to black and brown people, black lives matter, get off your asses and make more change. I yield my time.

>> Meg shy.

>> Hi, thank you for recognizing me. My name is meeting shehe. I'm a residents of district 5. I am just calling to say that like many others, I don't feel the proposed budget cuts to APD have gone far enough. I was surprised to see how much of the budget goes towards APD and I feel a reallocation of much of these funds towards other community organizations and programs would be more beneficial to the city of Austin. So I'm asking you to please

[10:38:52 PM]

refrain from approving this budget until it reduces APD's funding by at least \$100 million, as Austin justice coalition has called for. Thank you, I yield the rest of my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Savannah Shanks.

>> Hey, everyone, buckle in because I have a plan for you, can you hear me?

>> Yes.

>> All right. I'm speaking today to say what you have already heard. Fund APD by 50% or at a minimum \$100 million. I know we are very close to the budget due date. If we make cuts we need somewhere to put the money. I acknowledge that visiting millions of dollars into a half backed plan is unacceptable. This year we are in a unique situation due to covid. With the money cut from APD we can provide for relief efforts for many community in Austin. Throughout in year, we can invest in existing programs and begin to imagine new

[10:39:52 PM]

programs to begin funding next year, with the money that will become available from these covid grants. Hopefully if covid doesn't last forever, ha-ha-ha. It is projected that 85% of our music venues will close by October. Please provide relief efforts to music --

[laughter] -- To music venues, restaurants, coffee shops and small businesses that are being affected by covid. Also provide relief to austinites. The musician grant was great. Thank you. But we need more than a one-time, one thousand dollars check for people who are experiencing continued financial difficulty due to covid. In addition to the covid relief grants, I cutting allocating \$50 million a year for the next five years towards the program independent of APD to spearhead community building programs in Austin. For adequate [indiscernible] Mental health crises, homelessness, sexual assault reporting, including testing rape kits, et cetera. Also suggest putting aside \$325,000 for the severance package for firing city

[10:40:53 PM]

manager cronk. He gets \$325,000 annually and been negotiated to have 12 months pay plus an amount equal to six times his monthly premium for continued professional health coverage if he gets fired by you, city council. Cronk. This does not seem democratic and is one heck of a safety net. The more ems vehicles and raise the ems rate of pay.

--[Buzzer] -- Funding for schools for counselors, invest in education --

>> Next speaker.

>> Aliana Ruben.

>> Hi, thank you so much for hearing me today. My name is Aliana. I use he/she pronouns and live in district 9. I'm here to say that the budget allocates too much money to the Austin police department, it's rife with

[10:41:55 PM]

racism, sexism, homophobia.

[Rapid speech] No amount of from training or information seminars that are going to transform APD in a safe entity for all of our citizens, therefore the only option to divest money for

[indiscernible] Parts of the city that actually have the safety of everyone in mind. And I'm asking you that you city council divest between 100 to 200 million-dollar from APD for the year 2021 and put it towards emergency medical services, Austin public health, neighborhood housing community development, and really anything else. These types of systemic changes have been a long time coming and up in of these demands are new. But especially with the rise of covid-19 we do not need more policing. We need more ambulances, we need more economic direct economic assistance, we need housing for the unhoused. Spending that much money on APD is just an expensive band-aid when we have the money to address the root of the problem. I'm sure it's been brought

[10:42:56 PM]

up, but in the

[indiscernible] 2018 action plan to end homelessness in Austin it clearly stated it would take 8% of APD's budget, [indiscernible] To effectively end homelessness in our city. When we have the power to make sweeping changes like this, it will save and improve the lives of the most marginalized in our community, it's simply unacceptable to do anything else. For the safety of all austinites, I hope the budget is dramatically

[indiscernible] Thank you.

>> Meredith Warren.

>> I'm a native austinite, legal worker and frustrated community member in district 8. I was and tip to be profoundly moved by the efforts of my neighbors all around Austin, particular the Austin justice coalition in recent weeks. However I speak with you because I'm extremely angry and by the proposed budget. The last two months of long

[10:43:57 PM]

overdue conferences about systemic racism in Austin, APD to be reduced by 11.3 million is despicable at best and active oppression at worst in I'm in agreement that the budget of APD needs to be significantly reduced. Therefore I'm joining grassroots activists and demanding that the Austin city council approve a budget that defunds the APD by at least \$100 million and instead restricts funding to social services and job programs. Affordable housing for Austin housing population, or bolstering covid-19 recovery efforts. Second voicing my support for the calls made by community members for chief Brian Manley to be

removed effect immediately. We have seen police violently respond to public criticism at protests and demonstrations, we know that APD racially profiles brown and black austinites from the city's own analysis released in January of this year. The problem of systemic

[10:45:00 PM]

socio-economic inequality cannot be solved by more expensive body cams or civilian oversight. The proposed cuts are misleading, insulting and ignore the calls made by community activists, please divest and demilitarize the APD and stop ignore the demands of your community which you have been elected to serve. Spencer cronk and councilmembers the public is watching. Thank you all for your time, please wear a mask, black lives matter. I yield my time back to the council.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Catherine Pratt.

>> Hi. My name is cat Pratt. I live in district 9. The divestment from Austin police department proposed in the 2020-2021 budget is frankly unacceptable. I'm calling on the city of Austin to defund the Austin police department by at least 50%. And [indiscernible] To Austin public health, covid response, solutions to homelessness, expanded mental health services,

[10:46:01 PM]

affordable housing, the city's equity office and rise funds. We have an opportunity to use the tax money open trusted to you to build a more just and equitable community based on the actual needs of the people who live in Austin. The brutal and racist Austin police department is a health hazard to our black and brown citizens. And APD has operated with immunity and without any meaningful oversight. Impugningty. Defund the Austin police department by at least 50%, black lives matter. It's about time we act like it. I yield my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Susan Litman.

>> Hi, I'm Susan lit man. I live in district 5 and I belong to a number of environmental organizations. I'm a white haired, white woman and I haven't personally been touched by police violence or police misconduct. I pretty much attribute that

[10:47:01 PM]

to being protected by my white privilege. But I support and very much urge you to go ahead and cut that police budget by 25 to 50%. Or at least \$100 million. As the Austin justice coalition has asked. You know, from time to time, I've been at the meetings and the educational sessions and actions that Austin justice coalition has led. And I very much respect the work they've done and the other organizations, ccu, grassroots leadership. And so like if you are wondering what to do with \$100 million, for sure, follow their lead because I think they have very good ideas about what to do with the money that we should redirect to addressing people's crisis and not criminalizing them. I know that this would be a really transformative change for any city to undertake.

[10:48:01 PM]

I think Austin is the city that can do it. I would love to live in a city that has proved that we could cut the police department budget by \$100 million this year. Maybe more later. And see the crime rate go down because people's lives are getting better. And their crisis -- they are being helped in their time of crisis. Especially with the virus throwing so many people out of work and into crisis. So with everybody else that's spoken today practically and I thank you for your time and for the very long day that you're putting in.

>> Roy Whaley.

>> Hello.

>> Go ahead.

>> Howdy y'all. My name is Roy Whaley. I think most of you all know me as a long time environmental activist. And I live in district 7.

[10:49:03 PM]

I want to start out by saying, yes, black lives matter. But it is so easy to just say that. We have to make it have meaning. I'm an old white guy. And white people have to do the hard work of looking at the systemic racism that is buried behind our liberal self perceptions. And many times I've heard people say all lives matter. And while this is not original to me, I agree with the idea that all lives can't matter until black lives matter. Now, there have been some really great speakers, well spoken speakers today. And I agree with many of 'em. And there are many things that I would like to address, too. But I want to focus on just one. Because I don't have the ability to thoroughly understand the governor -- the budget before you.

[10:50:04 PM]

The thing that I want to focus on is to ship APD funding, Austin police funding for more park rangers to patrol our trails and open and green spaces. This will save money in the form of salaries and free up APD officers for more community service. And I know there are lots of other cuts that need to be made. I want to just focus on that one. But I do also want to say that since the cadet class is on hold, we need to look at the idea of the current police force being shot with a bean bag gun. As part of their training. I was once shot with a paint ball gun and it made more than just ----[buzzer] --

>> Mayor Adler: Next speaker.

>> Ariel Mago.

>> Hi, my name is Ariel

[10:51:06 PM]

[indiscernible] I'm a native austinite, artist and small business owner currently living in south Austin district 3. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. For the long hours that you have spent listening to constituents all day. It does not go unnoticed and unappreciated. I am calling today to demand that Austin city council approve a budget that defunds the police department by 50%, I would like to focus my comments tonight on the growing national awareness that American police officers and police departments, Austin included, are tasked with an insurmountable list of responsibilities that they are not equipped to highlight effectively.

[Rapid speech] When it's disproportionate budget does not allocate enough funds to address problems of mental health, homelessness, addiction or domestic violence in our community, which disproportionately affects black and brown families.

[Rapid speech] It's time that Austin faces its reality and the culture that it benefits. To echo the west point add debt player, make us choose

[10:52:07 PM]

the harder right instead of the easier wrong. It would take much longer than 60 seconds for me to unpack the history that led us here. I would focus on the action needed to move forward. I ask that the city council divest from police and invest in public safety through housing and health, with meaningful follow through, working with community leader. Please take this opportunity position Austin as a leader and a role model in this historic moment that we are in, a moment that calls for us to put people over politics. This is the city council's opportunity to make its mark in a movement that will long precede us. Thank you so much for your time and I yield my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Sarah wemble.

>> Hi, good evening. I was in district -- I live in district 5, I would like to further [indiscernible] City manager cronk's budget

[indiscernible] Ineffective and dangerous and the money

[10:53:08 PM]

would be better spent elsewhere.

[Indiscernible] Programs that will benefit from the redirection of funds. In the last six months I have seen my neighbors repeatedly interact with APD for mental health crisis and domestic violence situations, in the case of the mental health crisis my neighbor who is jobless

[indiscernible] Because they had no other options for help in Austin. APD provided no actual services. Other than a welfare check. Mental health services like integral care along with ems are outrageously under funded and under staffed. They need to have

[indiscernible] 40 million. In a domestic violence situation, four vehicles and eight cops were deployed on three separate occasions, each time releasing the violator back into the home within 24 hours of apprehension, this is unacceptable.

[Indiscernible] Violence prevention to fight Austin

[indiscernible] To protect and prevent such heinous acts from occurring and worse recurring as the

[10:54:08 PM]

police clearly aren't capable.

[Indiscernible] Needs to be invested in the permanent and rapid housing services to prevent homelessness from occurring to our most vulnerable individuals. Finally, presents being a budget so weak on police reform is to clueness to what the needs are austinites are, indicates how clearly incapable city manager cronk is at his job and he should be replaced immediately. I yield my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you, colleagues, there are about a dozen speakers left. I need a motion to go past 10:00. Councilmember Casar makes the motion, councilmember Ellis seconds. Any objection? Hearing none, continue on. Clerk?

>> Taylor brown.

>>> Hi, can you hear me??

>> Yes, go ahead is that thank you, my name is Taylor brown from district 7. I have lived in Austin since I was four years old.

[10:55:11 PM]

I'm -- I'm basically going to be echoing what people have already said. Thank you for taking this time.

[Indiscernible] Speakers. For the past two months I've watched -- as the Austin police department shot, beat and terrorized my fellow austinites while they were simply exercising their right to protest. Meanwhile the council just

[indiscernible] With the exception of a couple of you, has basically amounted to nothing. I don't really see how cronk's budget can be interpreted as anything other than an insult. This council seems content with letting pregnant women be shot, 16-year-olds to receive permanent brain damage and the rest of us to be beaten, brutalized and murdered by an excessively militarized police force which has zero empathy and scorn for the people they are purportedly supposed to be serving. I thank you for staying up so late and hearing speakers past 10:00. I yield the rest of my time.

>> Susan nayak.

[10:56:17 PM]

>> Hello, my name is Susan nyak, a resident of district 10. I'm a native Texan, have lived in Austin since 1991. I'm speaking on behalf of myself, but I also echo the testimony of so many today. \$11 million deduction in the police budget is not nearly enough to address the concerns of the community and from what I have learned today the real reduction is only 150,000, which is even worse. Spencer cronk says many of the right words but the numbers do not reflect the rhetoric. Not hiring for open

[indiscernible] Cadet class simply puts us in a place of standing still versus any meaningful change. We need to invest in housing, jobs, physical and mental health, addiction, parks, food access and

[indiscernible] Assistance particularly during this pandemic. It's pastime to address the underlying causes that often lead to crime. According to the statesman, one other person brought this up, I think this is really important to mention, only 27% of the police live

[10:57:18 PM]

in Austin. Which means almost three-quarters of the force has little personal investment in the city, which can easily lead to an occupying force mind set as we have seen with the treatment of protesters and which made me personally aware of the treatment of our communities of color. By living here, police officers would have a greater stake in making Austin better. That's what we all want, a community for all austinites. The budget needs to reflect that. I urge you to live up to your commitment from the

last meeting to reduce police budget by \$100 million and invest in our community instead. Thank you for your time and staying late to hear our concerns.

>> Jasmine Harrison.

>> Hi, my name is Jasmine Harrison. I'm a native austinite, thank you very much for your time this evening. I'm sure it's very clear to you, Austin wants to defund

[10:58:18 PM]

APD by at least \$100 million now. In the study recently released by ajc, it is clear that at the minimum 50% of APD officers' time is spent ponding to non-criminal activity. \$100 million is a fraction of 50% of the APD budget and if APD is only responding to crime, half of the time, then logically they should be receiving half of their current funding. So defunding by \$100 million is the least we can do to start dismantling this racist system. These non-criminal calls that officers respond to are often situations that they are woefully untrained for such as mental health crisis, medical emergencies, domestic violence, and blatant racial profiling and racism. All of these situations would be better handled by people trained to navigate them and who are trusted by and connected to our communities. Continuing our current system isn't good for the police and it's dangerous for our black and brown citizens. \$100 million taken from APD needs to go directly back

[10:59:19 PM]

into the organizations that can address these situations

[indiscernible] And effectively in our community. City council members, you work for us, you represent us. We voted for you because we trusted you. Listen to us and defund APD by \$100 million. At least. We need to take real action to address the racist and classist system of policing in Austin. White sympathy is not enough. Respectfully, put your money where your mouth is. Thank you for your time, I yield the rest of my time.

>> Thank you. >>

>> Nicole seriano.

>> Hello. I am Nicole and I am a homeowner in district 2. I can only imagine that this has been a long day for you guys so thank you for your time today. I urge you to reject the budget proposed by Mr. Cronk which vastly undervalues our community. The proposed decrease in budget is a sum that will frankly not have is a strong

[11:00:21 PM]

enough impact toward the community services that need funding, but you know this. I want to see a reallocation of at least \$100 million of APD's budget towards the rise fund, public health, low income housing to name a few. You have the opportunity to lead by example by listening to your constituents and taking bold action towards real solutions to bring the community away from crime instead of just overpolicing. I do not want to reject purchasing a home in a city that protects police over its people. Do not be remembered as someone who took the easy way out and kept our ears and minds closed. Be better. Thank you. I yield my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Those are all the -- for all the speakers in queue, if you have not pressed zero, please do so now. Thank you. The next speaker is Joann in a Becker.

>> Hi. Are you tired yet. I am a native born and raised austinite, but right

[11:01:21 PM]

now that is not something I can be proud of. 11 million, y'all, we really need to do better than this, especially you, Spencer. That is basically like cutting their cheese puff budget, y'all. Defunding police by half but a minimum of 100 million could be redirected to so many projects. We're in a pandemic and people need help. We should reallocate funds to the rise fund, equity office, affordable housing, public health, mental health services, community violence prevention, urban farming and food distribution services, libraries and education to name a few. Spencer cronk, make no mistake we will come for your job if you continue to ignore us. Continuing to give so much funding to APD after this straight-up atrocities they've committed is

[11:02:21 PM]

reckless, ludicrous and asinine. We demand to be heard. Really ask yourselves what side of history do you want to be on. I mean, come on, really. This is ridiculous. Black lives matter. I yield my time.

>> Tricia Todd? Please unmute. Courtney santana?

>> Good evening, my name is Courtney and I live in district 6 and I'm the CEO of the survivor to thrive

[11:03:23 PM]

foundation. We serve displaced and homeless victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and trafficking everyday. My city councilmember is Jimmy Flannigan and I greatly appreciate your time this evening. I am against the current proposed budget. However, I am requesting a favorable reallocation to an APD department that is working very well and benefits thousands of austinians every year. The survive the thrive foundation seeks to support a reconsideration of the proposed budget through the reallocation of funds to the APD victim services department and the crisis response team. Within APD this budget reallocation should increase the capacity of these two departments to serve the victim community in Austin. Victim services counselors serve as systems based advocates who both provide onscene and follow-up trauma informed services to those victims. I'd like to suggest the following budget

reallocations: The hiring of additional victim services counselors to serve these victims.

[11:04:24 PM]

There are 13 currently and there should be at least 25. The training of police officers and a standardized methodology in their handling and treatment of the vulnerable victim community here in Austin. The hiring of additional case management staff or local non-profits and service providers that offer case management to this victim community. And finally, the deployment of technology that gives law enforcement and service providers additional time saving disability into safe spaces and shelter availability for these victims. It shortens the time that a frightened victim will be accompanied by a police officer and gets into a safe location to receive care from victim services counselor or a responding non-profit organization. There are some systems and some programs that are working. It's time to grow those programs and support them fully. I appreciate your time and I thank you for listening. I yield the rest of my time.

[Buzzer sounds]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Dan Sullivan.

[11:05:30 PM]

>> Hi, thank you to the members of the council. I appreciate that you've been hearing a lot of testimony today. And in addition to the proposed budget cuts, one of the opportunities for reallocation that I wanted to highlight were just unique to the covid response that Austin can directly impact. So additional rent protection for folks that are at risk of losing their homes, grants to potential local hotels to house homeless individuals during this crisis. Additional funding for restaurant workers who are out of work during this time. Funneling money from APD to medical centers that are losing revenue because their resources are strapped dealing with covid procedures. And then also just purchasing ppe for schools that might have to open up during a pandemic and making sure that teachers are properly taken care of

during this time are all things that are best suited by Austin resources that should go to serve the community.

[11:06:30 PM]

So thank you very much and I yield the rest of my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> Tricia Todd.

>> Hello. My name is Tricia Todd. I live in district 10. I'm speaking today to support the demands of communities of color united and grassroots leadership to defend the Austin police department by -- decrease the Austin police department by 50%. To make our community stronger Austin government needs to find solutions and fund those solutions to serve people and their human needs. Divesting 50% from APD towards real solutions, the equity office, Austin public health and low cloud deck housing -- low income housing these begin to remedy the long-standing inequities faced by our communities of color in Austin. To councilmembers and to mayor Adler, we can do better. Thank you for your time. Black lives matter.

>> Austin Youngblood.

[11:07:36 PM]

Austin Youngblood? Please unmute. James Casey.

>> Thank you, city staff, for the hard work that you have done to try to make this testimony process more accessible. I hope you will keep at it. My name is Jim Casey. I am a husband, a grandfather, and an engineer living in district 5. I'm a member of usa, a member of district 5 for black lives and a member of the dsa. I support the demands of the communities of color united coalition and grassroots leadership to defund the APD by at least 50%. And to put that money into real solutions for real public safety. The rise fund direct payments, the equity office,

[11:08:38 PM]

Austin public health and low income housing and housing support services. Changing budget priorities will begin to put the brakes on systemic racism and the war on Austin's working class. Call me crazy, but prioritizing public health and other public services over violent armed thugs in the middle of a global pandemic and economic depression. I fear that some day soon you all will regret not having done they'll- all that you could to reduce the power of the racist, favorite police -- fascist police state in this city while

it was still possible. The failure to act will be much death, maiming, destruction of civil rights and a tidal wave of grief. Councilmember kitchen, I ask you to lead the way in answering the demands of people most impacted by institutionalized police violence that up holds white supremacy. Don't just say the pretty words. Lead the city towards

[11:09:39 PM]

transformational change. And if cronk will not demote chief Manley then show him the door. Black and brown lives matter. I yield the rest of my time.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you.

>> For all the speakers on the line in queue, if you haven't pressed zero, please do so at this time. Thank you. James Junius.

>> Hello, I am a resident of district 9. Before you do anything else take a big deep breath and a drink of water. For all we saw in the last month and the brutalized of APD against its own citizens I adamantly urge you to defund the police department by at least one million dollars and reallocate the money to the solutions as recommended by the ajc. A budget is what the society prioritizes and cares about. Because of what we give APD

[11:10:39 PM]

is about 40%. It's as if a household decided to spend 40% of their income on a security system. It's an ineffective way to try and ensure a city's overall health and longevity and asking its own police officers to do too much. You wouldn't ask a plumber to build 40% of the house so why are we asking APD to effectively take 40% of our city's needs. Especially at a time when more Americans have decide from covid that all the armed conflict in the last 70 years. It currently has a higher death toll than that of the civil wax the bloodiest conflict in U.S. History. This disease and pandemic has primarily affected

[indiscernible] Communities here in Austin already in a precarious situation as is. How do we as a city truly help these people? I am telling you and bring justice to those communities. I'll telling you this much,

[11:11:40 PM]

we can't use mill tarrized police vehicles to bring one of the 140,000 people who have died from covid back to life nor would it have saved them in the first place. Ultimately you can't jail or police somebody out of poverty. We're essentially funding our long-term resources into a massive scared straight

campaign. Shooting rubber bullets and tear gas at miners and pregnant women, APD, chief Manley and the city manager have lost my faith and them helping to create a better future for all austinites regardless of identity.

[Buzzer sounds]

>> Mayor Adler: Next speaker, please.

>> Jeremy kitsman.

>> Hi, my name is Jeremy. Thank you for hearing our feedback and for your attention after all these hours. Like many others I'm calling in support of cutting APD

[11:12:40 PM]

budget by \$100 million. A lot of callers far more qualified and honestly way more eloquent than me have already explained why that's a good idea. So instead I'll talk about your legacy. I have met and worked with many of you and I believe you're good people. And indeed this council has achieved Progressive and commendable results so far like decriminalizing homelessness and making progress towards real land use reform. But the truth is none of that will matter if you fail in this moment. The legacy of this council, this mayor and especially this city manager will forever be tied to this decision. This council has already sat by as our city has become a global laughing stock because of its inability to curtail the spread of covid-19. You could redeem yourselves with action. Will you be thought of forever as a council who made this movement or who made tepid baby steps towards a solution that requires quick and long strides? When someone Googles your

[11:13:41 PM]

name in 20 years, or let's be frank when you Google your name in 20 years will it pull up articles about how you bravely listened to your constituents? Or will it instead display your inability to show courage? My final point is for those of you who think \$100 million is too drastic or unrealistic. As you know, budget deliberations are an annual fair. In the event that a \$100 million budget cut to APD proves too severe or leads to financial chaos, which most of us calling in believe to be highly unlikely, you will have a chance to rectify that in only a year's time. It is clear that prior reforms and tweaks have not worked to address systematic racism and police brutalized. It's also clear that so many of your voters are urgently demanding this cut for this year's budget. Not future deliberations. Why not attempt this new solution --

[buzzer sounds]

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you very much. Next speaker, please.

>> For all the speakers in the queue, if you have not

[11:14:42 PM]

pressed zero, please do so at this time. Thank you. Okay, mayor. That was the last speaker.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. All right, colleagues. Those are all the speakers that we had. Is there a motion to set a public hearing to consider and receive public comment on the proposed rate and fee changes for Austin resource recovery as part of the fiscal year 2020-2021 proposed budget? Setting the public hearing on July 30th, 2020 at Austin city hall, 301 west second street, Austin, Texas, potentially to be held virtually. Motion from councilmember pool. Is there a second to this motion? Councilmember harper-madison seconds it. Discussion? Those in favor please raise your hand? Those opposed?

[11:15:44 PM]

Mr. Flannigan, you voting yes?

>> Flannigan: Still here voting yes.

>> Renteria: I'm voting yes also, mayor.

>> Mayor Adler: There you have it. That's all of us. It passes. Any other things to take care of? Anybody else have anything they want to say? Attorney, is there anything else we need to do, Megan? We're set?

>> Kitchen: Mayor? It might be helpful for folks who might be listening to tell them the rest of the budget process so people understand there's -- I think at least one more public hearing, and if you have that in front of you, mayor, it might be helpful just to repeat that for people.

>> Mayor Adler: So we have on July 27th, we have a meeting coming up that is a joint meeting on project connect with cap metro. On July 30th we have a council meeting that's going

[11:16:45 PM]

to concern the budget and people will also have a chance to speak at that council meeting, setting the maximum rates and the like. And then on August 7th, there will be a joint meeting again with capital metro to discuss that. And I'm not sure what the dates are for the rest of the budget issues. I think --

>> Kitchen: I think it's the 12th. We vote on the -- on August 12th, I think.

>> Mayor Adler: I think it begins on the 12th. I didn't know if there was a meeting between the 7th and the 12th. No? Not a work session on budget? But the budget itself will be considered -- I'm forgetting. With that, it is 11:17. And this meeting is adjourned.