

# TOWNSHIP OF MAPLEWOOD



## RESOLUTION NO. 219-15

### RESOLUTION

**WHEREAS**, public safety is the number one priority of the Maplewood Township Committee. We fully support the mission of the Maplewood Police Department “to serve and safeguard all persons within the Township in a fair, safe, professional and considerate manner.” We applaud the Department’s commitment “to prevent, identify and suppress criminal activity...while ensuring that the rights of all citizens are recognized, respected and preserved.” We salute the men and women of the Maplewood Police Department for their hard work and dedication to our community.

**WHEREAS**, we also know these are difficult times and there are serious questions about race, inequality and fairness within the criminal justice system. A July 2015 New York Times/CBS News poll found that “most Americans think race relations are generally bad and blacks hold a particularly negative view of the nation’s racial climate.” The poll also found that “while most Blacks say the police in their communities make them feel safe, blacks are more than twice as likely as whites to say the police make them feel mostly anxious.” Additionally, “blacks are eight times as likely as whites to say they have been stopped by the police because of their race, and almost two-thirds of black men report having been racially profiled by the police.” “Black lives matter” has become the rallying call in protest of the fatal shootings of black men by police officers in Ferguson, Baltimore, North Charleston, Cleveland and other communities.

**WHEREAS**, asked about the arrest in Texas of Sandra Bland and her death while in police custody, U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch said “it highlights the concern ... that a routine stop for many of the members of the black community is not handled with the same professionalism and courtesy that other people may get from the police.”

**WHEREAS**, as leaders of a diverse and inclusive community that seeks to build trust among all its members, we are deeply concerned about the growing divide on race in our society. Most white and black Americans are isolated from one another in everyday life. Of the 6,000 hate crimes reported in 2013, nearly one-half were based on race and 79 percent of racial hate crimes were against people of color. Median household wealth for whites in 2014 was \$142,000 and only \$11,000 for blacks. Life expectancy rates for blacks continue to lag behind whites and infant mortality rates are higher in black communities.

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Maplewood will join with other levels of government, community groups, religious leaders and others in discussing issues of racial equity, employing best practices and putting forth proposals that help address these divisions.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Township Committee of the Township of Maplewood, County of Essex, State of New Jersey that:

- We support President Obama's call for more community conversations across the nation about structural racism and inherent bias.  
On the local level:
  - ✓ We support the work of the Community Coalition on Race to build a more cohesive and intentionally integrated community.
  - ✓ We formed the Clergy Alliance to create stronger bonds between key religious leaders in the community and the Police Department.
  - ✓ We established the Maplewood Community Action Program to bring together on a quarterly basis neighborhood leaders from across town to interact with Township representatives and share information about activities in the different neighborhoods.
  - ✓ We sponsor various teen activities that strengthen the relationship between young people and police officers.
  - ✓ We undertake diversity trainings for our police officers to increase their capacity to interact with a diverse group of stakeholders.
  
- We seek to expand volunteer and paid employment opportunities for people of color and women.
  - ✓ We consider racial and gender diversity when making appointments to Township Boards and Committee to ensure broad representation.
  - ✓ We engage in targeted outreach efforts to recruit a robust pool of candidates of color as police officers.
  - ✓ We work with new businesses to make employment opportunities available for local residents.
  
- We support national and state initiatives that will improve the performance of the Maplewood Police Department and make our community safer.
  - ✓ We favor passage of NJ Assembly Bill 4343/Senate Bill 2888 which requires county and municipal police departments to "develop and adopt a cultural diversity training courses that includes instruction and exercises designed to focus on the needs of the racial, ethnic and religious communities within each department's respective jurisdiction."
  - ✓ We support federal and state programs that will fund the purchase of body cameras for our police officers.
  - ✓ We favor the passage of stronger national background checks for gun purchasers.

I, Elizabeth J. Fritzen, Township Clerk of the Township of Maplewood, in the County of Essex and State of New Jersey, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the Township Committee of the Township of Maplewood, County of Essex, State of New Jersey, at a regular meeting of said Committee held on November 4, 2015.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the Township of Maplewood in the County of Essex and State of New Jersey, on this 4th day of 2015.

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**ELIZABETH J. FRITZEN, R.M.C.**  
Township Clerk