

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Sheriff Kandy Fatheree

County of Summit • State of Ohio

Sheriff Fatheree meets with Summit County Black elected officials and pastors to discuss recent events and urge peace

AKRON – On Monday morning, Summit County Sheriff Kandy Fatheree convened a meeting with nearly a dozen Summit County pastors and Black elected officials to discuss recent demonstrations in Akron prompted by the death of Jayland Walker. The Sheriff briefed those in attendance on the statutory duties of her Office during such events, gave an overview of her plan to ensure safe and secure demonstrations, and explored ways to move forward together.

“As Sheriff, I absolutely respect the right to peacefully protest – I have taken an oath to uphold that right,” said Fatheree, “but we are also required to perform our legal duties.”

Per state law, the Sheriff’s Office is obligated to protect the county courthouse and all those who work within or have business there, to secure the county jail and protect the inmates, staff, and visiting members of the public, and to respond anytime there is civil unrest.

Sheriff Fatheree shared that, at the request for mutual aid from the Akron Police Department, she has begun placing her deputies alongside Akron officers while they are on patrol. She also continues to advocate for keeping local control over the response to demonstrations.

“My philosophy is that we in law enforcement are to be guardians of the community, not warriors,” said Fatheree.

State Senator Vernon Sykes and State Representative Tavia Galonski inquired about reports that arrestees had recently been released at locations other than the jail. The Sheriff responded that due to protests occurring outside the jail and threats received by staff, this was done for the safety of both her deputies and the arrestees, and to maintain the facility’s security.

Pastor Booker Person of Greater Bethel Baptist Church shared that his congregation are grieving and praying for the Walker family, and also praying for peace in the community.

Sheriff Fatheree and everyone in attendance agreed that, as elected community leaders, they must continue to urge demonstrators to remain peaceful. They also collectively condemned the vandalism that occurred along Main Street.

“Every day I am urging calm, patience, and de-escalation on all sides,” said the Sheriff, and I want to thank those who took the time to come together today.”

Attending Monday morning were Akron City Council members Tara L. Mosley, Russ Neal, and Linda Omobien, Akron School Board President Dr. N.J. Akbar and member Diana Autry, Twinsburg School Board President Mark Curtis, Summit County Councilwoman Veronica Sims, State Senator Dr. Vernon Sykes, State Representative Tavia Galonski, Pastor Booker Person of Greater Bethel Baptist Church, Minister Crystal Bowden of Rooted in Christ Church, and Pastor Deante Lavender of The Remedy Church.

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