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Subject: Toms River Mayor Rodrick - Nobody is Defunding the Toms River Police Department
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Mayor Dan Rodrick has issued a statement regarding the addition of 8 new emergency service officers in Toms River and assures the public, no police officers are losing their jobs and nobody is defunding the Toms River Police Department.

TOMS RIVER POLICE CAPTAINS EARN MORE THAN THE NYPD POLICE COMMISSIONER, NOBODY IS BEING 'DEFUNDED' MAYOR SAYS.

TOMS RIVER, NJ - With a salary of \$279,651 a year, Toms River Police Chief Mitch Little is one of the highest-paid public employees in the state of New Jersey and one of the highest paid law enforcement officials in the tri-state area.

All in with his pension and benefits, Chief Little is costing Toms River taxpayers \$391,843 a year. All in, just 31 men who comprise Toms River's PD's top brass are costing over \$9 Million a year. That's an average of \$300,000 a year per management position in the police department.

Nobody is being defunded.

"Salaries of Police Brass are out of control in Toms River and we need more emergency medical responders," says newly elected Mayor Dan Rodrick.

Rodrick said residents of Toms River have been experiencing ambulance wait times of as much as 30 minutes in some cases. Rodrick wants to change that by adding another ambulance on the road 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

"We can do that by hiring another 8 emergency medical officers," said Rodrick. "That would give the police department enough EMTs to get the job done and save lives."

Rodrick plans on not backfilling two \$ 350,000-a-year retiring captain positions to pay for the new Emergency Medical Officers.

No sworn police officers are losing their jobs.

"We need more boots on the ground," says Rodrick. "It's a matter of life and death."

Both Captains will be retiring from the Toms River Police Department in the coming months. Not backfilling the two positions will save taxpayers \$700,000 a year. Rodrick will also be eliminating a civilian public relations person from the department as well. The 31 members of the Police Department's management team are responsible for supervising 112 police officers.

That's around one management to every 3 sworn police officers.

Rodrick has been accused by the management union of defunding the police.

"Nothing could be further from the truth," says Rodrick. "We're adding 8 Emergency Medical Officers. So this money goes right back into the police department."

Rodrick believes that the union is opposing the measure because there are officers in the department who won't be getting promoted.

"We cannot put promotions ahead of public safety! This is a life or death matter and we will not be deterred by the union," he said, stating that the recent spate of intimidation tactics from the department will not force him to back down.

Rodrick today said that the Chief of Police is not being truthful with the residents of the township when he consistently and intentionally mischaracterizes the reallocation of funds from two retiring high-paid supervisory roles into eight life-saving emergency service officers.

"The Toms River Police Department is NOT being defunded. The budget for the police department is being INCREASED in 2024 in order to accommodate the rising salaries, health benefits and pension payments being made by the township as an investment into the police department and its officers," he said. "No, this is about a few police officers not getting promotions. Police officers in New Jersey are the highest-paid officers in the United States according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics. Toms River Police officers are well compensated and among the highest paid in New Jersey."

Nobody is being defunded.

"Toms River needs more cops on the beat and fewer cops in seats," he said. "We are being targeted by criminals from North Jersey, breaking into homes, stealing cars, and causing crimes in neighborhoods where there once were no crimes in our town. No cops patrolling the streets are being cut or lost. or promoted into desk jobs at this time."

"I have asked the chief to restructure the department to be more in line with the needs of what is needed in our neighborhoods. I have asked him to restructure to better address the immediate emergency needs of our community. Those needs are more EMTs on the roads and more cops on the beat. He chose to go to social media and wage war against our efforts instead of delivering a plan to my office," the mayor said. "Unfortunately, my predecessor left our town with a \$3.5 million budget deficit, and hard choices are being made all over the township. I have already eliminated more than \$500,000 in salaries in town hall, jobs that were filled unnecessarily by the former Mayor with friends and political allies. We are restructuring in other areas of the township to ensure the taxpayers are not paying for services and positions we do not absolutely need and that the town is being run more efficiently and cost-effectively."

Mayor Rodrick does not want to raise taxes on residents already struggling with inflation, supply chain problems, and rising energy costs.

"The only alternative is to raise taxes. I think we can do better. I think we can be honest with the taxpayers of Toms River and make the difficult decisions needed to ensure the same level of service without raising taxes," he said. "The chief is too busy looking out for promotions, pensions, and pay raises. He's not looking out for our bottom line. He is being disingenuous by calling this 'defunding'. The salaries of our executive level police officers is out of control. I met with the chief already. He refused to make any concessions while every other department in our town making hard choices. He refuses to do what is fiscally responsible and necessary to avoid a large tax increase in 2024."

Nobody is being defunded.

"Police officers in Toms River make more money than officers in most towns in New Jersey. The captains retiring this year make more money than the Commissioner of the New York City Police Department, more than the governor of New Jersey and more than the superintendent of the New Jersey State Police," he said. "We need more emergency officers and police officers in cars, patrolling our neighborhoods and fewer officers pushing papers behind a desk at headquarters. I invite the chief to come to his senses and return to the negotiation and do his part and not to have a tantrum because he's being asked to tighten his belt, like all of the other departments in our town. Nobody is being defunded and he knows this. The unions know this."

Let's put things into perspective.

- Toms River Police Chief Little costs the township \$391,000 including a \$279,000

base salary, \$61,604 pension payment and a health insurance plan that costs \$36,077. He is not being defunded.

- The retiring captains in the Toms River Police Department cost \$357,000 including a \$245,000 base salary, \$61,606 annual pension payment and a health insurance plan that costs \$28,000 per year.
- Lieutenants in the Toms River Police Department cost up to \$325,000 per year including a \$214,000 base salary, \$61,606 pension and \$36,077 health insurance plan. They are not being defunded.
- Sergeants in the Toms River Police Department cost up to \$287,000 per year including a \$188,000 base salary, \$61,066 pension and \$36,077 health insurance plan. They are not being defunded.
- That is more than the NYPD police commissioner, governor of New Jersey, Toms River School District superintendent and the superintendent of the New Jersey State Police.
- The Commissioner of the New York City Police Department makes \$247,000 per year.
- The superintendent of the Toms River School District makes \$215,000 per year.
- The New Jersey Governor earns \$175,000 per year.
- The Superintendent of the New Jersey State Police earns \$174,000 per year.