



June 9 2020

Dear Citizens of Edenton,

The past week we all have seen much pain, outrage, fear and grief throughout our country in response to the horrific murder of George Floyd. The cruelty and disregard for human life displayed in that video was the result of systematic racism, proof that the biases, whether implicit or explicit, that we carry as individuals and as a society have grave consequences for Black citizens. What happened to George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery were tragedies whose publicity has called attention to their regular occurrence and we utterly condemn these unspeakable acts of violence.

However, unlike most unforeseeable tragedies that we carry ourselves through by means of our faith and resiliency, these deaths exemplify why we **must** grow and change as a society. What has shocked and disgusted so many White citizens is a reality that our Black colleagues, Black friends, Black friend's children and loved ones face every day.

Systematic racism and the resulting violence against Black citizens must be spoken of, must be acknowledged and must be dismantled. North Carolina Mayors of small towns & large cities, including our Mayor, have signed a letter pledging to make every effort within their power to fight systemic racism within our police forces, cities, in this nation and within ourselves. We, as a governing body, collectively affirm this pledge as well. And collectively, all of us, this Council and every citizen must all work to be a better Edenton, a more equitable and just community. As an initial step, the Mayor and Town Council pledge to establish a Human Relations Commission to assist our community in addressing issues of justice and equality, including concerns expressed to us this week and in the recent past related to the Confederate Monument. We also commit to redouble our support of Police Chief Henry King's efforts to build meaningful relationships between law enforcement and the community.

As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. so eloquently stated, "the ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." There are challenges in Edenton that we know will generate controversy. But all of us must be brave enough at this moment in time to recognize the need for change.

Mayor Jimmy E. Stallings

Mayor Pro Tem Elton Bond, Jr.

Councilman Roger Coleman

Councilman Samuel Dixon

Councilman Hackney High, Jr.

Councilman Craig Miller

Councilman Roscoe Poole, Jr.