

Good Morning and Happy Wednesday, Memphis!



Welcoming the New Chief of the Memphis Police Department:

Today represents a historic day for the City of Memphis!

Chief Cerelyn "CJ" Davis has been approved to lead the City of Memphis' Division of Police Services.

In looking back over the past four months, I have emphasized my dedication to forward momentum for this wonderful place we call home. To this point, my colleagues on the Council will agree: *Forward momentum* is the lifeblood of every growing city. However, reaching and maintaining civic progress requires ensuring safety for every citizen. As we look ahead, I wholeheartedly agree that Chief Cerelyn "CJ" Davis is the right person for the job.

In addition to being the first woman to lead the 194-year-old department, Chief Davis also brings over 30 years of law enforcement experience across the American South, with time spent most recently as the head of the Durham Police Department. Furthermore, Chief Davis is well-known throughout the nation as a seasoned executive, with the practical knowledge and keen understanding needed to oversee and implement 21st Century Policing within a large organization.

Taken together, Chief Davis' proven management acumen, coupled with her decisive leadership style and genuine desire to build positive relationships between police and diverse communities make her an asset to Memphians of every stripe.

Please join me in welcoming our new Chief of the Memphis Police Department, **Chief Cerelyn "CJ" Davis**. We are excited to work together as we build an improved Memphis for all in the years to come.

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Note: Following the approval of Chief Davis, your Memphis City Council also discussed measures focused on improving the City of Memphis in the areas of city planning, public safety, parks, and animal services. If you were not able to virtually participate in the meeting via live-stream on the Council website, YouTube, or 88.5 FM (WQOX), a full review is provided, [here](#).

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Opposing the Closure of Scott Street:

You spoke and we listened.

Few issues affect quality of life, neighborhood stability, and sense of connectedness more than a lack of physical access to key resources. That is to say, over time, communities isolated from the larger whole become detached, putting them at a disadvantage from a health, safety, mobility, and economic growth standpoint.

So, when the Council learned of growing concerns regarding plans to close South Scott Street at its intersection with Poplar Avenue, we made a point to meet with constituents to better understand their thoughts on the issue.

At a recent town hall meeting, residents and business owners were able to share their stories:

For instance, a business owner of over 50 years within the Binghampton community commented that closing the intersection would devastate his operations. On the topic of physical well-being, another long-time resident noted that removing access to Poplar Avenue would be detrimental to those requiring emergency services from fire and police.

After considering these needs, the Council took action Tuesday by opposing the closure of the Scott Street Bridge for the purpose of keeping South Scott

Street and Poplar Avenue connected. The measure also requests the Tennessee Department of Transportation to explore financing for the Poplar Viaduct redesign project that keeps the Scott Street Bridge intact; as it is in the best interest of Binghampton, the City of Memphis, and the State of Tennessee to invest in the historic, resilient, and proud neighborhood.

Improving our Local Parks System:

The Council is dedicated to the upkeep of our local parks system. With that in mind, on Tuesday, we approved three resolutions to reach that end.

First, a resolution was passed accepting grant funds in the amount of \$10,000 for volunteer coordination and park activation efforts across all Council districts. The grant was funded by the Urban Land Institute and will promote the personal health and athletic development of Memphians by working toward the enhancement of recreational spaces dedicated to safe, structured, and free play.

Subsequently, a second resolution was approved accepting grant funds in the amount of \$150,000 for services, supplies, and capital improvements in Districts 4, 6 and Super District 8. The grant was funded by the Tennessee Department of Health, and will work toward the improvement of physical activity programming at Southside, Chandler, and Gaston Parks.

Finally, a third resolution was approved accepting in-kind grant funds from Home Depot to support community garden efforts. The grant will be utilized at the Cunningham Community Center.

Supporting our Animal Services Efforts:

Moreover, the Council values the work of the Division of Animal Services. As such, we passed a resolution accepting grant funds in the amount of \$95,000 for lifesaving programming. The grant was funded by the Petco Foundation and will work to empower the Division as it provides quality care to animals receiving shelter in their time of need.

Funding for the Division of Police Services:

I mentioned it within my opening remarks, and will underscore the point again, now: Your safety is our priority.

Therefore, I am pleased to announce that yesterday the Council took action by passing a resolution accepting grant funds in the amount of \$985,000 for (1) law enforcement training, (2) overtime for criminal cases, and (3)

upgraded technology equipment and renewed software products. The grant was funded by the State of Tennessee's Office of Criminal Justice Programs and will make certain that the City of Memphis' Division of Police Services remains one of the best in country.

Honoring Memphians Who Served:

When worthy circumstances arise, the Council has seen fit to name certain public roads in honor of citizens who have served this community. Yesterday, the late Tommy Pacello was recognized with an honorary street name.

Mr. Pacello was a community-minded leader whose vision of a modernized City of Memphis helped guide policy regarding urban planning in recent years. Specifically, Mr. Pacello served Memphis as an Assistant City Attorney, Director on the Memphis Mayor's Innovation Delivery Team, and President of the Memphis Medical District Collaborative.

Last year, we were saddened by Mr. Pacello's passing. Notwithstanding, his inventive legacy remains to inspire all. With this in mind, the Council passed a resolution designating N. Third Street between Looney Avenue and Chelsea Avenue as "Tommy Pacello Street" in commemoration of his life well-lived and countless contributions to the City of Memphis and its diverse citizenry.

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Looking Forward:

As we move ahead, I am honored to serve you each day as part of a thirteen-councilmember team working to transform our city into a place of opportunity for all. Stay tuned for future Council updates as we keep you informed regarding the activities taking place here at City Hall.

Yours in service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank Colvett, Jr.", with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Chairman Frank Colvett, Jr.
Memphis City Council
District 2