

CITY OF FOUNTAINS  
HEART OF THE NATION



KANSAS CITY  
MISSOURI

QUINTON D. LUCAS  
Mayor

April 22, 2021

Black Rainbow  
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People  
National Black United Front – Kansas City  
Operation Liberation  
Southern Christian Leadership Conference of Kansas City  
Urban League of Kansas City  
Urban Summit of Kansas City

Re: My Meeting Invitation Still Stands

Dear Community Leaders:

Several weeks ago, I was asked to take part in a meeting to discuss matters of public safety concern, longstanding issues of police-community relations broadly, and ways to avoid conduct that troubled activists, councilmembers, and myself arising from last summer's protests. I quickly agreed to take part and had my office lead the effort to invite organizations from throughout our community to take part. I planned to, and did, have the meeting regardless of the outcome of the murder trial and ultimate—and welcome—conviction of Derek Chauvin.

My goal then, as it has been every time I have met with your groups over the past year on policing or other matters—which we have done—was to listen and to be honest about that which I can do, have done, and plan to do ahead, and, importantly, to be honest with the challenges I also see in policing in Kansas City. I also received a recommendation that the Kansas City Chief of Police and the Jackson County Prosecutor be part of the meeting. Because of their positions—neither of which are controlled in majority part by me—I found their involvement to be warranted.

Our meeting was closed to the press, as have been my other meetings with your groups since past May. To the extent these private discussions have been shared or recorded from meetings, it has not been me sharing it.

Accordingly, I am surprised to receive a letter accusing me of “performative politics” and “political shenanigans” in a letter that, although addressed to me, was sent directly to the press and posted

on social media rather than sent directly to me. I learned of the letter from the press, which makes one question who is playing politics.

In the past year, you—many of whom I have worked with on many other important political causes—have endeavored to personally attack me as a liar, sell-out, and any number of invectives meant perhaps to provide the media an exciting Black-on-Black war of words, but has moved us nowhere in relation to long-term substantive change in practices of the Kansas City Police Department that you and I agree must be changed. All the while, I have seen members of your enumerated groups appear at press conferences with folks like Missouri Governor Mike Parson who actually have the power to appoint new police commissioners who will better hear our community's voices on areas of necessary change.<sup>1</sup> I hope you have used this time with the governor to share this point. I know I have.

But, here's the deal. I decided long ago that I am not going to get in a back-and-forth with anyone, let alone a back-and-forth that does nothing but entertain the masses while accomplishing nothing for my people. I will do my job. Long after I'm done being mayor, I will be a Black man in Kansas City and a Black man in America. I would like my time in office to make life safer for those like me and my sisters in Kansas City—and that includes from police misconduct.

I welcome your cooperation in that regard.

Concerning your particular demands, I will review all of them. Specifically though, I have shared previously and you are well aware that in our system of police governance, the mayor does not hire or fire the Chief of Police, who is further protected by Missouri statute limiting the grounds upon which he can be terminated. The mayor is one of five votes, often a lone one, pushing change on the governing board of the Kansas City Police Department. I will continue to do so.

I also will continue to reach out to you in that effort, regardless of what you feel about me. Your voices are important ones even when I do not do what you want me to do. I found yesterday's meeting to be a productive one. We plan to hold another meeting next month and each month thereafter; you have a standing invitation.

I thank you for your service to our community and look forward to being in touch.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'QD Lucas', with a stylized, cursive script.

Quinton D. Lucas

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://twitter.com/SavannahKCTV5/status/1372934627921436675> (Governor Parson's Arrowhead Stadium "mega vaccine" event with Urban League President/CEO Gwendolyn Grant present).