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PRESS RELEASE

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Portsmouth NAACP on New Portsmouth Police Chief

Portsmouth, VA – Today, we congratulate Chief Prince on his new role as the Chief of Police for the City of Portsmouth. In these difficult times in our City, the relationship between the community and the police department is critical and we look forward to a relationship with Chief Prince that is centered around transparency, accountability, measured results and policies and procedures that are focused on humane policing and the preservation of life in our community.

In the coming days, we will request a meeting with City Manager Jones and Chief Prince concerning items that we can work progressively towards together in addition to long-standing concerns that we have with the department. As we have with other Chiefs of Police in the past, we will encourage swift and decisive actions internally and externally regarding patterns and practices of civil and human rights violations that to many black and brown citizens systemically have become the victims of for far too often. Although some improvements may take some time, we feel that there are immediate actions items that could start the process of building trust that we will encourage the Chief to take quickly within the first days of his administration:

- Immediately eliminate any policy, procedure, guidelines or action that encourages officers to use unauthorized harsh tactic techniques specifically using their knee(s) on the necks of individuals of interest
- Conduct an immediate review of incidents where officers used forced entry tactics that resulted in the release of deadly force for violations of the conduct policy.
- Commit to adopting a yearly citizen review of all policies and procedures dealing with the Use of Force Continuum, Body Worn Cameras and Code of Conduct.
- Reallocate resources to neighborhoods that are being most impacted by violent crime.
- Coordinate internal structures to support an independent civilian review board with subpoena authority.
- Immediately review the process of ensuring that black officers have fair opportunity to reach the ranks of Lieutenants, Captains and above to improve diversity at the top administrative level.

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Founded in 1909, the NAACP is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. From the ballot box to the classroom, the thousands of dedicated workers, organizers, leaders and members who make up the NAACP continue to fight for social justice. The Portsmouth Branch of the NAACP is dedicated to the fight for social justice for the citizens of Portsmouth, VA and all Americans.