

## Public Memorandum

April 15<sup>th</sup>

### **City Council’s Vision for Community Safety and Toddrick Barnette’s Failure to Meet that Vision**

**Council vision: A balanced budget.**

**Commissioner Barnette’s record: Unchecked overspending with no communication or opportunities for corrective action.**

- Under Commissioner Barnette’s supervision, MPD [overspent their budget](#) by nearly \$20 million dollars. Commissioner Barnette concedes this oversight was due to the lack of engaged conversations with MPD leadership, and that he was not aware of the overspend until the third financial quarter of 2025. It is unacceptable for the City’s senior leadership to make the kind of mistakes that come at a direct expense for taxpayers while undercutting the delivery of services.
- During the hearing for his reappointment on April 7, 2026, Commissioner Barnette was unable to provide a specific plan or any corrective measures to prevent this kind of overspending by departments under his supervision from happening again.
- During the 2025 budget mark-up session, Commissioner Barnette and his office requested \$24 million for the proposed Community Training and Wellness Center, also known as “Cop City.” Only after Council Members pushed back on this request did Commissioner Barnette admit that the potential full cost of the proposed project for taxpayers could be nearly \$40 million.
- Additionally, despite stating the Training Center project could be a potential revenue generator, Commissioner Barnette later conceded there were no current leads to generate revenue to offset project costs.

**Council vision: All residents receive high-quality safety services and deserve accountability when the City misses the mark.**

**Commissioner Barnette’s record: The case of Davis Moturi.**

- Davis Moturi is a Black resident of Minneapolis who was facing specific threats of racist violence from his next-door neighbor. Mr. Moturi requested help and protection from MPD but did not receive it and was shot in the neck by his neighbor. There are still many unanswered questions about why MPD failed to protect Mr. Moturi and whether Commissioner Barnette has taken any corrective actions.
- In addition to Commissioner Barnette not taking ownership for this failure or explaining how it was allowed to occur, he has delayed progress on accountability. Despite claims that MPD conducted an internal review of the case and made operational changes, he has refused to publish for more than a year the results of any such review or operational changes made as a result of internal review.

**Council vision: Safety for victims and survivors of domestic violence.**

**Commissioner Barnette’s record: The cases of Allison Lussier and Mariah Samuels.**

- Allison Lussier was a 47-year-old Indigenous woman and domestic violence survivor who was found dead in her North Loop apartment in February 2024. Since her death, family members, community members, and domestic violence advocates have been demanding officials investigate the circumstances of her death and the role that was subsequently played by MPD.
- Mariah Samuels was a Black resident and a domestic violence survivor who was killed in 2025. She called and engaged with MPD to receive help all the way up until the morning [she was killed](#).
  - This egregious killing came after the City Council [requested more information](#) on the City’s response to domestic violence survivors due to unresolved concerns regarding gaps of services by MPD.

**Council vision: Strong, successful relationships with credible contractors and partners.**

**Commissioner Barnette’s record: Lawsuits, dubious contracts, and poor oversight.**

- Commissioner Barnette failed to cancel the contracts with Salem, Inc. for violence prevention after the leader of the organization, Pastor Jerry McAfee, disrupted a council meeting, hurled homophobic remarks at the only openly gay council member, made threats to come around the dais at another council member, and posted on Facebook Live that he did not “hurt or shoot anyone [on the council], but [he] will if [he] has to.” Commissioner Barnette did not consider it disqualifying for an organization’s leader to make death threats towards elected leaders. In response to a council member questioning the appropriateness of proceeding with a new contract request, Commissioner Barnette affirmed his recommendation for approval. It was only after the

Hennepin County Attorney's Office charged two individuals connected to the organization led by McAfee with felonies related to their violence prevention work that Commissioner Barnette requested the item be pulled from consideration.

- Not only did Commissioner Barnette fail to cancel the contracts, under his leadership the Neighborhood Safety Department later brought forward [two contracts for Salem, Inc. for \\$650,000, which was promptly voted down by the Minneapolis City Council.](#)
- Commissioner Barnette failed to take preventative or corrective actions during the tenure of Neighborhood Safety Director Luana Nelson Brown, which included [poor financial management](#), [improper procurement protocol](#), and [potential conflicts of interest](#).
- During Commissioner Barnette's tenure, council members received several complaints from contractors for lack of communication, delay in contract execution, and clarity on the broader strategy for violence prevention, for which they were selected to play a role.
- Last year, Commissioner Barnette oversaw the selection of OUR Rescue, formerly known as Operation Underground Railroad, as the City-contracted vendor to provide sex trafficking prevention services to MPD at the South Minneapolis Community Safety Center. The founder of this organization was federally investigated on sexual exploitation, sexual assault, and fraud allegations. Upon learning about this prospective partnership via a Star Tribune [article](#), several council members and community advocates urged Commissioner Barnette to cease all collaboration with OUR Rescue and to utilize proper procurement processes to select a credible contractor. After much public outcry and persistent pressing from council members, proper procurement channels were used by OCS to select a credible sex-trafficking prevention vendor.

**Council vision: Leadership who is active and involved, has a clear vision of a comprehensive public safety system, is knowledgeable about all the departments they oversee, treat their employees well, and is accessible to the City Council and the public.**

**Commissioner Barnette's record: Absent, disengaged, inability or unwillingness to answer basic questions and fulfill legislative directives.**

- Commissioner Barnette was absent and often unengaged from the work of Commissioner. He had a hard time answering questions the Council and the public had. He often seemed, and acknowledged, that he was uninformed about the ongoing work and issues of many of the departments he oversees.
- Council members received a letter from AFSCME Local 9 on April 6, 2026, which provided a summary of comments from the AFSCME employees who work in the departments under Commissioner Barnette. Below are quotes taken directly from the letter:

- “Members indicated that his interactions with employees feel political, and that he is friendly and warm with some employees while ignoring others.”
- “Members were very critical of the work environment under Toddrick’s control. Members indicated Toddrick’s greatest flaw is that he does not hold the Police Chief accountable for his toxic behaviors, resulting in a culture of fear and strained relationships across the enterprise.”
- “Members noted that he is largely invisible, with communications mostly coming from the official newsletter.”
- “Members get the sense that he does not know anything about their collective bargaining agreements and does not care.”
- Commissioner Barnette and his staff were often absent from important agenda setting meetings where Mayor Frey’s administration, City Council, and broader City staff meet to talk through agenda items coming before City Council committees.
- Commissioner Barnette regrettably has a track record of being unresponsive to standard requests. Council Member Chowdhury requested basic financial details and information on spending of the Canopy Roots contract for \$26 million so she could conduct her business of oversight and engage with her constituents. The Council Member sent repeated emails with little to no response, to the point where the Council Member pleaded for a response on behalf of the community she represents. This is one of many similar experiences from multiple Council Members and their staff who seek information on behalf of the public.
- Even [Council Members who supported Commisisioner](#) Barnette’s appointment stated that they had frustrations with the lack of outreach, responsiveness, and collaboration with the City Council.