

August 6, 2025

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to recommend John Patterson as the City of Madison's next Chief of Police.

I've known John for nearly 4 years. We were first connected when I was elected to serve on Madison's Common Council in 2021. I decided to run for office due to being a lifelong Black resident of Madison and a social worker seeking to disrupt status quo in regards to racial disparities and the plight of Black Madisonians. Personally, and professionally, I was skeptical of law enforcement and its officers as an institution, based on its history in relation to Black people and communities. In fact, I publicly campaigned on divesting MPD funding to be reallocated towards meeting basic needs, such as housing and food security. Around the same time, John had been promoted to Assistant Chief of Support & Community Outreach, aligning him with the City's budget process and sitting alders. I recall a meeting with (then) Chief Barnes and John where it was clear we weren't going to end the meeting in agreement. After the meeting, John gave me his card and encouraged me to schedule a ride-along and time to meet with the captain of my aldermanic district. Although still skeptical, I remember not feeling pressured by him to feel or think one way or the other, but to be open-minded to forming my own perspectives. Going forward, John always made a point of being available to answer questions, talk through solutions, and discuss challenges. He came to meetings prepared, spending time looking for and connecting me to existing sources, but also spending time to craft information based on specific asks and my learning style. Looking back, my interaction with him and his challenge to me ended up being transformational for my own reckoning with public safety, law enforcement, and community policing.

While I am no longer an alder, I continue to work with John professionally. My current role involves coordinating a diversion and non-traditional court program, aimed at lowering racial disparities and volume within arrest and incarceration rates in Dane County. John and MPD staff consistently 'sit at tables' discussing justice reform, demonstrating an openness to protecting public safety along with striving to do the best by *all* of its residents, especially those who come into contact with law enforcement consistently. This openness includes being part of a robust data sharing agreement where analysts and executives assess and often scrutinize LE, suggesting better and reimagined approaches to achieve justice. In public and private conversations, John's commitment towards justice reform as a leader and officer is evidenced by words and actions. He has a deep knowledge of community strengths and needs, as well as an openness to being community-led and informed, as evidenced by his strong, trusting relationships with many community leaders and residents. John truly wants the best for Madison, even if that means challenging his own thoughts & approach.

In conclusion, John Patterson is the best candidate for the job. He naturally possesses the compassion, humility, fairness, and approachability Madison's top cop needs, and has demonstrated a commitment to further enhancing these skillsets throughout his 27-year MPD tenure. John is an extremely skilled, flexible but firm, and collaborative leader who does not thrive in hierarchy, but in community and relationships. I wholeheartedly support him to continue serving the City of Madison as Chief of Police and encourage you to do the same.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Patterson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.