



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

David L. Sartori

Milwaukee County Supervisor - 8th District

Dear Comrade Commander,

I am writing this to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated June, 2016 regarding the placement of a memorial in Red Arrow Park in relation to the Dontre Hamilton/Officer Christopher Manney tragedy. My office received your letter on the 14th of June, 2016 and I would request that you make this response to your letter available to all interested parties.

I testified on the issue in question at the May, 2016 meeting of the Parks, Energy, and Environment Committee of the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors. The proposal before the Committee was to decide whether to recommend the installation of a park bench with a specialized inscription honoring the life and contribution of Dontre Hamilton and his family. In attendance at the meeting besides myself were Mr. Hamilton's family represented by his mother, his local celebrity brother, several children and one infant, the President of the Red Arrow Association, a small contingent of anti-police activists, and one self-proclaimed "combat-veteran warrior," (dressed in various stages of military garb), now declared "anti-militarist community peace advocate." Admittedly, I am not certain whether this individual ever served in our Armed Forces. No representatives on behalf of Officer Manney were in attendance.

Although I am not a member of this committee, Chairman Jason Haas permitted me to be the very first speaker on this topic, in which I enunciated my strong opposition to the installation—a position supported by the President of the Red Arrow Association. The outcome of that meeting was to place the item on file to be reviewed again during the July, 2016 meeting of the Parks Committee. At that time, I plan to be present again, and to reiterate my personal position on this sensitive and heartbreaking tragedy.

MILWAUKEE COUNTY COURTHOUSE

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Of the 18 members of the Board of Supervisors, four are military veterans, including myself. In addition, I am the only combat-decorated and disabled veteran. I am also proud to say that I am a life-long member of the American Legion, the AM Vets, the VFW, and the DAV.

I mention this because I want to assure you that I know what duty, sacrifice, honor, and respect for our flag means. All of my mother's sons served in the Armed Forces, and for a twenty-one day period of time, all of us served in an active combat zone. When I returned home from war, fellow citizens spit in my face. With all of this in mind, I say that we can never do too much to honor our veterans, nor can we ever forget that "all gave something, but some gave all."

Despite severe criticism that may be directed my way by members of the public on account of this position, I absolutely oppose any memorial at Red Arrow Park, Veteran's Park, or the War Memorial Building. I have recommended to the Hamilton family that planting a tree(s) in one of our other 128 county parks would be a suitable alternative.

Red Arrow Park is an enduring memorial to the veterans of the 32nd Infantry Division, and their families and friends, and not an appropriate location for such a memorial; although, I do want to acknowledge that during the hearing I learned that Mr. Hamilton's grandfather was a career "Lifer-Marine." I served with great pride and honor for seven years in the 32nd Military Police Company of the Wisconsin Army National Guard following my military service in Vietnam, and it was only due to my combat disabilities that I had to discontinue my military involvement.

Notwithstanding, my heart and sympathies go out to former Officer Christopher Manney and his family and friends. By most accounts, he was a dedicated, conscientious, and honest cop. My heart also goes out to the family of Dontre Hamilton. Mr. Hamilton was plagued by demons and other mental health conditions for most of his young life. He has finally found peace. Henceforth, we now must dedicate our efforts to helping

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to bring our fractured community together; with God's help, I am confident this is an obtainable goal.

Best wishes,

David L. Sartori,

Milwaukee County Board, Supv. 8th District

CC: Chairman Theodore Lipscomb, Mke Co Brd of Supv.

Chair Jason Haas, Committee on Parks, Energy, and Environment

Mr. John Dargle, Director of Mke County Parks

Mr. James Duff, Director of the Mke Co Veteran's Service Office

Mr. Theodore Welch, President, 32^D Red Arrow Veterans Association

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