

If it ain't broke, maybe the tinkering isn't to fix it

WITH NO PRIOR discussion, Nashua's mayor and several aldermen introduced a piece of legislation to make a significant change to the city charter that deals with the manner in which police commissioners are appointed.

This legislation was defeated by the board of aldermen and tabled pending further discussion in an effort to inform and educate those unfamiliar with the way the police commission is appointed.

So that the citizens of Nashua might have the best police protection, they need the knowledge to make an informed decision about this significant change. It shouldn't matter which political party holds the corner office as to how the public's safety stacks up on City Hall's agenda. Nashua has been recognized many times as one of the safest cities in the nation, a view affirmed as recently as last month.

The Nashua Police Department is a nationally-accredited police agency and consistently in the top 5% of the CALEA standards (Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc.). Every three years, the Nashua Police



**Lori Wilshire, June Caron
& Michael B. O'Brien Sr.**



NEW HAMPSHIRE VOICES

Department is ranked against the toughest 600-plus particular standards and they consistently score high. This speaks to the professionalism, the commitment and talent of our law enforcement officers.

Something must be working well in Nashua.

Currently, the Nashua Police Commission is a three-member board that is appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Executive Council. The current three members of the police commission were appointed by then-Gov. Maggie Hassan (D) and re-appointed by Gov. Chris Sununu (R). The most recent commission appointment was Nicholas Dahl, who was re-appointed just a matter of weeks ago. Why was no one else nominated when the

opening occurred in August of 2021? The mayor, who is proposing this change, had the opportunity to make this a diversified board by nominating a woman in August when the appointment of Nick Dahl expired but made no effort to do so. Maybe this is not about diversity after all.

With the election just a number of days away and the question on the ballot, we urge you to vote "No" and tell this administration that more information is required by those affected by this attempt to take greater control of a very well-managed department. This referendum was placed on the ballot at a mid-term election with the lowest turnout historically. This would have been voted on by more citizens had this not been rushed through.

If this is a good idea now, then why isn't it an even better idea when we have a full conversation with the citizens by having this referendum on the ballot at the next municipal election? If it's such a good idea it should stand the test of time.

Many citizens have participated in the 20 to 30 Neighborhood Crime Watch meetings and know firsthand that the people of Nashua are being well served by the Nashua Police Department. The citizens of Nashua deserve real answers and not more rhetoric about local control. We have local control now. The board of aldermen control the police department budget. The current commissioners are all longtime Nashua residents.

Change for the sake of change is not in the best interest of the citizens of Nashua. Our police department does not get nationwide recognition for no reason. The charter change is an attempt to gain personal control of the department, period.

You should ask yourself if there is a real need to change the way the police commission is appointed after Nashua having been recognized as the third-safest city in the country.

Please vote "No" on Question 2 on the Nov. 2 ballot and keep politics out of our highly-rated police department.

Nashua Aldermen Lori Wilshire, president and at-large member, Michael B. O'Brien Sr., vice president, and June Caron, Ward 7.