

## Robert P. Magnus

Office of the Mayor

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: Thursday, May 20, 2021

### **RE: Lowering of the Flag**

Dear Oconomowoc Community,

As you may be aware, I ordered the thin blue line flag at the City Public Safety Building be lowered last week, in the middle of National Police Week. This action was not only ill-timed, but inappropriate. I apologize to all of our brave men and women who serve and protect our community, as well as to any citizens who may have also been offended by this temporary lapse in judgement. I have never referred to, nor do I believe that the thin blue line flag is a symbol of racism.

Upon receiving a number of complaints regarding the flag, I reacted rashly and regret doing so. I truly respect and support our Police Officers and the potential danger they subject themselves to every day to protect and keep our community safe.

These past few years many flags have been viewed not for the positive intent in which they were designed. I have been working together with both the Police Chief and the Fire Chief to provide the right practice for honoring the men and women that the blue line flag and the red line flag represent. Our practice moving forward will be for the respective Blue or Red line flags to be flown at our public safety buildings at the times listed below.

- National Police Week
- National Firefighters Week
- For one day in the event of any City of Oconomowoc Police or Western Fire Lakes Fire District active duty or retired employee death
- For three days in the event of any Wisconsin Law Enforcement, Fire or EMS line of duty death

Moving forward we will do our best to educate the community about these flags and the original and true meaning and what they represent. Both flags will be flown in the future and the entire community will fully understand what they represent in an effort that no outside influences will ever again take hold of these cherished symbols and use them for any representation of political or personal agendas.

Sincerely,

*Robert P. Magnus*

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Mayor, City of Oconomowoc