

Special Call City Council Meeting

April 29, 2024

Mr. Mayor, City Council, Vero Beach Police Department employees, and members of the public, good morning.

Today we are here to discuss some issues that have been brought forward by City property owners Tom Corr and Lanse Padgett.

On September 7, 2023, I had a lunch meeting with Mr. Corr and Mr. Padgett. They indicated that they are supporters of law enforcement, have a good relationship with the Sheriff's Office, and would love to have the same relationship with the Vero Beach Police Department. They told me that they wanted to be a part of the solution and not just complain to complain. Then they told me that they didn't think David Currey was the right person to lead the Vero Beach Police Department and that he needed to go. Finally, they told me that Milo Thornton should be Chief Currey's

replacement. For the record, I discussed this with Mr. Thornton and he emphatically stated that he was 100% committed to the race for Indian River County Sherriff.

Since that initial meeting, we have met in person twice, had several phone calls, and I met with Mr. Corr once. I have exchanged numerous emails with Mr. Padgett and he has made many public records requests.

Some of the concerns the expressed by Mr. Corr and Mr. Padgett include:

- Crime in Vero Beach, in particular on the island.
- Cases being closed too quickly.
- Hostile work environment.
- VBPD not working well with the Sherriff's Department.
- Don't think Chief Currey is the man for the job.

Crime

We discussed the September 3, 2023 shooting in Humiston Park.

In this case:

- The VBPD presented charges to State Attorney's Office for aggravated battery with a firearm and possession of a firearm by a juvenile.
- The State Attorney declined to issue warrants citing self-defense of another.
- The VBPD obtained two arrest warrants for misdemeanor battery and one for felony battery.
- To date, arrests for two misdemeanor batteries have been made.

We discussed the January 1, 2024 stabbing at Grind and Grape. In

this case:

- An arrest for aggravated battery with deadly weapon was made within approximately one hour of the incident.
- The State Attorney's Office made charges of aggravated battery with a deadly weapon and misdemeanor battery.
- An arrest was made for misdemeanor battery two days later.

Overall, crime was down in Vero Beach from 2015 to 2022 (see Attachment 1). 2023 saw an increase and the first quarter stats for 2024 are lower than the first quarter of 2023.

Cases Being Closed Too Quickly

There were three cases brought to my attention that Mr. Corr and Mr. Padgett felt were closed too quickly. After reviewing these cases, I met with Chief Currey to discuss the closing of cases. On March 15, 2024, I met with the Vero Beach Police Department command staff, lieutenants and up, and instructed them that all reports must be reviewed and signed by one of them and that no

case can be closed without one of them or an official from the State Attorney's Office concurring.

Hostile Work Environment

Due to notice of a possible hostile work environment, I had our Human Resources Director conduct interviews at the VBPD. Twenty-two of the 83 employees ($\pm 25\%$) were interviewed. The Human Resources Director concludes: "I did not find nor was I made aware of any behavior that would rise to the level of a hostile work environment. I found no evidence of any type of retaliation nor any fear of retaliation if there was a difference of opinion with the Chief. The overwhelming consensus was that the Chief has an open-door policy and welcomes ideas and suggestions from his staff. Several people mentioned that the Chief almost always solicits advice and opinions when making a decision. There does not appear to be any favoritism or targeting of employees. I was unable to find any indication of malfeasance or wrongdoing on the

part of the Chief. What I did find was an eroding morale among the officers and staff as they feel the pressure of the recent outside constant scrutiny.” (see Attachment 2)

Since March 7, 2024, Mr. Corr and Mr. Padgett have indicated that there are several employees who would come forward but fear retaliation. I informed them that employees are protected from retaliation by the Florida Whistleblowers Act and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. To that end, the City retained the services of Attorney Stephanie Marchman with the firm of GrayRobinson to assist in an investigation. I asked them to have the employees provide written anonymous statements and forward them to Ms. Marchman for her to determine how to proceed. An initial date to provide the statements to Ms. Marchman was April 1, 2024, but due to an email address typo on my part, we extended the date to April 12, 2024. On April 9, 2024, I had a phone call with Mr. Padgett where we discussed his hiring of an attorney to collect the anonymous statements from the employees. We scheduled a follow-up call for

April 15, 2024. Approximately 15 minutes before our scheduled call, I received an email from Mr. Padgett proposing to provide a questionnaire to the employees for them to answer. I agreed (4/16/24, 8:42 email) and proposed that they be returned to Ms. Marchman by April 26, 2024. To date, no statements have been provided.

On April 3, 2024, Mr. Padgett sent an email to numerous officers at the Vero Beach Police Department (see Attachment 3). On or around April 5, 2024, Mr. Padgett left a message on Lieutenant Matt Harrelson's phone (see Attachment 4), and on or around April 10, 2024, Mr. Padgett left a message on Officer James Doty's phone (see Attachment 5). I am not aware if any of these emails or phone messages have been answered. However, no statements have been provided to date.

On April 22, 2024, Lanse Padgett met with some City Council members here at City Hall.

Throughout the interactions, going back to my initial meeting on September 7, 2023, the constant theme from Mr. Corr and Mr. Padgett has been that David Currey is not the right man for the job of Police Chief and that he must go. I've heard terms including: lies, arrogant, unethical, immoral, disinformation, roadblocks, etc. (see Attachment 6), used during this process. In one meeting, I was even asked what it might cost to entice the Chief to retire early.

The City's Charter provides that the City Manager, City Attorney and City Clerk report directly to the City Council, and the remainder of the employees are my responsibility. Due to the concerns expressed about our Police Chief, I have kept the City Council informed throughout this entire process. I have consistently told Mr. Corr and Mr. Padgett, the City Council and Chief Currey that if I am provided with any information regarding activities that are illegal, immoral or unethical, I will investigate and act accordingly. To date, no such information has been provided that would rise to the level of disciplinary action, much less termination. I have been

objective and methodical throughout. The City Council has indicated to me that they are supportive of the manner in which I have handled this process.

It is important to note that other than the issues brought forward by Mr. Corr and Mr. Padgett, I have received no other complaints from the public regarding the VBPD, except for the occasional parking ticket.

I have learned that due to the constant outside scrutiny of the VBPD, the morale of the employees is in decline. They don't deserve this. They are loyal employees of the City and Police Department, and they just want to do their jobs!

Chief Currey has been professional throughout this entire process, as he has been throughout his 34 years at the Vero Beach Police Department. He leads an 83-person department that has been accredited by the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement

Accreditation for the last 22 years. He is respected in the community. He is in line to be the President of the Florida Police Chiefs Association in the summer of 2026. He is slated to retire in early 2028. But most of all, he is a loyal and dedicated family man. On two occasions, once with the mayor present, I was told that if I did not replace the Chief my job would be in jeopardy. During one of these encounters, I was told, "We have the votes" to have me removed.

As the City Council knows, I was set to retire this month but agreed to stay on to work on the generational projects the City is undertaking:

- Three Corners;
- The new advanced wastewater treatment facility;
- The Marina; and,
- Downtown

Since January of this year, I've logged almost 190 hours of work in addition to my normal schedule. In this same period, I've devoted at least a third of my time to this issue when that time should have been invested in these generational projects and the daily operation of a 340-person/\$70,000,000 operation.

Based upon what was recently reported in a local press outlet, it now appears that there may be a way to resolve this issue without Chief Currey being replaced. However, nothing has been proposed to me and if it had been proposed at the initial meeting on September 7, 2023, maybe we would not be here today.

On Friday afternoon, I received an email from Mr. Padgett (see Attachment 7). The last paragraph contains the following:

"I have professionally questioned decisions made by you and Chief Currey. Throughout our multiple conversations, I have never deviated from anything but

the truth with you. I will continue to speak only the truth at the meeting on Monday. I would like the opportunity to remind all parties involved that this is a public forum. I have not and will not be attacking you or any city member personally. I would expect the same treatment in return. Any slanderous or defamatory content proferred by a City Employee or department head directed at Mr. Corr or myself will certainly result in litigation.”

David Currey, nor I, have attacked Mr. Padgett or Mr. Corr throughout this entire process. As public servants, we hold ourselves to a higher standard. I challenge anyone to be called liars, unethical, arrogant, or immoral and to have your jobs threatened to not feel as if you have been attacked!

We have received letters of support (see Attachment 8) from Detective Russell Lachowicz, Vero Beach Police Department; Mike Swan, Attorney Vero Beach; Rosemary White, Citizen Vero Beach;

Will Murphy, Attorney Vero Beach; Casey Walker, Attorney Vero Beach; Caryn Toole, Director, Communities Connected for Kids; Sean Toole, Training Sergeant, Vero Beach Police Department; John Moore, Attorney, Vero Beach Police Department; John Pedersen, Retired Vero Beach Police Lieutenant, Indian River County Resident; Bill Penney, President, Marine Bank; Chef Michael Glatz, Proprietor, Coffee House 1420; and one from the Executive Director of the Florida Police Chiefs Association which I will ask the City Clerk to read into the record.

Since I have not received any information that shows anything illegal, immoral or unethical, nor have I received anything that would result in disciplinary action, much less termination, nor have I received any statements, that I have repeatedly been told that I would receive, we will no longer be dedicating resources to this issue. It is time to move on.

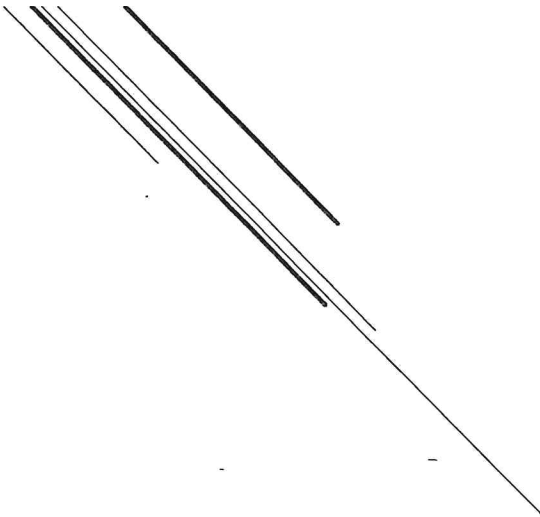
I trust that I still have your support.

Attachment 1



PUBLIC SAFETY PRESENTATION

**Presented by:
Chief David E. Currey**



INTRODUCTION

- ▶ **Men & Women of VBPD**
- ▶ **Vero Beach City Population**
- ▶ **City Limit Boundaries**
- ▶ **Calls For Service/Response Time**

**UNIFORM CRIME
RATE (UCR)
SEVEN(7)
INDEX
CRIMES**

- ▶ Murder
- ▶ Rape
- ▶ Robbery
- ▶ Aggravated Assault
- ▶ Burglary
- ▶ Larceny
- ▶ Motor Vehicle Theft

2015

- ▶ 6.1% Decrease in Index Crimes
- ▶ 6.9% Decrease in Overall Crime

2016

- ▶ 21.3% Decrease in Index Crimes
- ▶ 22.4% Decrease in Overall Crime

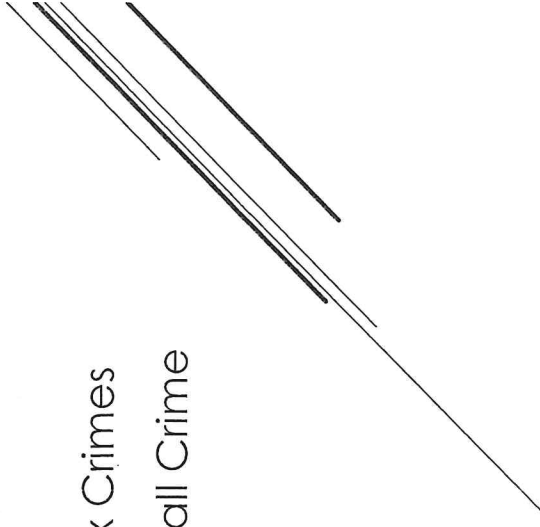
2017

- ▶ 8.3% Increase in Index Crimes
- ▶ 6.5% Increase in Overall Crime

2018

- ▶ 14.7% Decrease in Index Crimes
- ▶ 15.7% Decrease in Overall Crime

2015-2018 CITYWIDE CRIME DATA



2019

- ▶ 13% Decrease in Index Crimes
- ▶ 15.4% Decrease in Overall Crime

2020

- ▶ 28.5% Decrease in Index Crimes
- ▶ 29.1% Decrease in Overall Crime

2021

- ▶ 14.4% Decrease in Index Crimes

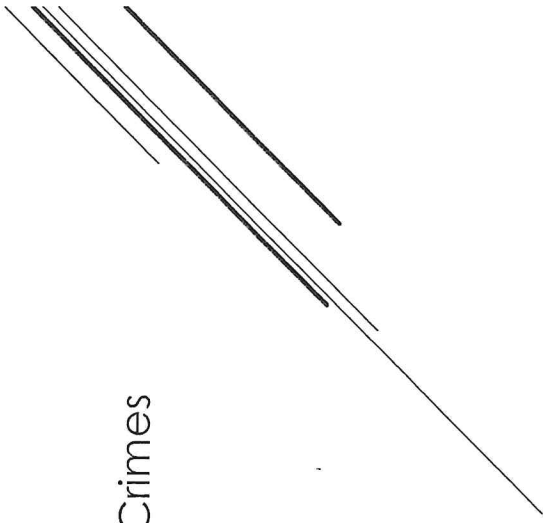
2022

- ▶ 5.8% Decrease in Index Crimes

2023

- ▶ 13.5% Decrease in Index Crimes

2019-2023 CITYWIDE CRIME DATA



	Agg. Assault	Burglary	Larceny	Murder	MV Theft	Rape	Robbery
2021	29	47	148	1	7	6	5
2022	19	28	151	1	15	8	7
2023	19	34	122	0	11	9*	3

*Two of the nine reported rapes did not occur in 2023.

2021-2023 CITYWIDE INDEX CRIMES

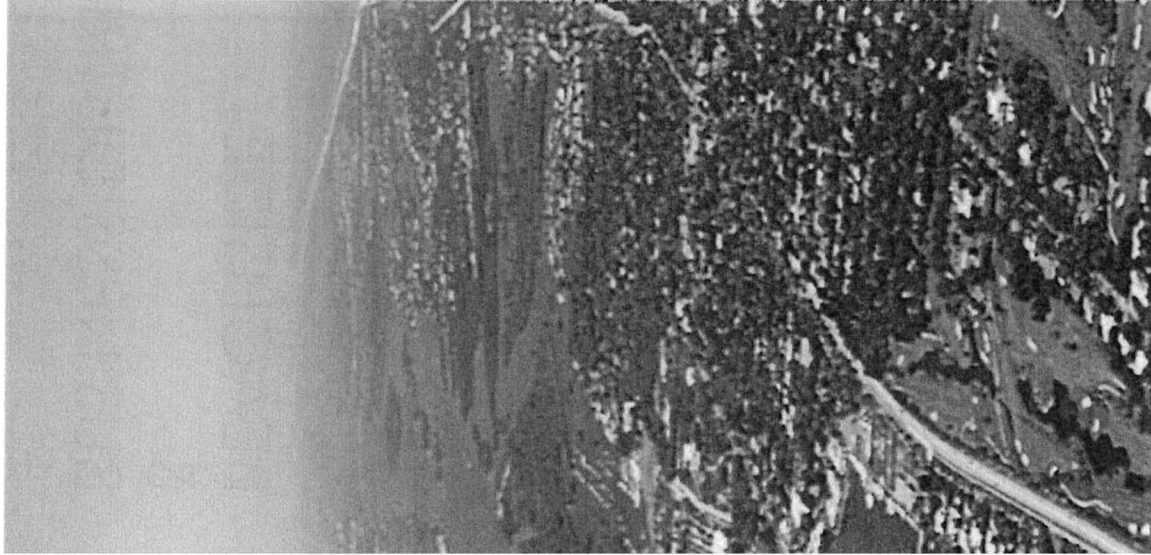
	Agg. Assault	Burglary	Larceny	Murder	MV Theft	Theft	Rape	Robbery
2021	5	11	25	0	2	2	1	1
2022	5	5	26	0	3	3	1	0
2023	5	5	22	0	3	3	5*	0

*Two of the five reported rapes were cleared as 'Unfounded'

2021-2023 BEACHSIDE INDEX CRIMES

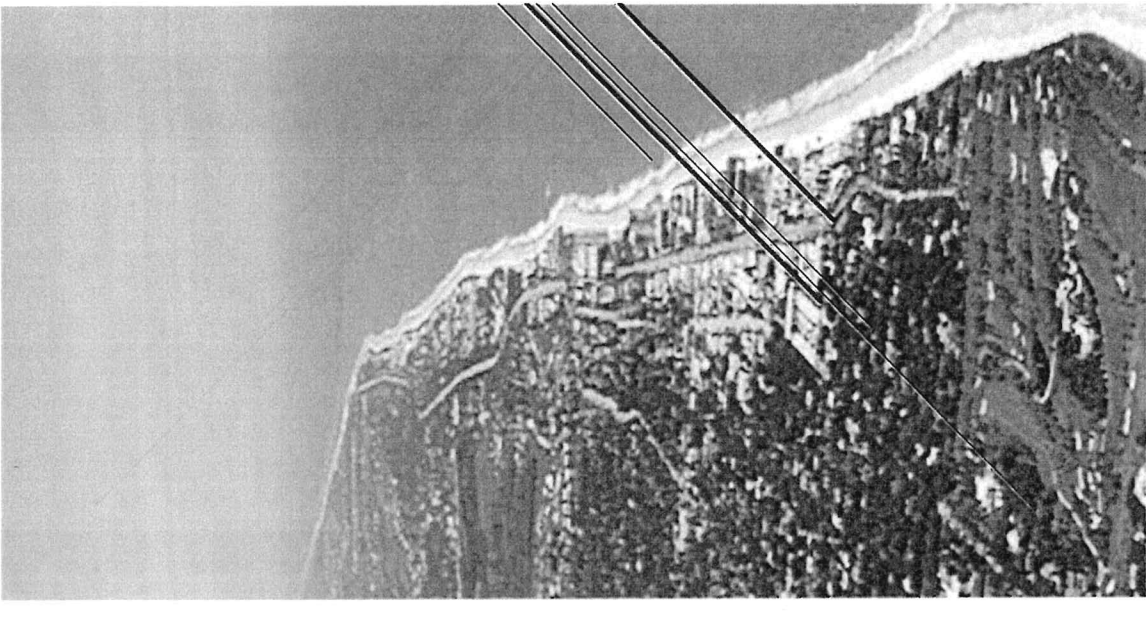
- ▶ Since January 1, 2022 we have issued more than 60 trespass warnings collectively along Ocean Drive/Beach Business District.
- ▶ Since January 1, 2023 we have conducted more than 250 close patrols, foot patrols, and business checks in the 3000 block of Ocean Drive (Humiston Park).
- ▶ We have updated the signage at Humiston Park to clearly state when the park closes.
- ▶ During the summer months the Community Partnership Unit (CPU) was assigned to concentrate their patrols at Humiston Park/3000 Ocean Drive. This will take place until further notice. CPU is a two officer overtime detail on Friday and Saturday from 6pm-10pm. The current time frame is at the request of the dining establishments so we can be seen while they are open.

BEACHSIDE & BUSINESS DISTRICT



- ▶ Our patrol shifts make daily checks and are submitting an activity log to me detailing their efforts on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights.
- ▶ Our K-9 officers work 6pm-3am. They have been tasked to perform periodic checks from 10pm-3am.
- ▶ We have installed “No Parking or Standing” signs between 10pm-6am in the 3000 block of Ocean Drive on each side of the road. This will enable us to easily move individuals who choose to park and congregate late at night. We have contacted the businesses and have their blessing.
- ▶ As of November 1, 2023, an officer will be assigned to the Beach Business District daily between the hours of 6am-6pm. The assigned officer will conduct patrols with an emphasis on walking and biking and making contact with business owners and visitors.
- ▶ In 2023-2024 we are creating a new sworn position. This “Utility Officer” will be assigned to patrol our waterways, beach, and bike throughout the Beach District.

BEACHSIDE & BUSINESS DISTRICT (CONT.)



▶ VBPD General Contact Number 772-978-4600

▶ Chief David Currey - Cell Phone-772-633-7135

▶ Connect with us *

▶ <https://linktr.ee/verobeachpd>

▶ Vero Beach Police Foundation

▶ www.verobeachpolicefoundation.com



~~* All contact info, websites, social media links can be found here~~

CLOSING



Attachment 2

MEMO

TO: Monte Falls, PE, City Manager

FROM: Gabrielle Manus, Human Resources Director *DM*

DATE: April 16, 2024

SUBJECT: Vero Beach Police Department

I have been asked to look into several allegations and issues regarding the Vero Beach Police Department (VBPD). The issues were as follows: hostile work environment, fear of retaliation, lack of cooperation, favoritism, and behavior, on the part of the chief, which discouraged officers from questioning or disagreeing with him. To determine if any of these issues existed, I interviewed the Deputy Chief, the five lieutenants, the seven sergeants, the four corporals, and four additional employees of the VBPD that I felt I should speak to. I spoke with a total of twenty-one employees out of eighty-three department employees.

Issues:

Hostile Work Environment

I asked each individual if they were aware of or had witnessed any inappropriate workplace behavior that would rise to the level of severe and pervasive. It must be remembered that severe and pervasive means conduct that unreasonably interferes with an employee's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. Severe and pervasive behavior is according to the person to whom the behavior is directed. This situation was unusual in the fact that there were no specific instances or allegations to which I could refer. When performing a hostile work environment investigation, I am normally given situations, evidence, or at the very least comments that must be looked at to determine the validity and if they rise to the level of a hostile work environment. In this instance, this was not the case as all I had were vague allegations that it existed but no supporting details.

After speaking with all individuals, I did not find any evidence of inappropriate behavior on the part of the Chief. In addition, I did not find any evidence of the existence of a hostile work environment. However, several individuals did mention behavior exhibited by one individual. I did not find any indication that this behavior rose to the level of a hostile work environment. The behavior is more along the lines of inappropriate workplace behavior. Several individuals expressed concern that this individual appeared to like to cause turmoil and discord among their fellow officers. It was also expressed that the same individual rants and tries to cause problems and disruptions in the office. The overwhelming consensus was that most people try and avoid this individual because of the disruptive behaviors.

Some individuals stated that they try to stay on this person's good side to avoid any problems or issues.

Fear of Retaliation/Interaction with the Chief

There have been some allegations, though no specific examples, that employees are reluctant to voice any discontent with upper management and/or how the administration is handling matters as employees fear retaliation. It was not clear as to whether it was retaliation in the legal sense under Title VII or some other type of retaliation. Regardless, I was unable to find any individual who felt that they would face retaliation if they questioned any member of the administrative staff. What I found was that the opposite was true. Along the same lines of asking about retaliation, I also asked if the individuals felt comfortable talking to and disagreeing with the Chief. I was unable to find anyone who believed that the Chief would feel that no one would be able to question his actions or decisions. Again, the opposite was true. The consensus was that the Chief had an open-door policy and was willing to listen to all differences of opinion. More than one officer indicated that they have, in the past, disagreed with the Chief. The Chief listens to differing viewpoints and has, in the past, changed his mind after listening to his officer's opinions. Each individual felt that this open-door policy was evenly applied to all divisions and ranks.

It was further indicated that the Chief was receptive to changes and ideas that were put forth by individual officers. The officers indicated that they now have shift meetings where the officers can express their thoughts and concerns to the Chief. The Chief also does a "Chief's chatter" where people have another opportunity to express ideas, concerns, and issues they would like to have addressed.

Favoritism/Targeting

There were some allegations, though no specific examples, that the chief had exhibited favoritism towards certain officers while targeting others. I was unable to find any individual who felt that the Chief, any member of the administrative staff, corporals, or sergeants exhibited overt or covert favoritism. No individual was aware of any officer or civilian employee being targeted. All employees felt the officers were all held to the same standard of conduct. Some individuals did say that they had their "favorites" meaning they enjoyed working more with some people as opposed to others. However, I could find no evidence of covert or overt favoritism or targeting.

Lack of cooperation with other agencies

Concerns have been voiced that there is a lack of cooperation with other law enforcement agencies, specifically the Indian River Sheriff. Once again, I found no evidence which would lead to the validity of this concern. The road officers indicate that they get along great with the Sheriff's Department and work together all the time. We will send a female officer to assist the Sheriff when they have a female suspect when needed. The K-9 officers train with the Sheriff as does the

motor pool. The detective bureau will share resources and has used the Sheriff's resources. Some individuals did comment that there may be differences in protocols and policy as to how they do things but I could find no animosity between the two organizations.

Survey

There have been numerous allegations and assertions that the Chief willfully ordered a survey destroyed as it was damaging to him and he did not want anyone to see it. To fully understand this whole issue, it is important to understand the why behind the survey. Two officers wanted to find a way to help improve the VBPD. To this end, they decided to come up with a survey that was to be used solely for the betterment of the department and not as a tool to cause any dissension or problems. To accomplish the goal of improvement, the two officers proposed that the survey be deleted upon completion of the task. The survey was not to be taken by anyone who was a Corporal and above. The survey was approved by the Chief and the Lieutenant in charge of the two officers. Once approved, the survey was disseminated digitally, by one of the two officers, to each officer in the department. Upon completion, the results were discussed, the survey was deleted, and positive changes were made. Indeed, several individuals felt that some of the changes for the better were a result of the survey. It is important to note that there was a consensus, between the four personnel involved, to delete the digital copy. At no time was this a unilateral decision on the part of any of the four involved. Lastly, no paper copy of the survey was ever printed.

Morale

I am including this as I believe it is something that needs to be addressed. It was expressed, to me, over and over that the constant request for public records and outside interference is severely impacting the morale of the officers. They feel that they are always looking over their shoulders and are afraid to do their jobs. They fear that if they make even a minor mistake, they will be the subject of the next public records request. The officers are very nervous and hesitant to act as a result of the intense scrutiny from outside individuals. Many officers expressed the concern that the longer the constant attacks of the administration continue, the worse morale will become. Many of the individuals did not understand why this was occurring as they had seen nothing that would justify attacks of this nature. These officers take a great deal of pride in their jobs and the department and feel that these attacks are personal and uncalled for.

Another point that should be mentioned is that I heard the term "family" quite often. It was repeatedly expressed the VBPD is a family or that it feels like a family. One officer went out of his way to let me know how appreciative he was of the Chief's support during several traumatic life events he experienced.

To conclude, I did not find nor was I made aware of any behavior that would rise to the level of a hostile work environment. I found no evidence of any type of retaliation nor any fear of retaliation if there was a difference of opinion with the Chief. The overwhelming consensus was that the Chief has an open-door policy and welcomes ideas and suggestions from his staff. Several people mentioned

that the Chief almost always solicits advice and opinions when making a decision. There does not appear to be any favoritism or targeting of employees. I was unable to find any indication of malfeasance or wrongdoing on the part of the Chief. What I did find was an eroding morale among the officers and staff as they feel the pressure of the recent outside constant scrutiny.

I performed a comprehensive review of the department and interviewed approximately 25% of the workforce. As with any type of in-depth review, there are some small changes that might be beneficial to the overall operation. However, this result would occur with any department or business if someone came in and reviewed the operation.

Attachment 3

Kerensky, Brian

From: Lanse Padgett <lanse.padgett@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 3, 2024 1:02 PM
To: Lanse Padgett
Cc: Tom Corr
Subject: Fwd: Investigation
Signed By: lanse@gorillaammo.com

Good Afternoon,

My name is Lanse Padgett. I run a company called Gorilla Ammunition in Sebastian, Florida. My business partner, Tom Corr, and I are die hard supporters of law enforcement officers. We truly appreciate everything that you do on a daily basis. We interact with law enforcement and our most elite military operators daily and pride ourselves on supporting you in any way that we can.

Back in September we asked for a meeting with the City Manager and asked him if there was anything that we could help the VBPD with. Did you need more money, more officers, or better technology? We wanted to help VBPD officers combat the ever increasing crime in Vero Beach.

After the meeting with Monte, Chief Currey asked for a meeting with us and instead of a meeting to discuss how we could help, I received a glowing report from the Chief on how crime was down in Vero Beach based on his statistics. I know everyone on this email is well aware that crime is on the increase virtually everywhere in the United States and the job of a law enforcement officer is becoming more dangerous everyday. After we were informed that crime was down, I asked Chief Currey some direct questions to which he mis-stated the truth (blatantly lied) to me when he responded.

As a former prosecutor and a concerned citizen who was offering to help the VBPD I was extremely offended that the Chief of Police would attempt to mislead me when I asked pointed questions. I feel that the Chief of Police should be the pillar of ethics and morals in the community. To that end, I asked a lot more questions.

Fortunately, I have met an amazing number of great law enforcement officers at the VBPD over the last six months, who I will be friends with for life. These are great men and women who put on the uniform everyday to protect and serve. Unfortunately, I have heard the same story over and over from every officer that I encounter. Everyone has stated the lack of leadership at the very top of the VBPD being a problem. Officers are often disciplined to deflect attention from poor management or planning decisions at the very top. People are afraid to speak up because of fear of being targeted by the top. I also understand there was an anonymous survey that was completed by the employees a little while back that was destroyed because it did not shine a favorable light on the Chief.

I just wanted you to know that if you have heard my name or Gorilla Ammo at the PD in a negative fashion it is because I am making it harder for the Chief to cover up poor management decisions. (Like you guys having the worst records management system in the United States or losing access to the FLOCK cameras because he bought the ones that don't integrate with Flock)

I am genuinely here to try and help the men and women on the street be treated fairly and with respect. If you speak to any officers that have talked with me, they will tell you I am an honest and trustworthy person. I truly appreciate everything you all do everyday. If you need anything from me I am always happy to help in any way that I can.

Attachment 4

The audio message below was transcribed using the smart verbatim transcription style (slightly verbatim but without unnecessary words or fillers like uhms and ahs).

Hi Matt, it's Lanse Padgett, it's about 3:45 on Friday afternoon. Hey man, hope you're doing well. Eric Flowers and one of my employees, Fletcher McClellan, says you are a great guy and I wanted to get your ear for a second if you get a minute. If you could call me back I'd appreciate it. 772-473-3472, 772-473-3472. Hey man, thanks so much, have a great day. Bye.

Attachment 5

The audio message below was transcribed using the smart verbatim transcription style (slightly verbatim but without unnecessary words or fillers like uhms and ahs).

Hey Officer Doty, this is Lanse Padgett at Gorilla Ammunition. Hope you're doing well. Hey, I just wanted to tell you that congratulations on being named officer of the year, especially being selected by your peers, that is awesome. I have talked to multiple, multiple people at the Vero Beach Police Department that tell me you're a great guy, and I'd love to talk to you if you get a minute. I've been trying to help the VBPD in any way I can. I'm a huge supporter of law enforcement. We've offered to the City Manager to help you guys in any way we can but unfortunately I've been met with a bunch of roadblocks and disinformation campaigns so, love to get your opinion. As I said you're well respected amongst your peers plus I'd just love to meet you anyway at any time. If you want to call me back my number is 772-473-3472, 772-473-3472. Thanks, and congratulations again, hope to meet you one of these days. See you buddy. Bye.

Attachment 6

Falls, Monte

From: Lanse Padgett <lanse@gorillaammo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 03, 2024 12:05 PM
To: Falls, Monte
Cc: Tom Corr; Cotugno, John
Subject: Re: Investigation

Good Morning Monte,

I am glad I was able to get a good laugh when I read my emails this morning after spending the last two days at Nemours Children's Hospital in Orlando with my 10 year old daughter having heart surgery. Your email to me was literally comical.

We have been having discussions since September of last year when Tom and I asked for lunch with you as concerned citizens and offered to help be part of the solution for the growing crime problem in Vero Beach. Unfortunately, after our meeting with you, the Chief of Police requested a meeting with us where we were met with **misdirection and misinformation** resulting in our current predicament.

Since that first meeting with you, I have offered you and the mayor multiple examples of mismanagement and botched investigations at the VBPD. I have given you multiple police reports of serious weapon related crimes that were closed out with little or no investigation. In addition, I have pointed to more than one instance of the **Chief of Police being unethical and mis-stating the truth to both myself and you**. I have told you that multiple (yes multiple) sworn and non-sworn employees of the VBPD have come forward to speak with me about the hostile work environment and lack of leadership at the VBPD. You have continued to believe **the dishonest words of your police chief, who lied to me in our very first meeting together**, over the official police reports and evidence that I have provided to you. You have launched an ineffective human resource investigation which the employees have labeled a "witch hunt" only to find out who is spilling the truth, not to help the remedy the problems.

Mr. Corr and I have had multiple meetings with yourself and the mayor. Unfortunately, in my last meeting at the City Manager's office, **you chose to lie to us as well**. That has forever tainted my trust in you and damaged what I thought was a great relationship that I have enjoyed with you for decades. Nonetheless, in that meeting at your office, we discussed hiring an unbiased third party to conduct an investigation, since the VBPD employees do not trust their leadership, the human resources department, or the City Manager, due to the hostile work environment that has existed for years. We offered to pay the third party or even pay half, so that the party could remain unbiased.

That meeting at your office resulted in you requesting another meeting with Mr. Corr and that I not be in attendance at that meeting. It is pretty obvious now that you wanted me absent from that meeting, so that there were no witnesses. I spoke to Mr. Corr immediately following your meeting. Mr. Corr explained to me that you asked for more time to take care of the issues that were plaguing the VPBD. Mr. Corr also explained to me that he gave you until the Monday after Easter to come up with names of possible unbiased third parties for us to hire as discussed previously.

I agree that you and I had a phone follow up to your meeting with Mr. Corr. At that time you advised you had hired Stephanie at Gray-Robinson. I was taken aback by your statement because we had more than one conversation about hiring someone together and you were to deliver names so that we could vet and agree upon someone. Instead of giving us names to agree upon, you took it upon yourself to pick the person and then hire them for the City. In effect, they became the attorney for the city and no longer unbiased. Based on the information that you provided I told you that I would talk to Stephanie and then to Mr. Corr to see if we were okay working with her to investigate the VBPD. The date of delivering witness statements to you and/or Stephanie was not discussed at all. The only thing I agreed to was to talk to Stephanie and Mr. Corr and get back to you. Why would we discuss the date of delivering witness statements when we had not even agreed to work with Stephanie?

In your accusatory email this morning you stated that I had not reached out to Stephanie (which I had done) albeit to the incorrect email that you provided to me. You also stated that Stephanie had reached out to me via email (which I never received) because you gave her the wrong email for me. In addition, you did not provide phone numbers, which would have helped the situation. While I would like to think it is a minor oversight of yours to give incorrect emails to not one, but both parties, it seems to add credence to our arguments of **systemic incompetence, misdirection and deflection that have become commonplace at the VBPD and the City.** In addition, you have delayed taking any action for over six months and now you have imposed deadlines on myself and Mr. Corr? Let me be very clear that you work for the taxpayers of Vero Beach. Mr. Corr and I do not work for you. We have spent countless hours trying to help the citizens of Vero Beach and the employees of the VPBD while getting push back from yourself and the Chief of Police.

Monte, you are very aware that Mr. Corr and I are upstanding citizens and taxpayers that came to you and offered help. We asked if you needed more money, more officers, or more technology. We could have been your greatest allies because we did and still do wish the very best for the City of Vero Beach. We had the greatest of intentions when we initially met with you and as you well know could have garnered so very much support for the VBPD. Now, we have wasted countless hours due to your failure to act when presented with evidence of **deceptive behavior by your Chief of police.** As I digest the enormity of the **calculated misinformation campaign** that I have encountered from the City I should probably reach out to the State Attorney, The Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and the Governor's office to determine whether any of the behavior warrants criminal charges. I am pretty confident that the police chief ordering the

destruction of the damaging survey by his employees or him arbitrarily calling cases "open" to decline public records requests are at a minimum a sunshine law violation.

Mr. Corr and I are both die hard supporters of law enforcement and have amazing relationships with agencies across the United States at the local, State and Federal level. It pains me that we have discovered the systemic pattern of covering up ineptitude and hostile work environments in the City of Vero Beach. I once regarded the City of Vero Beach with and the VBPD with great respect. While we still have the utmost respect and support for the VBPD officers that risk their lives every day, we have lost any sense of respect for upper management at the VBPD. Monte, your allegiance to your ineffective/deceptive Police Chief Currey at the expense of the safety of the citizens and the employees of VBPD has been noted.

Lanse Padgett
President/CEO
PCP Tactical LLC
Gorilla Ammunition
10315 102nd Ter
Sebastian, FL 32958
(772) 564-0777
(772) 473-3472 cell
lanse@gorillaammo.com

On Apr 3, 2024, at 6:14 AM, Falls, Monte <MFalls@covb.org> wrote:

Lanse,

In response to your E-mail of 4/1/24 (10:10AM) you state, "I have reached out to Stephanie as we discussed." Ms. Marchman advised that as of 4/2/24, she has yet to hear from you; you state, "When you and Mr. Corr spoke (without me) you were going to give him names of proposed unbiased third parties for us to discuss and agree upon." Based on my recollection, in my meeting with Mr. Corr, we discussed the City hiring outside counsel to assist in the investigation. The discussion regarding "names" occurred at a meeting in my office with you, Mr. Corr, Mayor Cotugno and me in attendance; you state, "From our subsequent conversation, it appears that you may have hired someone already without having that discussion with us. Unfortunately, that does not make them unbiased if they are already retained by you." In separate phone calls on 3/22/24 with Mr. Corr (+/- 11:30AM) and you (+/- 2:00PM) I advised that we had retained Stephanie Marchman (Gray-Robinson) to assist in the investigation. By retaining her, the City is the client. Ms. Marchman resides in North Central Florida and has no relationship with the Chief or other police department employees. I also advised that we needed the

anonymous statements by 4/1/24. Neither Mr. Corr nor you expressed any concerns about this plan of action. Further, you indicated that you might be representing some of the individuals, who would be making statements, and that you may like to contact Ms. Marchman. I advised Ms. Marchman and she emailed you around 3:00PM on 3/22/24.

As the City would like to resolve this matter expeditiously, please provide the statements to Ms. Marchman by close of business on April 5.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Monte K. Falls, P.E.
City Manager
City of Vero Beach
mfalls@covb.org
772-978-4710

From: Lanse Padgett <lanse@gorillaammo.com>
Sent: Monday, April 01, 2024 10:10 AM
To: Falls, Monte <MFalls@covb.org>
Subject: Re: Investigation

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Monte,

I have reached out to Stephanie as we discussed. I was in Washington DC last Monday-Wed. Obviously, there are not going to be statements delivered to Stephanie within the one week you proposed.

As you and I discussed, I was going reach out to Stephanie and then talk to Mr Corr about your proposed solution. When you and Mr. Corr spoke (without me) you were going to give him names of proposed unbiased third parties for us to discuss and agree upon.

From our subsequent conversation, it appears that you may have hired someone already without having that discussion with us. Unfortunately, that does not make them unbiased if they are already retained by you.

Hopefully, I will speak to Stephanie today and I can get back to you shortly.

Lanse Padgett
CEO/President
PCP Tactical LLC
Gorilla Ammunition Company
3895 39th Square
Vero Beach, FL 32960
772-564-0777

Falls, Monte

From: Lanse Padgett <lanse@gorillaammo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 12:13 PM
To: Falls, Monte
Cc: Zudans, Tracey; Cotugno, John; Dingle, Taylor; Moore, Linda; Carroll, John; Turner, John; Stephanie Marchman
Subject: Re: Path forward

Monte,

Yes, I intentionally added you prior email about calling my cell because the last time we talked that is what happened. That is what I state in my email. It is very obvious that you and I need to communicate in writing or at least follow up in writing since there is a communication barrier.

I am glad you have witnesses to me saying I would call you. I have the witnesses that watched both you and Chief Currey lie to me about City matters on different occasions. I evidently missed a phone call. You and the Chief, on the other hand blatantly lied when asked direct questions.

Now that we both have witnesses, can you answer the questions that I asked about the possible violation of the sunshine law by the Chief by having the survey destroyed in my previous email?

1) I did a public records request for the survey. You did not respond to that.

2) I questioned whether the Chief discussed the survey with you. Did you see the survey? If we had the survey, maybe we wouldn't be wasting taxpayers money on external legal fees. We could just read what the employees have to say.

3) Did you make the legal determination that a survey received by the Chief from a subordinate in the course of his official business at the PD was not subject to the sunshine law? If so, who made the determination? Did you investigate the Chief at all? I would like to do a public records request for any information relating to the Survey and the Chief's request to delete/destroy the survey and subsequent investigation or determinations by the City.

4) I would like to do a public records request for the any and all information regarding the recent Human Resource investigation at the VBPD.

Since you are a City Employee that works for the taxpayers, I would appreciate you answering these questions and providing the information requested in this email and my last. Your tendency to deflect from the serious questions and problems in favor of trivial responses has been your pattern so far.

Lastly, I hear there was **another stabbing in the City last night. That makes two in two weeks!** Maybe you should concentrate your time and energy on holding the management of the VBPD responsible instead of retaliating against officers who are trying to curtail crime. If you were doing your job, I wouldn't be forced to stand up for the mistreated officers and use my time to try and insure the citizens of Vero Beach are safe. This is what you were hired to do, Monte.

Respectfully,

Lanse

Lanse Padgett
President/CEO
PCP Tactical LLC
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10315 102nd Ter
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(772) 564-0777
(772) 473-3472 cell
lanse@gorillaammo.com

On Apr 17, 2024, at 9:07 AM, Falls, Monte <MFalls@covb.org> wrote:

Lanse,

For the record, I would note that in your 4/16/24, 1:39 pm email, you copied a previous email from me to you (4/9/24, 1:13 pm) which stated "Yes, I'll call your cell". At approximately 3:00 pm on 4/9/24, I did call your cell along with Mayor John Cotugno and City Attorney John Turner. We discussed your hiring of an attorney to collect anonymous statements from employees and forwarding them to our outside counsel, Stephanie Marchman for her review. You said that you would think about that process and we agreed to a call on 4/15/24 at 3:00 pm. I said that was a good time as I would be with the Mayor and City Attorney then and you could call my office. On 4/16/24, I confirmed this with both the Mayor and City Attorney. Further, on 4/9/24, I advised my assistant that you would be calling in on 4/15/24 and she added to my calendar "Lanse should be calling in" (4/15/24, 3:00 pm).

In your 4/15/24, 2:47 p.m. email, you wrote "several witnesses". I interpreted several to mean not many. In the past, you have said that you have "a handful" of witnesses and "six or so" witnesses. So when you said several, I assumed that you still had a relatively small number.

I did not give you a deadline to collect the statements in my 4/16/24, 8:42 am email. I wrote: "We propose having them returned to Stephanie by 4/26/24". The purpose of the proposed date was to move the process along in an expedient manner.

Since March 7, 2024, you have said that you were going to provide statements from employees and each time I have said that we would investigate. We have retained outside counsel to assist in the investigation. To date, no statements have been provided. Once the statements are provided to our outside counsel, she will make a determination on how to proceed.

We stand ready to move forward upon receipt of the statements.

Monte K. Falls, P.E.
City Manager
City of Vero Beach
mfalls@covb.org
772-978-4710

-----Original Message-----

From: Lanse Padgett <lanse@gorillaammo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2024 1:39 PM

To: Falls, Monte <MFalls@covb.org>; Zudans, Tracey <TZudans@covb.org>; Cotugno, John <JCotugno@covb.org>; Dingle, Taylor <TDingle@covb.org>; Moore, Linda <LMoore@covb.org>; Carroll, John <JCarroll@covb.org>
Cc: Turner, John <JTurner@covb.org>; Stephanie Marchman <Stephanie.Marchman@gray-robinson.com>
Subject: Fwd: Path forward

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Please Note: Florida has a very broad Public Records Law. Most written communications to or from State and Local Officials and agencies regarding State or Local business are public records available to the public and media upon request. Your email communications, including your email address, may therefore be subject to public disclosure.

Lanse Padgett
President/CEO
PCP Tactical LLC
Gorilla Ammunition
10315 102nd Ter
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(772) 564-0777
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lanse@gorillaammo.com

Attachment 7

Falls, Monte

From: Lanse Padgett <lanse@gorillaammo.com>
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 2:52 PM
To: Falls, Monte; Dingle, Taylor; Zudans, Tracey; Cotugno, John; Turner, John; Moore, Linda; Carroll, John
Cc: Tom Corr
Subject: Special Call Meeting

Monte,

I understand that there is a special city Council meeting slated for Monday April 29, 2024. Item 2B is Discussion of Vero Beach Police Department Matters. As you are aware, you and I have had many discussions regarding the VBPD in recent months, so I will plan on attending the meeting.

Since the agenda item is so vague, I am unsure as to what Department Matters are to be discussed, but I am hoping the agenda includes both public safety and some of the recent grievances filed by Vero Beach Police Department employees.

I have been meeting with City Employees since Sept 2023 when the Humiston Park shooting occurred. I offered to help be a part of the solution to the apparent growing crime problem in the City. My questions directed to you about public safety and management at VBPD have not been baseless or personal. They came as a result of the lack of transparency with regards to the crime in Vero Beach. As a citizen and a taxpayer it is my right and my duty to question the people responsible for public safety when they are being paid by the public to protect us. It is my duty as a human being to question those same people when the voices of their employees (also paid by the taxpayer) are not being heard.

On August 4, 1822 one of our founding fathers, James Madison Said ...A popular Government, without popular information or the means of acquiring it, is but a Prologue to a Farce or a Tragedy; or perhaps both. Knowledge will forever govern ignorance; And a people who mean to be their own Governors, must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives."

I just want to make clear that I feel it is my duty as a citizen , resident and taxpayer to question the government's ability to provide public goods such as the police department. You know my feelings on the matter.

I have professionally questioned decisions made by you and Chief Currey. Throughout our multiple conversations, I have never deviated from anything but the truth with you. I will continue to speak only the truth at the meeting on Monday. I would like the opportunity to remind all parties involved that this is a public forum. I have not and will not be attacking you or any city member personally. I would expect the same treatment in return. Any slanderous or

defamatory content proferred by a City Employee or department head directed at Mr. Corr or myself will certainly result in litigation. I would love nothing more than this conversation to continue and progress in the public forum, so that we can all find a positive conclusion, as well as provide much needed change for the citizens of Vero Beach and the employees of VBPD.

Have a good weekend. See you next week.

Lanse

Lanse Padgett
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Attachment 8

Letters of Support

Detective Russell Lachowicz, Vero Beach Police Department

Mike Swan, Attorney Vero Beach

Rosemary White, Citizen Vero Beach

Will Murphy, Attorney Vero Beach

Casey Walker, Attorney Vero Beach

Caryn Toole, Director, Communities Connected for Kids

Sean Toole, Training Sergeant, Vero Beach Police Department

Jennifer Pritt, Executive Director, Florida Police Chiefs Association

John Moore, Attorney, Vero Beach Police Department

John Pedersen, Retired Vero Beach Police Lieutenant, Indian River County Resident

Bill Penney, President, Marine Bank

City Manager Falls,

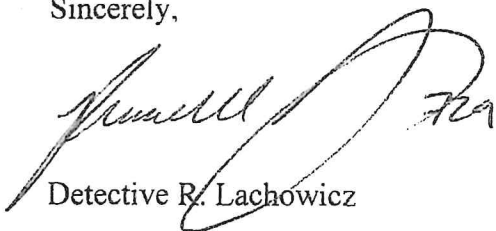
I am writing you today to express my unwavering support of my Chief of Police David Currey. In the seven plus years I have been employed as a sworn police officer with the City of Vero Beach, Chief Currey has been the very definition of a leader. When I think of the pillar of our department, I think of my Chief. The Oxford English dictionary defines pillar as "a person or thing regarded as reliably providing essential support for something." Never have I seen anything different from Chief Currey. I know Chief Currey to be reliable, ethical, honest, moral, compassionate, caring, supportive. and especially passionate for this job and the men and women of the Vero Beach Police Department. All things expected out of the pillar of our department and community.

Chief Currey has said over and over again, that his door is always open, and any employee at the VBPD can reach out any time. Many employers in my past have said the same, yet when I reached out, the door was closed. Not the case with Chief Currey. I have personally gone to the Chief on multiple occasions in my career, for an array of different things, and his door has always been open. Even with small things, I never feel like I've been put to the side, and the Chief takes the time to hear me out, and effectively fix whatever problem was brought to him. Chief Currey has always been a sounding board and encourages his employees to come to him directly whenever they feel the need. The administration has the same policy when it comes to having their door open to hear what any member needs to speak about.

I have many friends in this line of work, throughout the State of Florida, and in many other states in this country. I am often a sounding board for many of these friends when they want to vent about their departmental woes and problems with their administration. They will ask me my opinion based on how I often speak about my Chief and my administration in such high regards. Many of my friends are jealous of my department, and wished they worked here at Vero Beach Police Department.

There have been recent allegations toward Chief Currey, and I can say in full confidence, none of these ridiculous allegations are even close to the truth. I was shocked and appalled when I read these claims. I will stand with Chief Currey, as I know he would do the same for me if someone questioned my ethics and morals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Lachowicz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Detective R. Lachowicz

Special Investigations Unit

Vero Beach Police Department

Falls, Monte

From: Bursick, Tammy
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 1:32 PM
To: City Council; Falls, Monte; Currey, Dave
Subject: Fwd: Support of Chief David Currey

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Michael Swan <mswan@rosswayswan.com>
Date: April 26, 2024 at 12:34:03 PM EDT
To: "Cotugno, John" <JCotugno@covb.org>
Subject: Support of Chief David Currey

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Dear Mayor Cotugno:

I read about the special call meeting of the City Council this coming Monday. While I intend to be present at the meeting, I wanted to send you an email to express my 100% support of our Police Chief David Currey.

My wife and I reside in the City of Vero Beach and my law firm is in the City of Vero Beach.

I have known and worked with Chief Currey for many years and have always found him to be a complete professional, a gentleman, and the consummate public servant.

I chaired the Mental Health Collaborative of Indian River County and Chief Currey attended our meetings and was always engaged in the work of the Collaborative in supporting multiple community efforts to improve the delivery of mental health services to our fellow citizens.

It is unfortunate that the City is having to hold such a meeting, but it is my hope that the City Commission will show its total support of the Chief as I know the citizens of Vero Beach trust and respect Chief Currey for all of his service to this community over the years.

Thank you,

Mike

Michael J. Swan, Esq.
mswan@rosswayswan.com

Falls, Monte

From: Bursick, Tammy
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 1:33 PM
To: City Council; Currey, Dave; Falls, Monte
Subject: Fwd: Please forward today to City Council-Rosemary

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: ARTHUR WHITE <apro17@comcast.net>
Date: April 26, 2024 at 1:15:41 PM EDT
To: "Bursick, Tammy" <tbursick@covb.org>
Subject: Please forward today to City Council-Rosemary

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Tammy,
Please forward today to City Council, thank you.
Have a wonderful and blessed weekend,
Rosemary

Mayor Contugno, Vice Mayor Moore
Councilmen Carroll, Dingle, Zudan

I am asking Councilmen Dingle if he would consider reading my email into the record during Monday's Special Call Meeting. Thank you for your consideration.

In our city, we are fortunate to have an outstanding police department whose mission is providing professional police service to the community.

Over time, many may have forgotten, but my neighborhood has not, the terrible tragedy of the murder of our dear neighbor, Brian Simpson. I saw neighborhood fears and concerns addressed by Chief Cury, until justice was served.

In our city, residents continue to see the department go above and beyond the call of duty and for those who may not know the department successfully attained an "Excelsior Recognition" review from the Florida Police Accreditation Commission.

And at this time, I would like to thank Chief Curry for his leadership and also thank the outstanding men and women in the entire department who work 24-7, even during



Lewis W. Murphy, Jr. *□◇

Casey Walker *□±

Elisa C. Mills

Anthony G. Mitchell

*Board Certified Civil Trial Lawyer

□Board Certified Business Litigation Lawyer

*Board Certified Construction Lawyer

◇Fellow, American College of Trial Lawyers

MURPHY & WALKER
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

2001 U.S. Highway 1
Vero Beach, Florida 32960

Telephone 772-231-1900

Facsimile 772-231-4387

www.murphywalker.com

April 26, 2024

Via email

City Council for the City of Vero Beach
City Hall
1053 20th Place,
Vero Beach, FL 32960

Dear Councilmembers,

First, we both want to thank you for your dedicated service to the City of Vero Beach. The willingness of good and talented people to serve the public is the reason that the City has been able to preserve the unique quality of life that has been enjoyed by City residents consistently over the years.

We feel strongly that one of the important reasons why Vero Beach has retained its unique character despite the challenges of the modern age is the exemplary leadership of VBPD Chief David Currey. Under his stewardship, the VBPD has maintained and further enhanced the skill, competence and professionalism with which it serves the community, which we all know is most assuredly not the case elsewhere.

Whatever may be occurring "behind the scenes," Chief Currey has our absolute and unconditional support in his position as Chief of Police, where we very much hope he serves for the rest of his career.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact either or both of us if you have any questions or if you wish to discuss the matter further.

MURPHY & WALKER, P.L.

By: 

Lewis W. Murphy, Jr.

By: 

Casey Walker

/av

Falls, Monte

From: Caryn Toole <caryn.toole@cckids.net>
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 4:40 PM
To: Falls, Monte
Subject: Note of support for Chief David Currey

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Good afternoon Mr. Falls,

I am writing in support of Vero Beach Police Department Chief David Currey in preparation for Monday's unprecedented special call meeting. In my role as Director of Child Welfare for Indian River County, Chief Currey and I often communicate about children in my care or service delivered by my office, which is in the city limits. I have always found him to be respectful, responsive, and communicative. Chief Currey holds leadership roles on many boards and committees that we are joint members of and he does not take these leadership positions lightly, he is not just a figurehead but a hardworking advocate for the causes he serves. Frankly I have never heard a negative word about Chief Currey spoken in any community meeting or otherwise, he is genuinely respected by the citizens of Indian River County. I hope to be present at the meeting on Monday morning to offer my support in person but wanted to send this letter in case circumstances prevent my attendance. In conclusion, I offer my wholehearted support of Chief David Currey and want to thank him for his years of service and dedicated leadership to the citizens of Vero Beach and beyond.

Sincerely,

Caryn M. Toole
Indian River County Director
Communities Connected for Kids
1459 20th Street,
Vero Beach, FL 32960
(772)579-9978

The mission of Communities Connected for Kids is to enhance the safety, permanency and well-being for all children in Okeechobee & the Treasure Coast through a community network of family support services.

Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail.

This e-mail (including any attached files) is intended only for the addressee and may contain confidential information. If you are not the addressee, you are notified that any transmission, distribution, printing or photocopying of this e-mail is strictly prohibited. If you have received this e-mail in error, please immediately notify me. Unless specifically attributed, the opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the official position of Communities Connected for Kids.

Falls, Monte

From: patrick toole <toolepatrick430@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 6:42 PM
To: Falls, Monte
Subject: Letter of Support for Police Chief David Currey, VBPD

SECURITY WARNING: This message has originated from an **EXTERNAL SOURCE**. Please show caution when clicking links, opening attachments, or responding to this email unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon, Mr. Falls,

I am writing this letter in support of Chief David Currey, whom I have worked with since March 18, 2002. When I came here from the Gainesville Police Department twenty-two years ago, Chief Currey was the Patrol Captain. The family atmosphere here at the Vero Beach Police Department was evident from the start and still exists today. Chief Currey has always treated me with respect and fairly over my career. He genuinely cares about his employees and cares about how they feel about him. I feel he is well respected in our community at a time when other law enforcement agency heads cannot say the same.

I don't know anything about the complaints levied against Chief Currey other than what I read in an odd email from an outside entity that was sent to nearly every employee of the department. A little more light was shed on the situation when I read a recent newspaper article inferring how the whole complaint could be part of an orchestrated political scheme...and appears to be just that.

I can only speak for myself, but I don't want the men and women of the department to be used as a pawn in someone's political games. I'll say, whole-heartedly, that Chief Currey has my utmost respect and support.

Respectfully,
Sean Toole
Training Sergeant, VBPD

Falls, Monte

From: Jennifer Pritt <jpritt@fpca.com>
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 8:00 PM
To: Falls, Monte
Subject: Vero Beach Police Chief David Currey

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City Manager Falls,

Good evening. I hope this email finds you well. I am writing to you in my capacity as the Executive Director of the Florida Police Chiefs Association (FPCA) to speak to the character of Vero Beach Police Chief, David Currey.

I've had the opportunity to work closely with Chief Currey on Association business for the past 3 ½ years (my tenure at FPCA), first in his capacity as the District 6 Director on the FPCA Board of Directors. As the District 6 Director, David represented all the police departments in the counties of Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee & St. Lucie. Chief Currey served in this capacity for nearly 10 years, making him one of the longest serving District Director in Association history. He only stepped down from this role as required when he was elected by the membership to serve on the FPCA Executive Board as the 3rd Vice President in the summer of 2023. In this role, David will ultimately serve as the FPCA President in 2026.

David's tenure as District Director demonstrates the extraordinary confidence the law enforcement leaders from throughout the region had in him to represent their interests within our Association as well as on important public safety and law enforcement policy issues with Florida Cabinet and the Florida Legislature. I've personally worked with Chief Currey on our legislative responsibilities and have seen him answer questions, provide testimony to Legislative leadership and Committee members on such vital issues as officer mental health and wellness and post traumatic stress disorders within the first responder community. As someone who has worked in the legislative process on law enforcement matters for over 20 years, I can attest to Chief Currey's undeniable acumen as a law enforcement leader as well as his upmost character and professionalism in circumstances that would challenge the patience of most people! He is a thoughtful, humble, deliberative, wise, experienced leader and his commitment to accountability and ethics in our profession is clear to those that work with him and have interacted with him.

The reason for my email is that I read a recent "hit piece" (my opinion) on Chief Currey that suggested that he lacked integrity and accountability. Then I received calls from other FPCA members, current and prior chiefs of police (and some that had also served as city managers) that were upset about the attack on Chief Currey's character and I felt compelled to send you an email. Chief Currey did not ask me to get involved, which also speaks volumes about his character. I simply want to say for the record that the statements by some quoted in the article on Chief Currey that question David's integrity seem completely unaligned with the person I know to be Chief David Currey.

Without getting into my background, let me just say I do know a bit about what true public corruption looks like when it is happening within local and state government and law enforcement agencies in particular. Unfortunately, I've seen when law enforcement officers and leaders violate their oaths and engage in misconduct or when they act unprofessionally and refuse to admit it and do not want to be held accountable. Of my nearly 30 year law enforcement career, I spent 22 years at the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, starting my career in the Office of Executive Investigations which is charged with working public corruption cases; and I served for several years as the Director of Criminal Justice Professionalism, which had oversight for the discipline of law enforcement officers up to and including chiefs of police. I ended my time at FDLE as the Assistant Commissioner of Public Safety and had the opportunity to work with thousands of law enforcement leaders at the local, state, tribal, and federal levels during my career. I believe I have some expertise for recognizing when leaders operate with an undeniable and strong moral compass and commitment to serving with the

highest levels of professionalism, accountability, as well as steadfast devotion to protecting and serving their communities. In my opinion, Chief Currey is one of those leaders.

Police leaders always need to be accountable to the communities they serve, but as citizens in a democracy, we should all aspire to have any process by which these chiefs' performance and actions are judged be transparent and free from outside competing interests, agendas, and politics. I don't pretend to know what is really happening in Vero Beach based on reading an article or speaking to some other chiefs in the region; that said, what I read based on my experience truly makes me wonder if there are specific individuals in positions of power hoping to see other interests served by the removal of Chief Currey. I hope not. I hope the record of Chief Currey and his service will be evaluated in a fair and impartial manner, in an open setting and one that allows for the community at large to voice their support and opinions.

Respectfully submitted,

Cookie

FPCA Executive Director

jpritt@fpca.com

Jennifer "Cookie" Pritt

Office 850-219-3631

**John E. Moore, III
7400 29th Court
Vero Beach, Florida 32967**

April 28, 2024

Via e-mail

Mayor John Cotugno
Vice Mayor Linda Moore
Councilmember John Carroll
Councilmember Taylor Dingle
Councilmember Tracey Zudans

Monte Falls, City Manager
Tammy Bursick, City Clerk

Re: Chief David Currey

Dear Members of the Vero Beach City Council, Mr. Falls and Ms. Bursick:

I write this letter in support of my friend and longtime public servant, Chief David Currey.

In my many years here, I have known Chief Currey to be a dedicated public servant and exemplary law enforcement officer. His work in the community testifies to his dedication to our residents; his dedication to his office is confirmed by his commitment to the Vero Beach Police Department as his choice of agency throughout his career.

Our residents count on our community to be a safe and peaceful place both on our streets and in our political institutions. In that vein, I know that the good people of Vero Beach are counting on all of you to recognize and confirm Chief Currey's many years of excellent service by moving quickly through whatever issues (real or perceived) may have arisen of late.

In the end, I believe we are far better off with Chief Currey, a proven success, at the helm of the VBPD working to resolve any issues than to turn abruptly away from past success and toward an uncertain and unknowable future.

Very truly yours,



John E. Moore, III

TO: Monte Falls, City of Vero Beach City Manager

FROM: John Pedersen

SUBJECT: David Currey, Chief of Police

DATE: April 28, 2024

Mr. Falls,

I recently read an article that criticized Vero Beach Police David Currey. I have known Chief Currey for 29 years. I was a Vero Beach Police Officer from 1995-2022. During these years, I worked closely with Chief Currey while serving as a police officer, Sergeant, and Lieutenant.

Chief Currey is a leader. He is a professional and leads the Department in a professional manner. He is a good, honest, ethical, and caring man. Chief Currey is a man of impeccable character. He is one of the best Chief's I've every worked for during my 32.5 law enforcement career.

During one of my assignments, I served a four-and-a-half-year term as the Detective Division Commander. At our staff meetings I would advise Chief Currey of our new assigned cases and the status of major cases or other noteworthy cases which we were investigating. Chief Currey never once tried to influence the outcome of the cases we were investigating. The Detectives would investigate their assigned cases to the best of their ability. Whether the case was cleared by an arrest or not, Chief Currey only expected my Detectives to investigate cases to the best of their ability. Many cases were not cleared due to the lack of probable cause, a victim withdrawing their complaint, and the State Attorney's Office refusing to prosecute.

One of my duties as the Detective Division Commander was to review Uniform Crime Report (UCR) data on a weekly basis. I was also tasked with submitting semi-annual reports to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) after reviewing the accuracy of clearances by UCR standards. When I brought UCR data to Chief Currey for his review and signature, I would advise him of all statistics, including our clearance rate. Whether our clearance rate was highly or lower, Chief Currey would state something to the effect, "the rates are what they are." Every UCR report that I submitted to FDLE was not influenced by Chief Currey whatsoever.

Chief Currey has always had my support and he always will. The City of Vero Beach is fortunate to have David Currey as its Chief of Police.

John Pedersen

Indian River County Resident

Falls, Monte

From: Falls, Monte
Sent: Monday, April 29, 2024 7:56 AM
To: Falls, Monte

Good morning David.

I have my usual host of Monday Morning staff meetings but I'll try to come by mid-morning.

This will be a tough day for you but you will be ok. I called a lot of people and you have a lot of support in this community.

Also you have a stellar career with unquestionable integrity.

Good luck my friend.

From Bill Penney-Marine Bank

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Falls, Monte

From: Bursick, Tammy
Sent: Monday, April 29, 2024 8:33 AM
To: City Council; Falls, Monte; Currey, Dave
Subject: FW: Police Chief David Currey

Tammy K. Bursick, MMC
City Clerk
1053 20th Place
Vero Beach, Florida 32960
Phone: (772) 978-4700



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From: Michael Glatz <chefmichael@coffeehouse1420.com>
Sent: Monday, April 29, 2024 7:59 AM
To: Dingle, Taylor <TDingle@covb.org>; Carroll, John <JCarroll@covb.org>; Zudans, Tracey <TZudans@covb.org>; Moore, Linda <LMoore@covb.org>; Cotugno, John <JCotugno@covb.org>
Subject: Police Chief David Currey

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Greetings my Worthy Vero Beach City Council Members;

I write to you on this 29th of April in the Year of Our Lord 2024, in full support of our Police Chief, David Currey.

My name is Michael Glatz, I reside at 1826 21st Avenue and I am the Sole Proprietor of COFFEE HOUSE 1420 at 2001 14th Ave, on the corner of 14th Ave and 20th St.

I am unable to attend this morning's meeting, but desire a voice in the community.

After reading the article in 32963, and various social media posts, I have become disappointed in the stance again Chief Currey.

I am not an officer or in any way associated with the police staff, nor have I spoken to any of them about this, so I only comment as an outside observer - a concerned citizen and business owner.

I have had many casual and professional conversations with Chief Currey over my 4 years in business in downtown, as well as with many of his officers. My business, COFFEE HOUSE 1420 hosts "Coffee With A Cop" several times a year... the Chief and several dozen of his officers attend, as well as the community and my client base - these are all happy and very positive events with a great deal of laughter, conversation and camaraderie amongst the officers - and in their relationship with Chief Currey. He and his team of officers have been a great support to the downtown business community, especially in the areas of dealing with the homeless and the parking challenges. In my business we have called the VBPD many times over my tenure in business here, using both the 911 emergency line, as well as the standard phone number for non-urgent issues - the response is always impressively immediate, within just a few minutes.

From my vantage point, none of this points to a force with low morale and bad leadership.

Now, having said that, despite my successful hospitality business, talk to my staff on a wrong day and you may sense bad morale or they may be willing to pass a bad word or judgement about me - particularly after a moment of needed discipline or teaching to right a wrong. Humans are not perfect, we all make mistakes - myself and Chief Currey as well - but nonetheless you may find a staff member here willing to speak ill of me if given an opportunity. ...Does that mean I'm a failure in business or should have the Coffee House taken from me? Of course not! How ridiculous!

I have owned and/or run businesses in several small communities in other states, and I have never felt safer and more supported than here in Vero Beach.

I am proud of our Vero Beach Police Department - the men and women officers, and the administrative staff! Is it a well-oiled, smooth running machine? I suspect not! Show me any business or branch of government that is! Challenges abound, especially in today's world.

I fully support David Currey as Police Chief of Vero Beach, I believe our community is better because of his leadership!

Respectfully,
Michael Glatz 772-538-1811
Proprietor, Coffee House 1420

CHEF MICHAEL GLATZ, PROPRIETOR

•RELAX•
•RECHARGE•
•BELONG•



2001 14th Ave, Vero Beach FL 32960
OPEN Monday -Saturday, 7:00am until 5:00pm
772-925-1572 www.coffeehouse1420.com

