



February 3, 2020

Director Andrew Myerberg
Office of Police Accountability
720 3rd avenue, 18th Floor
Seattle, Washington 98124
SENT VIA EMAIL

Dear Director Myerberg,

As we discussed, I am writing to refer to OPA, for further investigation, the matter concerning what have been deemed "credible allegations" of sexual assault against SPD employee Garry Boulden, stemming from his tenure as a priest with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Spokane in the late 1970s-early 1980s. While the acts alleged, having reportedly taken place in Spokane, are for that reason outside of our jurisdiction to investigate criminally, they are well within your purview for an administrative inquiry.

I am aware that these allegations were investigated by the Spokane Police Department in the early 2000s, and that no criminal charges resulted. I am also aware that these allegations were among those that were included in a sweeping settlement of numerous civil lawsuits that were brought against the Spokane Diocese, arising out of a decades-long pattern of sexual abuse, that ultimately led to the Diocese's bankruptcy. I am aware of these resolutions because this is not the first time these allegations have come to the attention of the Seattle Police Department.

This has been of intermittent but on-going (and understandable) media interest since the early 2000s, and SPD has previously undertaken its own review of available materials, including the Spokane Police Department's investigative file. It is my understanding that our investigators agreed that, based on the facts that were available to them at that time, there was insufficient legal cause to support criminal charges - a determination that I understand was, at the time, weighed in evaluating Mr. Boulden's continuing employment with SPD.

However, neither I nor anyone on my leadership team were part of that review, and we are therefore unable to assess for ourselves the rigor of that review, and - particularly with the tremendous leaps forward over the past several years in how we respond to and investigate allegations of sexual assault and how we care for and honor victims - I cannot rest on that prior review alone.

I want to be clear that, as it relates to his conduct as a member of this department, I am aware of no concerns regarding his interactions with individuals he has served. To the contrary, as evidenced by a service award presented to him just recently, he has delivered support to victims of crime compassionately and, as far as has been brought to my attention, fully within professional bounds.

That said, I believe we have a moral and professional obligation to revisit these allegations, leveraging all of the advancements that law enforcement has made in its efforts to get to the truth, often buried, of past wrongs. As always, we will go where the truth takes us.

Sincerely,


Carmen Best
Chief of Police