



REPORT

February 28, 2011

To: Mr. Clarence Patterson, City Manager

From: -Guilherme Ruiz-Nicolas, Human Resources Director
•David Chiyerton, Assistant to the City Manager, &
Office of Community Services

Reference: Police Department —Fact Finding Inquiry

Pursuant to your memorandum dated January 27, 2011 assigning the task of conducting a fact finding inquiry within the City of Opa-Locka Police Department as a result of the recent claims, concerns and comments as to the dissatisfaction or concerns in the Police Department.

In an effort to effectively complete the task we randomly selected from the list of active police officers in the department. Our selection, included eleven (11) executive staff and six (6) police officers, for a total of seventeen (17). Each session was done one person at a time and with both of us present. At the beginning of every inquiry the officers were advised that anything said during the process will be compiled into one (1) report and forwarded to you. Furthermore, the information compiled will be without names or references of their positions within the department. Each individual was informed that if they felt uncomfortable with any question or any follow-up questioning, it would have no bearing on their status with the department, and they were free to opt with "no comment"; or any other response they felt best.

Each person was free to make their comments and refer to situations or incidents that they feel may have satisfactory or unsatisfactory effected the department, along with any recommendation to improve the department. The following is a compilation of the comments from all of the executive staff and officers.



COMMENTS:

- Many of the officers expressed their dissatisfaction with favoritism.
Some officers are not reprimanded for violation of the code of conduct. Officers are not given fair opportunity to advance.
Complaints filed against officers go without further investigation or follow-up with officers who filed complaint.
Officers feel that there are clubs, clicks or organization established within the department that gets favorable treatment, i.e.. (Hennessey Club, etc.) Reprimands are not applied according to the standards of the police-officer manual or code of conduct manual. In their opinion; decisions are made arbitrarily.
- ♦ The department is a frustrating place to work.
- Information is not disseminated in writing.
Several officers' comments on the fact that they receive information by word of mouth and seldom receive written documentation to solidify what they are told.
- Individuals are apprehensive about filing grievance for fear of repercussion, retaliation, demotions or suspension.
- No consideration given to officers with seniority when opportunities exist, i.e., shift assignment and specialty training etc.
- o Rumors are usually based on intent to cast disparity on officers who are not a part of a particular group.
- Fear of change.
- Officers interfering in personal matter of other officers.
More than one (1) officer said that phone calls were made to their homes commenting about rumors that are untrue and causing friction in their family.
- Promotions and demotions are made without a fair process and lack of transparency.
- No confidence in the rank and file command or administrative staff.
- No effective administrative structure due to the division within the department.
- Salaries are too low, forcing officers to work off-duty details to support their family.
- Most staff welcomes the opportunity to be a part of the department's transition to becoming an accredited police department
- The Department is built on deception.
- Lot of gossiping
- Low morale.
- No confidentiality.



Grateful for promotion.

Sometimes the department is a very stressful environment to work. Several officers indicated that they prefer to patrol the streets then being in the police building.

Officers gather, compile and maintain personal information on other officers and use the information as leverage.

Appreciate the department and administration.

Unprofessionalism and deficiency in administration.

Administrative staff releases or shares personal information with others unrelated to their supervision or outside, the department.

Officers indicated that the department representative for the PBA Contract is unfair and does not work in the best interest of the officers.

The department is often politically interfered with or influenced in making decisions.

Management at times appears to be out of touch with the challenges of the officers and the need for the support from upper management.

CONCERNS:

- Officers are not maintaining qualification with firearms.
 - Officers do not receive annual physical.
 - Reprimands are not given or enforced regardless of Internal Affairs investigation concluding that the officer is in violations of code of conduct.
 - /• Not all officers are required to work shifts in the patrol unit. y
- Insufficient officers to handle the workload.
- Officers receive accommodation or awards without merit.
 - /• City hires officers that are documented problem officers from other municipal police department /• Inadequate equipment and supplies to do police duties. /■ Loose criteria for officers to qualify.
 - Lack of trust between officers on the street.
 - Some ethnic divide between community and officers.
 - /• Officers have unscrupulous relationship with known criminals and convicted felons in the City.



INCIDENTS:

Administration ordered officer to pay for traffic citation ticket given to relatives or friends of persons connected to police department or with political connection.

Officer ordered to pay for traffic citation ticket and was ordered to take the money to the house of the person related to the person given the citation.

Officer used police department issued taser gun on another officer while horse playing without reprimand.

Administration ordered officer to release a person under arrest and was ordered to discard the report.

Property stolen/removed from police station without authorization.

Upper management forced/ordered arresting officers to un-arrest individuals that are suspects of a crime or have committed a crime.

Officer worked during regular time off or on specialty leave.

- Officers' purchase and transport liquor/alcohol in City issued police vehicles for parties, private gatherings, etc. Officers having sex with arrested offenders in lieu of moving forward to prosecution, eventually un-arresting the individuals and discarding the police report, Officer sleeping on job and not reprimanded although (here is documentation and observation by supervisor).
- Officers ordered to change patrol log or they would be reprimanded.
- A few officers express their concerns with the perception of racial profiling.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Continue procedures to getting police department certified.

Ethics training to deal with the integrity in the City.

Establish a homicide department.

Establish a sexual battery department.

Need K-9 dogs.

Eliminate the Cronyism.

Need more training to help officers qualify for specialty services.

Managerial training for officers interested in advancing.



- * Update polio manual and code of conduct. ®
Ncv\ police department building/facility.
- * Annexation in solid if) an increase of police and increase in pay. »
Metier maintenance and repair on vehicles.
- * Add a Public Service Aide for all shifts, to present officers from responding to minor incidents.

Several c/fitfrs\aid (/nil as a wutli <>/ the uiiiiU'rsiiiffhiii n/j>i>lt< e off'n er.\ it would he \ cry helpful if there iv«;> he a Public Sa\ii e Aide to handle the minor traffjh <n rtdent.% and • >ihei minor tin tdenls 01 eowimiiiitly i alls.

The aforesaid information i-. A\) accurate compilation of the information attained from the interviews of the officers and personnel ii includes their comments, concerns, incidents and recommendations based on their experience. It some instances the offices expressed their frustration with the department and the egregious wa> th a i things are done. Most of the officers with tenure of seven (7) years or more seem to be settled and willing to work to improve die department on u whole. Some of the comments seem minuscule, however we wani to be sure to list ail the information.

We feel that we fairly gathered th is information and have compiled it without personal input 01 opinion.

Respectful!) Submitted.

Guilhclc Rui/.-Nienlas. I
luman Resources I)irccloi

David ("luvevlon
Office of Community Services &
Assistant to the City Manager

End of Report