

Interview Transcript: Police Complaint Against 10/19/2020

The Democratic Women of McDonough County submitted a complaint to Macomb Police Chief Curt Barker about the behavior of Macomb Police Detective XXXXXXXX for his anti-BLM protestor posts on his wall of his tactical equipment site.

We submitted a complaint to the Macomb Police Department to see how the complaint process works, how community members can expect to be treated by the MPD Leadership, and how the department responds to complaints.

- Annotated complaint:
https://www.democratic-women.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/DWMC_-_Complaint-Against-Officer-JP-McLaughlin-10_19_20-2.pdf
- Best Practice Guide for handling complaints against officers
<http://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/2018-08/BP-InternalAffairs.pdf>
- DWMC Board Public Comment to city council after reviewing video/transcript of treatment of Heather McMeekan and Dr. Essie Rutledge by Deputy Chief Dave Burnham
<https://www.democratic-women.org/2020/11/02/our-complaint-to-mpd/>
 - Process is not trauma-informed, nor are accommodations agreed to upheld, such as being able to speak without interruption
 - Deputy Burnham tries to claim Ms. McMeekan can only speak for herself, which is inaccurate; furthermore, it is an abusive tactic used to create a sense of isolation in a complainant. That these tactics are being used against a law-abiding citizen bringing concerns of multiple people to the Police Leadership's attention says much about the departmental culture.
 - Deputy Burnham repeatedly calls Ms. McMeekan by her first name, "Heather" which is disrespectful, especially given the manner and tone in which he addresses her; later he calls Dr. Rutledge by her first name, and dismisses her remark about being cold in the room
 - Requiring them to meet in the small interview room during COVID violates pandemic distancing guidelines, putting Ms. McMeekan and Dr. Rutledge at potential risk
 - Deputy Chief Burnham misunderstands or misrepresents the 1st Amendment
 - Deputy Chief Burnham repeatedly, persistently interrupts Ms. McMeekan

Transcript

Heather McMeekan 0:01

Hi, this is Heather McMeekan. Today's date is October 28 2020. And I'm going in to make a complaint, it's 12:04pm CST. It's Wednesday, October 28. Going in to make our complaint to the police department, meet with them about our complaint about [REDACTED]
And I'm just gonna keep rolling.
I have our complaint. So let me let them know that we are here.

Dr. Essie Rutledge 1:22

Because they compete.

Heather McMeekan 1:24

They are. Yes.

Hi, this is Heather McMeekan. I'm sorry, I think we had a miscommunication.
Let's see, I think we were gonna, we thought we were going to meet with the deputy chief today at noon, with the city attorney here.
And we're out in the lobby.
He already spoke to Essie that I must have gotten the time wrong. He was gonna, he was gonna meet with the other person at five, because she's out of town.
I mean, we can come back at five.
Yes, please. Thank you.
Sorry.

I was gonna meet with him at noon. Because Gina can't be here during the day.
Now, that's a city attorney. So you and I can meet with him. Now, but then Gina. Gina actually can't meet until six because she doesn't get off work in time.
So he told me that we couldn't meet as a group and then I had to come in one on one.
I got to pick up my [inaudible].

Deputy Chief Burnham 2:43

At five or ..

Heather McMeekan 2:44

So...Let's see, I thought that I, that we were going to meet at noon and then Regina was going to meet somewhere around five but she said she can't make it till six because work. She can't leave early. There's somebody gone to okay,

Deputy Chief Burnham 2:55

But my understanding was we're going to do it at five.

Heather McMeekan 2:57

I'm sorry, I misunderstood. I thought that we said two separate times for

Deputy Chief Burnham 3:01

[Interrupts] the issue that we run into is I've got this interview room is one going to do that.

Heather McMeekan 3:06

Okay.

Deputy Chief Burnham 3:06

And I don't think we're going to be able to have more than three people in that interview room at a time.

Heather McMeekan 3:13

Oh, okay.

Deputy Chief Burnham 3:14

So

Heather McMeekan 3:15

Well, can we... Is there a larger room we can meet at? Not that's not audio and video recorded?

Deputy Chief Burnham 3:25

Yeah, well, only one for this incident.

Heather McMeekan 3:27

I can have a supporter with me?

Deputy Chief Burnham 3:30

But she's asked for the city attorney to sit in on it as well.

Heather McMeekan 3:34

Right.

Deputy Chief Burnham 3:34

So that's the issue that we're running into is the city attorney's in on it. I can only have three in this room,

Heather McMeekan 3:39

huh? Okay.

Well, what do you think Essie?

Dr. Essie Rutledge

Well, I definitely think we need that, and we want the city attorney.

Deputy Chief Burnham 3:50

What's that? She's here right now. That who was just here.

Deputy Chief Burnham 3:56

I thought that was your understanding. I'm saying three, including me. Yeah. Me, her and the city attorney.

Heather McMeekan 4:01

So yeah, I thought that I could, I knew I could have a supportive person. I realized we were limited.

Deputy Chief Burnham 4:06

I thought your person was the city attorney is what I thought.

Heather McMeekan 4:09

No, she works for you. Right? She's part of the city.

Deputy Chief **Burnham 4:12**

Yeah?

I'm kind of confused as to why the city attorney was here

Heather McMeekan 4:15

Because I brought the city attorney to make sure I have some questions about policy and procedure. And I want to make sure also that she is there to make sure that policy and procedure was followed.

Deputy Chief Burnham 4:25

What we're doing is we're dealing with your complaint is what we're dealing with.

Heather McMeekan 4:30

Yes.

Deputy Chief Burnham 4:31

Okay. That's the sole thing that we're dealing with at this point in time.

Heather McMeekan 4:34

Okay,

Deputy Chief Burnham 4:34

If you have a policy or procedure question, you can ask that of the chief. You can do that. But at this point in time when we're in there in the interview, I'm focusing on your complaint, is what I'm focusing on.

Okay. So because that's my sole purpose,

Heather McMeekan 4:49

okay, nothing outside of that. That's the sole purpose.

Okay, well, Essie Thank you. I think we'll meet with them, you know, meet with them later.

Deputy Chief Burnham 4:57

Everything is video and audio recorded with your permission.

So it's there. So we can't, we can't go back and say that you said one thing and you didn't. I mean, it's all there.

Heather McMeekan 5:06

So that's fine. So what do you think?

Dr. Essie Rutledge 5:11

Well, that depends on the chief and if...

Deputy Chief Burnham 5:18

[Interrupts] ...you guys want to meet and talk and I'll let you do that,

Heather McMeekan 5:20

Yeah let's, let's do that.

Thank you.

I met with the ACLU.

So I guess that it'll just be Essie and myself there then and the last will thank the city attorney and ask her if we, if we have any questions, and..

Deputy Chief Burnham 5:48

[Interrupts] Okay, that's up to you, everyone does that

Heather McMeekan 5:50

Okay. We'll do that.

Deputy Chief Burnham 5:51

Okay. Come on in.

City Attorney 6:10

That way, we have the same kind of situation.

I'll still observe.

Heather McMeekan 6:18

Thank you so much for being here. I'm sorry for the confusion, trying to get all of our people who weren't.

Deputy Chief Burnham 6:23

She can watch it there.

Heather McMeekan 6:25

Okay.

Thank you.

Yes.

I like to remind everyone that I am recording this for our benefit.

I gotta admit, it kind of smells like pot in here to wonder what's up.

Dr. Essie Rutledge 7:14

Yeah. Not a good smell, that's for sure.

Heather McMeekan 7:31

Whenever

Deputy Chief Burnham 7:41

I'm gonna try not to get close to you,

Heather McMeekan 7:43

Okay.

Deputy Chief Burnham 7:43

I just the problem is I'm trying to go through what the shout out here

Heather McMeekan 7:48

I'm recording

Deputy Chief Burnham 7:51

Video and audio recording. Is that okay?

Heather McMeekan 7:53

That's okay.

Deputy Chief Burnham 7:53

Okay.

You can sit wherever you like. So if you want to sit there you can or if you want to sit there, you're more than welcome to keep our mask on. So we

Heather McMeekan 8:02

stay as far away as we can.

Deputy Chief Burnham 8:04

Okay, so the actual complaint that you made. You didn't fill out the form you just attached your statement that you read to city council? Correct?

Heather McMeekan 8:17

Yes, I hadn't had time yet for our team to put together a report but I brought it with me. Okay, screenshots.

Deputy Chief Burnham 8:23

Okay. You don't have screenshots at all. For me,

Heather McMeekan 8:26

We do have screenshots.

Deputy Chief Burnham 8:27

Okay.

Heather McMeekan 8:33

I can go through page by page on this. The third page is where I have this packet I just handed you, and contains the first post that he made. And then our Racial Justice Coalition Co-Chair Regina Matthews' response, which he deleted.

Deputy Chief Burnham 8:53

Okay, but it's his page, so he can delete whoever he wants. Correct?

Heather McMeekan 8:56

Absolutely.

Deputy Chief Burnham 8:57

Okay, so have you talked to Facebook at all about these posts?

Heather McMeekan 9:00

So we have, we've reported the ones that were that we felt were close enough to the line that Facebook might take action if they did disappear. But we don't know, but.. all the conversation disappeared and was replaced by a different post.

Deputy Chief Burnham 9:17

Okay?

Heather McMeekan 9:18

So we don't know who all did or why.

Deputy Chief Burnham 9:21

Okay. But it doesn't usually use Facebook. If you send something to facebook facebook sends it back saying yes, that page has been investigated and there is something there you've not gotten anything from Facebook saying that

Heather McMeekan 9:33

I actually have not looked to see since the posts were taken down and that was our concern. I didn't check through yet to see because we repost we, we are reporting things all the time every night.

Deputy Chief Burnham 9:45

Okay,

Heather McMeekan 9:45

we get so many responses from Facebook. I did not track back through.

Deputy Chief Burnham 9:49

Okay. I will at some point in time make copies of that okay, if that's fine.

Heather McMeekan 9:53

Okay.

Deputy Chief Burnham 9:54

Because I got the stuff that we have here and I don't know who said,

Heather McMeekan 9:57

If Well, let me go through the packet. If I could, if you would let me explain kind of how it went down. So his very first post that he made, he made it at 7:58am, which was the morning afterwards. And he had had an interaction with a woman who is not in our org on the square. She is a petite about 110 pound woman,

Deputy Chief Burnham 10:21

[Interrupts] I'm familiar with them, right.

Heather McMeekan 10:22

And she does have.. one of the reasons why she's not a member of our org is because we do not allow people to do ad hominem attacks, per se, just or trying to do that kind of stuff that provokes because what happens is it creates more danger for ourselves. And so we don't even allow yelling at our protest, we, we do try very hard to play just top 40 music, and just sit there and let people yell whatever they want at us, other than to wish them a nice day. So the first post that was made said, from the, from his site, and we don't know for sure that it's him or not, you would have to

Deputy Chief Burnham 11:03

[Interrupts] say there's no name that's even associated with this.

Heather McMeekan 11:06

That's right. And normally, in a proper investigation of these, you would contact Facebook and you would ask who...

Deputy Chief Burnham 11:11

[Interrupts] I would, but here's the problem with Facebook. Right? It has to be a criminal complaint. I can't get a warrant from the State's Attorney's Office unless the criminal complaint

Heather McMeekan 11:20

I understand.

Deputy Chief Burnham 11:20

This is an internal investigation. I can't get anything from Facebook based on that.

Heather McMeekan 11:25

Okay, so...

Deputy Chief Burnham 11:26

[Interrupts] If it was a criminal complaint, I wouldn't be handling it would have been kicked over to the only state police

Heather McMeekan 11:31

That's fine.

Deputy Chief Burnham 11:31

Okay.

Heather McMeekan 11:32

So we, someone on his site wrote "I've debated on posting this and I've come to the conclusion it's well past time to show the true colors of some of these people. This was at 10 to 20, roughly at 5pm I kid you not I was verbally attacked on the Macomb square while off duty in plainclothes while waiting on my daughter's tumbling class. Because of my full time job by a woman I don't know. I was actually sitting in my personal car minding my own business when she approached me and had the eerie feeling of the recent shooting in LA. This woman took pictures and appeared to record me and my personal vehicle during it the karma at all twice, she unknowingly dropped her purse outside for the vehicle and left it which I returned to her both times, but I'm still the pig. And she's still gonna steal my car because she paid for it."

Heather McMeekan 12:18

She denies saying that.

"Just so we are on the same page. That's the caliber of people protesting. You have the wrong impression if you think I can be intimidated."

And then there's two laugh emojis to which our Racial Justice Coalition Co-Chair Regina Matthews responded. Now there were 210 responses to that, and 53 shares of his post. So we showed 53 times to other people or other walls or groups. And there were over 210 people

interacting with that, of which a few of them were ours, but they did not. As far as we know, did not click and do that reaction.

Regina Matthews responded with, "I would like to point out that the one bad apple doesn't should, should pertain to everything if you use it. You debated on whether to post but you didn't even wait a day. The woman in question doesn't represent our organization that puts on these protests and we can demonstrate behavior but now our protesters are more scared of the threat of violence that seems to have provoked. If you would like an honest opinion of our peaceful protest, please ask Officer Jeff Hamer." And that woman had told me about the incident that she had. She took responsibility for her part in that she claimed that she was on..."

Deputy Chief Burnham 13:35

[Interrupts] Let's talk about this real quick. Heather. I'm going to try to move you around. I know you. What do you have for an hour lunchtime?

Heather McMeekan 13:40

Well, my boss gave me the afternoon off okay, we can take our time on this.

Deputy Chief Burnham 13:44

Well, I can't because I've got other appointments that I have. I thought you were coming at five. So I've got other appointments stacked up too.

Heather McMeekan 13:49

Okay,

Deputy Chief Burnham 13:50

So here's my question with the original post, what is in the post that you think would be against our department policy or would be illegal in that original post because it seems that you do bring up a lot with the post in your complaint.

Heather McMeekan 14:07

The fact that he posted it at all on a tactical arm site and is using dehumanizing language the

Deputy Chief Burnham 14:14

[Interrupts] What's the dehumanizing language?

Heather McMeekan 14:16

So the dehumanizing language is when "just so we are on the same page that's the caliber of people protesting," so he's generalizing us all out as being a person who calls cops pigs.

Deputy Chief Burnham 14:28

Okay

That is not accurate. Sorry I'm trying to go on Facebook here to look, and see what..

Heather McMeekan 14:35

He had pulled it all down so there's nothing.

Deputy Chief Burnham 14:37

So there's none of that stuff is there?

Heather McMeekan 14:39

None of that stuff is there now.

Deputy Chief Burnham 14:40

Okay. He put but these were all these things here when I got another set here.

Heather McMeekan 14:47

Okay, I don't know what all is still up there from that.

Deputy Chief Burnham 14:50

Okay. But as I've got some of this that I've got does is not included in yours. Yours, it looks like you've just included Regina's. So some of your people too

Heather McMeekan 15:00

Explain we we only included the things for which our team tried to interact and and try to divert the discussion into talking about how we do our protests but after all of our stuff was removed and he only allowed the the responses from the some of the people who are frightening and and quite hateful and have been giving us a hard time for months, some of them like Mr. R----- online, and has a propensity for violence and a past history with violence with women.

Deputy Chief Burnham 15:33

How do you know that?

Heather McMeekan 15:35

Because some of his ex wives have reached out to us and shown us the evidence of his harassment of them out of their concern for our safety, as he has been repeatedly showing up on our things, despite repeatedly being asked to please leave us alone. Okay, he has since escalated again since [REDACTED]'s post. So he has since changed his name on his Facebook, or come up with a different Facebook page. And now he's back harassing us again, when he had finally been leaving us alone.

Deputy Chief Burnham 16:07

Have you reported that to Facebook?

Heather McMeekan 16:09

Yep, we sure did.

Deputy Chief Burnham 16:10

Okay, and why not go with that?

Heather McMeekan 16:12

We're still waiting for them to respond back on that one.

Deputy Chief Burnham 16:15

Okay. What are those posts that he's posting?

Heather McMeekan 16:19

He's not crossing the line. He's just calling us names and being a jerk,

Deputy Chief Burnham 16:23

[Interrupts] which is like free speech, right?

Heather McMeekan 16:25

So

Deputy Chief Burnham 16:27

[Interrupts] I mean, here's my thing, either. I mean, I read through all of these posts, I've been through all of these posts, forwards, backwards, forwards, backwards. And I need your help trying to understand what you're talking about. Because,

Heather McMeekan 16:39

Okay,

Deputy Chief Burnham 16:40

[Interrupts] I mean, this is such a

Heather McMeekan 16:41

Hey if I can speak without being interrupted for a little bit.

Deputy Chief Burnham 16:44

[Interrupts] Well, that would be fine. If you would stay on point for me, I can't go out

Heather McMeekan 16:51

I may not be able to stay on the point that you want me to stay on....

Deputy Chief Burnham 16:54

Okay, well...

Heather McMeekan 16:54

Because I am a trauma survivor as well. So I need time to do an interview as a victim.

Deputy Chief Burnham 16:59

Okay. I understand that.

Heather McMeekan 17:01

But you could with your...

Deputy Chief Burnham 17:03

[Interrupts] You need to, Heather. You need to tell me what is the complaint that you have here, based on this?

Heather McMeekan 17:07

Our complaint is him posting a comment about our protesters on his own tactical site after we have already made your department aware of our concerns and fears for our safety, we have repeatedly had to have some of these people investigated because of their harassment of us online. And showing up in person has caused our organization to not feel, to feel intimidated now to feel like they can't trust calling the police. When if we have a problem, because they're worried that [REDACTED] or some of the others who have commented might be the ones who respond, it caused a loss of trust in your agency, it caused a loss of trust in our members, it caused a lot of our members who are victims of male harassment to be re traumatized. And so if you can look at the impact of this, from a survivors perspective, you might understand how having a bunch of men with guns, posting negative comments about us on that post,

Deputy Chief Burnham 18:05

[Interrupts] But you're basing it off of an assumption that you're making, because you're going to their Facebook pages and looking at that. I don't see anybody that's posted anything as a gun, or anything else on this particular thing right here, as far as what you gave me. Because you've edited your portion of it. I have the actual posts here of everybody else on here

Heather McMeekan 18:25

We haven't edited any of the screenshots at all

Deputy Chief Burnham 18:29

Right but you just give him a ...

Heather McMeekan 18:30

Let me give you an example of one right here, S---- S----- says *"the biggest problem is that we have tolerated this bullshit for too long hoping it would just go away. It's time good hard working Americans stand up to the scumbags that have become so entitled and let them know we are not putting up with this shit anymore."*

Someone else, uh..

Deputy Chief Burnham 18:49

[Interrupts] Okay, so what is what is wrong with that one, like is that a threat directly to your organization? To you?

Heather McMeekan 18:56

That is calling us to be scumbags is a dehumanizing language that he is allowing to persist on his wall that was provoked by his comment. Now, if you think if you see no problem with that, then we might as well end this conversation. Now.

Deputy Chief Burnham 19:10

I'm trying to understand the context that is here.

Heather McMeekan 19:14

That our impact is the fear of our protesters realizing that one of our police officers will sit there dehumanize us on his own tactical website in front of the people who already have a propensity for guns, use dehumanizing language, and that impacts our people's willingness to even use their first amendment rights.

Deputy Chief Burnham 19:34

Okay, but then you're saying that these people do not have first amendment rights to say what they...

Heather McMeekan 19:38

I'm not saying that at all.

Deputy Chief Burnham 19:39

[Interrupts] That's what you're saying..

Heather McMeekan 19:40

That's not what I'm saying. No, no, that's not what I'm saying at all.

Deputy Chief Burnham 19:42

What you just said...

Heather McMeekan 19:42

I'm not saying that at all. And don't put words in my mouth.

Deputy Chief Burnham 19:45

I'm not putting words in your mouth. I'm telling you that based on what I see here, I do not see anything that's is a direct threat to you or anyone in your organization, based on what I have here,

Heather McMeekan 19:55

Right, and this complaint is actually a complaint that your officer is asking. improperly,

Deputy Chief Burnham 20:00

[Interrupts] but you don't even know that it is our officer you're just basing it off the fact that it's his site

Heather McMeekan 20:06

Except that he uses I statements and relates what happened on the square and speaks out himself and then admits that, he had a conversation about her. And she had come and spoke with Officer Hamer and then he and I had a conversation and he confirmed that it was officer [REDACTED] who had that.

Deputy Chief Burnham 20:21

Okay, and so how and [REDACTED] owns this site. And even though all that is circumstantial, that is still enough for us to feel intimidated and be fairly competent, confident that this was officer or [REDACTED], or someone he spoke to who he empowered to use I statements about that initial conflict, which you could actually look up on the square on one of the cameras. They can't, the particular area that he's in, I don't have a camera.

Heather McMeekan 20:49

So I don't know about what happened on the square before hand

Deputy Chief Burnham 20:52

[Interrupts] The particular area that this is here. So as you're saying that

Heather McMeekan 20:56

is he denying,

Deputy Chief Burnham 20:57

[Interrupts] I'm not going back and forth with you on that. I'm covering your complaint here, Heather.

And I'm going to say you're wrong. We're saying welcome, unprofessional, and caused fear, anxiety and it defeats it for our members. And based on what is right here in this first line. Is that correct?

Heather McMeekan 21:12

Based on this entire conversation that..

Deputy Chief Burnham 21:14

[Interrupts] But he can't control that.

Heather McMeekan 21:16

Yes, he can.

Deputy Chief Burnham 21:17

He can't control when someone does something on his site. Yes, he can block them if that's what he wants to do.

Heather McMeekan 21:22

He could block them. He could have never started that conversation, and never allowed it to continue.

Deputy Chief Burnham 21:27

Right. But he didn't. And now he doesn't have to, he has free speech like anybody else.

Heather McMeekan 21:31

Thank you for clarifying that an officer may paint a target on any of our backs.

Deputy Chief Burnham 21:35

There's no target painted on anyone's back. You're, you're not specific on this stuff.

Heather McMeekan 21:39

Impact of how it feels.

Deputy Chief Burnham 21:41

Okay. I understand that. So it's basically your opinion, just your opinion,

Heather McMeekan 21:45

No, our people, our orgs opinion,

Deputy Chief Burnham 21:47

[Interrupts] your opinion, because you're the complainant on here, Heather?

Heather McMeekan 21:50

Yeah,

Deputy Chief Burnham 21:50

[Interrupts] Not your organization.

Heather McMeekan 21:51

Guess what?

Deputy Chief Burnham 21:52

[Interrupts] Not your organization, It's YOU!

Heather McMeekan 21:53

You don't get to say who I get to speak for in this room. I also

[Interrupts] Deputy Chief Burnham 21:57

Well, I

Heather McMeekan 21:58

Let me explain other things here, you go to other impact statements. Here's the one thing that I've got other witnesses who saw that let me read those real quick,

Deputy Chief Burnham 22:05

[Interrupts] You don't need to read that to me. If you want to give that to me, you're more than welcome to do that. This is what I'm focusing on right now this information here. Because I know come Monday, I will next, I will be the next hot topic for you to talk about at City Council. Because I know you're not going to enjoy what I'm telling you here. But I want specifics, I need specific information!

Heather McMeekan 22:25

You didn't need to put that passive aggressive dig in at me in this conversation. Are we going to get any

Deputy Chief Burnham 22:31

[Interrupts] I'm not going to sit and listen to what you're going to read to me. If you have stuff for me to look at. I'm more than happy to look at that. But I'm not going to sit in here. I'm trying to get to the bottom of what your complaint is. Because you're so generalizing here..

Heather McMeekan 22:43

Our complaint is that your officer showed poor judgment.

Deputy Chief Burnham 22:49

Okay,

Heather McMeekan 22:49

And generalized us and accused us of wrongdoing from this woman...

Deputy Chief Burnham 22:55

[Interrupts] That he says protesters that's all he says he doesn't even use your organization's name does not specifically use your organization's name. That could be protesters all across the country.

Heather McMeekan 23:05

That was our protest that night, okay, was not some and she was someone that we had told not to come back. She chose to attend that night. And when she arrived, I set down the ground rules. And she told me that no, she will only be peaceful while she's there. And then she told me about the problem she had and I spoke with officer Hamer. I said please pass along to officer [REDACTED]. She is not with our org and we do not condone that kind of behavior.

Deputy Chief Burnham 23:30

And He even went on his Facebook, which is not included in your post. But he went on his Facebook and actually apologized a little bit saying I'm sorry

Heather McMeekan 23:38

after several of our members messaged that page and said you are making us feel very afraid.

Deputy Chief Burnham 23:43

Okay. And then he said that he apologized for that. Is that not correct?

Heather McMeekan 23:47

So he claims he apologized

Deputy Chief Burnham 23:51

on his Facebook.

Heather McMeekan 23:52

Right? Right, good. Well,

Deputy Chief Burnham 23:54

[Interrupts] there's no claim it's on his Facebook stuff.

Heather McMeekan 23:56

Okay. And we don't know that that's him. For sure. Right?

Deputy Chief Burnham 23:59

Well, I'm saying if you're saying that it's him, if it's Illinois, tactical firearms training

Heather McMeekan 24:03

Then it's him. Okay, good. So then that first post is him and then he apologized for that post? That's fine. So. But we still want him held accountable.

Deputy Chief Burnham 24:11

What are? Accountable for what? For having a Facebook page and having people talk on the Facebook page? Is that correct?

Heather McMeekan 24:17

We want him accountable for being a police officer who does not understand his power and authority in this community. And that when he uses his voice in a tactical website, against peaceful protesters, equating us dehumanizing language that it causes fear and causes us to be afraid to have any confidence in calling your police department...

Deputy Chief Burnham 24:36

[Interrupts] Did he at any point in time say that he was a police officer with the Macomb Police Department?

Heather McMeekan 24:41

I have no idea. I did not go through the rest of it after that. If he did, I don't think so. But he never did...

Deputy Chief Burnham 24:48

[Interrupts] I mean, I'll tell you now I've looked at all the posts. He never once says anything about being a police officer with the Macomb Police Department.

Heather McMeekan 24:53

He's still well known here and..

Deputy Chief Burnham 24:55

[Interrupts] I understand

Heather McMeekan 24:55

this and it's one of our members....

Deputy Chief Burnham 24:57

[Interrupts] They now know who he is because you went in front of City Council to call him out on it.

Heather McMeekan 25:02

Yeah.

Deputy Chief Burnham 25:02

So?

Heather McMeekan 25:03

We can't let a police officer attack our org this way or, or cause us to feel unsafe.

Deputy Chief Burnham 25:08

Okay?

Heather McMeekan 25:08

When men do this to us, you should understand...

Deputy Chief Burnham 25:11

[Interrupts] But I don't understand. That's why I'm saying I don't understand why you're saying, you feel. Because he lumps you in, lumps this person in with protesters, does it? I could even if I had a little more specific stuff as far as saying...

Heather McMeekan 25:24

So is this complaint about you and your feelings and what you think or is it about the impact and the fear of my org?

Deputy Chief Burnham 25:29

It's about what a reasonable person perceives. I have to take it as a reasonable person's perception. Mm hmm. That's what I have to take it as, as I'm looking at it. There's no violation of department policy that I see in this original post

Heather McMeekan 25:43

Okay.

Deputy Chief Burnham 25:44

That I see here. And you've seen it here, you keep going back to the fact that he blocked your people from even being able to be on either

Heather McMeekan 25:51

Making the differentiation that she was now with us trying to make us be safer. So

Deputy Chief Burnham 25:57

[Interrupts] Have you not blocked people from your Facebook?

Heather McMeekan 26:00

Excuse me? Are we being investigated?

Deputy Chief Burnham 26:02

I'm I'm explaining to an

Heather McMeekan 26:05

May I clarify something? We're volunteers we stand there with cardboard, we don't have guns and shields

Deputy Chief Burnham 26:12

Chuckles

Heather McMeekan 26:12

and the police the way that you all do. So it's not as...it's not an equivalent thing. We block people who attack us. Yes. If they are just hurting somebody if they are re-traumatizing our people, we do not have to give a forum for hate and we don't on our wall. But, and we've lost people who just are afraid. And of course none of this is about how our org functions. This is about his functioning as an officer and if you are okay with an officer behaving in that manner, and all of us feeling, being you know, cause to feel unsafe and to feel intimidated to even protest...

Deputy Chief Burnham 26:48

[Interrupts] You're not giving me anything to tell me that what, what specifically are you talking about as far as how you feel intimidated? You're saying that the words that he uses

Heather McMeekan 26:58

And also it being on a tactical site

Deputy Chief Burnham 27:01

[Interrupts] Okay,

Heather McMeekan 27:01

with other people who are using that started off a flame war

Deputy Chief Burnham 27:06

Does he ever at that point in time say that you need to shoot protesters? Does that take place anywhere in there?

Heather McMeekan 27:13

So that is the only level that....

Deputy Chief Burnham 27:15

[Interrupts] I'm not saying that, I'm going through a list of questions for you. Okay?

Does he do that? No. Do others make veiled threats like that? Yeah.

Specifically what?

Heather McMeekan 27:27

What I read to you already

"it's time to city puts a stop to the BS and grow a set people are so stupid these days and they wonder why we want concealed carry licenses stay safe we back the blue wish I was there for the first time she dropped it I would have thrown it in the garbage. Yep, common sense respect for each other's gone out the window."

Deputy Chief Burnham 27:48

Nothing there is a threat to anybody.

Heather McMeekan 27:51

It's more the the, the ability of these men to be using language "stay strapped my friend, "

Deputy Chief Burnham 28:01

[Interrupts] But this is a Tactical Site

Heather McMeekan 28:02

"I've been wondering when..."

Deputy Chief Burnham 28:04

[Interrupts] So

Heather McMeekan 28:04

"I've been wondering when this BS would come to Macomb, we can't let radicals take over. I have a very short fuse. And I really don't want to go to jail. But I won't stand back."

Deputy Chief Burnham 28:13

But they make no direct threats to you. No direct threats to you or anyone in your organization. Is that correct?

Heather McMeekan 28:19

That's correct.

Deputy Chief Burnham 28:20

Okay. So it's based on your perception. The organization, it's your organization's perception, let's say your organization's perception that is a threat because it's on a tactical website.

Heather McMeekan 28:33

Mm hmm.

Deputy Chief Burnham 28:33

Okay. Why would you? I mean, you're anti-gun, I would assume.

Heather McMeekan 28:38

I'm actually not anti-gun, believe it or not, I used to be a FOID card holder. Okay. And I grew up in a gun family.

Deputy Chief Burnham 28:44

Here's what I'm saying. You could choose not to look at this, if that's what you choose to do. Correct.

Heather McMeekan 28:49

So as the leader of our org, all of our members began messaging with their fear and concern and worry. So this impacted an organization and damaged our orgs members and hurt them. And Regina Matthews will, you know, be able to meet with you about her part of it, but because she was the one on duty for overseeing you know, responses and trying to...

Deputy Chief Burnham 29:11

[Interrupts] But it's the same stuff that you're saying, I'm not seeing anything here that says a direct threat. I've asked you specifically.

Heather McMeekan 29:17

Okay, so a complaint against the police can only be if they violate the law, there's nothing subpar.

Deputy Chief Burnham 29:23

No. We have policies and procedures that we have in place. And I told you that but as I look through here, one he doesn't mention that he's a Macomb, city police officer. You've brought that out

Heather McMeekan 29:35

[Tries to respond] because everybody in this community already aware

Deputy Chief Burnham 29:38

[Interrupts] Yeah, they're aware of it because he does concealed carry classes. That's fine. But it's a public way. He doesn't mention anything in there for that. He doesn't say what the Macomb Police Department is, he has his private business. This is his private business meaning?

Heather McMeekan 29:52

Private Tactical business, which do they have contracts with the police?

Deputy Chief Burnham 29:55

They do not.

Heather McMeekan 29:56

Okay, good.

Deputy Chief Burnham 29:57

So we don't have contracts with anybody on, as it relates to firearms sales, or tactical gear or anything else, all of gear is ordered straight through either Gil Hubbard's or not Gil Hibbard's, but Uniform Den out of Moline,

Heather McMeekan 30:14

I appreciate that.

Deputy Chief Burnham 30:15

All of our firearms are ordered through other dealers that are around.

Heather McMeekan 30:19

Our concern is that if we call the police because we need help,

Deputy Chief Burnham 30:23

[Interrupts] So basically my understanding is he's already targeting you?

Heather McMeekan 30:26

No, we're saying that people are not, and do not feel safe.

He has had a loss that we didn't, we didn't have an opinion on him before until this happened. But then he didn't even give our leadership team the courtesy of responding back.

Deputy Chief Burnham 30:44

But he did respond on his page,

Heather McMeekan 30:46

after we called them out on our page.

Deputy Chief Burnham 30:49

So then,

Heather McMeekan 30:50

Sir,...

Deputy Chief Burnham 30:50

..he responded back to you. So....

Heather McMeekan 30:53

Fear is still there.

Deputy Chief Burnham 30:55

Okay?

Heather McMeekan 30:56

The damage to our org is still there, the trauma to our members is still there.

Deputy Chief Burnham 30:59

There's nothing, there's no mention of your organization whatsoever.

Heather McMeekan 31:03

If you cannot, I understand if you do not see the issue with a sworn police officer owning a tactical business and posting a generalised comment that leads to a flame war, including people dehumanizing and further using scary language...

Deputy Chief Burnham 31:20

[Interrupts] people can have their own opinions, everybody has an opinion. And that's what these look like. These are opinions that people have put out there.

Heather McMeekan 31:26

Okay.

Deputy Chief Burnham 31:27

Nobody. You don't like things that I probably like. You don't like things. I've tried to like things that you like, everybody doesn't get along and doesn't agree on every single thing that goes on. But we don't take it to the point of where you've contacted the FBI to investigate [REDACTED].

Heather McMeekan 31:44

Because we believe that we won't get a fair investigation from this department.

Deputy Chief Burnham 31:49

Okay.

Heather McMeekan 31:49

And some of which can I also ask, why are you assigned to be the person interacting with me knowing that you are the person that is named in the ***** case for which we've gotten and you're one of the people named in the ***** case? Well,...

Deputy Chief Burnham 32:03

No. ***** case I wasn't there at all.

Heather McMeekan 32:06

Okay, well, I mean, I...

Deputy Chief Burnham 32:08

[Interrupts] Not at all. So I mean,

Heather McMeekan 32:09

So you're not on a report?

Deputy Chief Burnham 32:10

No.

Heather McMeekan 32:12

Okay.

Deputy Chief Burnham 32:12

It absolutely is not.

Heather McMeekan 32:14

Okay, then it's a different person, I want to make sure that they didn't assign me anyone who's assigned with that case.

Deputy Chief Burnham 32:19

So it's absolutely not you should have everything already out on that case, because you filed the FOIA for it. And you had all the information there. So my name is not there on the report. I didn't have anything to do with that case.

Heather McMeekan 32:30

Thank you. We, I wanted to make sure that you were not a part of that case.

Deputy Chief Burnham 32:33

It doesn't pertain to that case, anyway.

Heather McMeekan 32:35

Okay. Well, we were hoping that this complaint process would get at because our understanding was that if a police officer acts in a way that causes you to feel unsafe, we thought maybe the police department would be concerned about that. But since it's all on us, we just have to put up with it. As is I guess,...

Deputy Chief Burnham 32:55

[Interrupts] I'm saying that I've asked you for specific information.

Heather McMeekan 32:58

And I've given you all the specific information I've got.

Deputy Chief Burnham 33:00

You've given me no specifics, it's all still generalities. This is why I'm asking you what specifically is there? That's the target, you read me the one complaint? He doesn't target?

Heather McMeekan 33:10

Okay?

It's just generalized then, and everybody knows. I mean, we've made it very clear that we are a group that does the protests, so by him saying protesters in that way, everybody knows that...

Deputy Chief Burnham 33:21

[Interrupts] But you're not the only group that's up there. Is that correct?

Heather McMeekan 33:23

Not anymore. The other ones have given up because they're afraid.

Deputy Chief Burnham 33:26

Okay.

Heather McMeekan 33:27

We are the only group doing it now.

Deputy Chief Burnham 33:28

Okay.

Heather McMeekan 33:29

And all in one, the haters have won. They've scared the other groups.

Deputy Chief Burnham 33:32

Why are you lumping me into that category?

Heather McMeekan 33:34

I'm sorry.

Deputy Chief Burnham 33:35

Once again, you're generalizing me with everybody else, just like this.

Heather McMeekan 33:40

Like ■ said, you assume that I'm not that I'm against guns

Deputy Chief Burnham 33:43

I just assumed that, because I just assumed.

Heather McMeekan 33:45

Exactly.

Deputy Chief Burnham 33:45

So and I made that, I told you that, I told you that in [inaudible]. I'm assuming that you're a gun, a non gun owner, is what I said, I put that out there to you. I put that right out there to you.

Heather McMeekan 33:58

Mm hmm. So,...

Deputy Chief Burnham 34:00

[Interrupts] If I'm making an assumption, I'm putting it right out there for you. Okay.

Heather McMeekan 34:03

We have tried to provide impact statements on how our members have been made to feel by this incident. And I understand that you do not since it does not, but find the criteria to definitely say, Yeah, he definitely intentionally try to do it in a way we know that police officers know how to skirt the law. Our concern is your department lost our faith after we were trying to find help for some of our members try to find their way back to you. And since then,...

Deputy Chief Burnham 34:36

[Interrupts] What do you mean by that? "Find their way back to us?"

Heather McMeekan 34:39

Some of our members who have had negative interactions that they have relayed and some of

the negative interactions that we have had. We've been trying to work with us as a group to begin to have open conversations and to talk about how and when we interact with each other. It's important to try to adhere to understanding things like violence. And sub narratives and subtasks. There's a lot of sub narratives in this that do not meet the criteria where you can probably hold them accountable. But at the very least, it would have been nice to have been received as potential concerned citizens instead of people who are just here to create problems for you.

Deputy Chief Burnham 35:17

I've never, I've never said that.

Heather McMeekan 35:18

You have, and I said that your tone and attitude has been adversarial.

Deputy Chief Burnham 35:22

I've never said that. Because I'm trying to get specific stuff from you Heather. It's like when I talk to you on the phone, I'm trying to get specific information from you. I want to do what I can for you. But if I don't have specific stuff, I can't do too much. And you're not providing anything specific, you keep going broad on everything. You keep going broad on everything.

Heather McMeekan 35:41

Because he was not dumb enough to target us by name. I guess that means then that he gets away with all of this from your perspective.

Deputy Chief Burnham 35:49

So you're saying that.

Heather McMeekan 35:50

The damage to our org has been done, the damage to our people has been done. And I'm trying to make you aware that if you allow officers to do this to your community members, then your department is going to continue to have trouble being trusted in this community.

Deputy Chief Burnham 36:08

I don't expect everybody to agree with every single thing that we do, just like you can't expect everybody to agree with every single thing that you do. But you're everybody has opinions. Moses, I'm sorry,

Heather McMeekan 36:19

You're paid, though, and your department is paid by our tax dollars. So we would like to at least assume that we are when, when we're coming here, like I'd also like to find out, is it? Is there a policy that says that we can only meet in a small room? And that

Deputy Chief Burnham 36:34

[Interrupts] No, there isn't a policy, I want to be able to have an audio and video recording of this. So that you can't say that I said something that I didn't say or I can't say that you said something that you didn't say, we generally like to have that done. And we don't generally do it as a group, either. Any interview that we do anything, sex assault interviews,

Heather McMeekan 36:52

Okay,...

Deputy Chief Burnham 36:53

robbery interviews, any interview that we do, we do one on one with somebody else. So if I'm through, we don't have a whole large group in here, trying to intermingle their thoughts and going back and forth and throwing in their two cents. I want to get that information.

Heather McMeekan 37:08

My friend's trauma is worth more than two cents sir...

Deputy Chief Burnham 37:09

[Interrupts] Ah! **chuckle**

Heather McMeekan 37:11

The pain and...

Deputy Chief Burnham 37:12

[Interrupts] I apologize, that's not what I'm talking about. I'm just saying, I don't have a, I can't have a group in here, throwing in this and this and this, then you throwing more stuff at me.

Heather McMeekan 37:21

This was done against the members of our group.

Deputy Chief Burnham 37:26

What was done, specifically?

Heather McMeekan 37:28

When he deleted our group's thoughtful comments, instead of allowing us to have a conversation, and then he didn't respond back to them and instead, but then left up all the hateful stuff against us, that allowed our people to feel like "okay, we can't even get at this anyway. I guess we'll just have to live with whatever he allows posted about us." And then we're here..

Deputy Chief Burnham 37:54

[Interrupts] You treat him with the same respect. You just said that you delete people off of your stuff that you don't want on yours.

Heather McMeekan 37:59

Ours is not a private business that does a tactical website, that allows men with histories of violence against women to demean women.

Deputy Chief Burnham 38:08

So you have one guy on here. Who else is on there, that has a history of violence? Who else specifically you talk about the R subject. Who else has a history of violence?

Heather McMeekan 38:18

There's a couple on there that have, but I don't have permission from those ex's to relate what they have relayed to us. But they did relate concern that also I'll see that former MPD officer L---- on there. He didn't say anything inappropriate. But he did. But he is someone that we recognize as a former officer,

Deputy Chief Burnham 38:41

So he can't make a comment on that?

Heather McMeekan 38:42

Of course he can.

Deputy Chief Burnham 38:43

Okay. So why are you bringing that up?

Heather McMeekan 38:45

You're asking me for context. I'm giving you context and why that stuff is. I'm telling you that we are concerned that the culture of your department is extremely misogynistic and has no problem causing, and allowing women to feel unsafe and made unsafe by your actions outside of your department.

Deputy Chief Burnham 39:03

MY actions specifically?

Heather McMeekan 39:05

When I say specifically, so it is this is an example of where

Deputy Chief Burnham 39:09

[Interrupts] To me now

Heather McMeekan 39:10

I'm you're asking me about how we're our org, you wanted to talk about my org.

Deputy Chief Burnham 39:16

[Interrupts] I asked I asked you specifically what other people in this chain of people that are on here are ones that are wife abusers or anything like that. You said you didn't have anything other than R----, because no one else wanted you to tell information.

Heather McMeekan 39:29

If a lot of them...

Deputy Chief Burnham 39:30

[Interrupts] Is that based on investigations to where they've been arrested, or is that just based on what their ex wives have said?

Heather McMeekan 39:36

So I'm not going to relate the details about those other than to say that we have concerns and we do have some evidence that shows that some of these people in the past have said things that are quite frightening about women and about hurting women and some of their

Deputy Chief Burnham 39:54

[Interrupts] But you won't specifically give me any of that information?

Heather McMeekan 39:57

I will not because I do not have the permission and they are not on trial so they have not changed

Heather McMeekan 40:03

Our issue is with your department allowing one of your officers on his own time to use his tactical website to degrade all of us protesters in a way that then sparked a conversation that allowed a lot of people that further degrade and demean us and cause us to feel unsafe. do with that what you will that is the crux of our issue..

Deputy Chief Burnham 40:25

Okay?

Heather McMeekan 40:26

We do not feel safe now. We do not feel like we can trust that we will be treated fairly by your department. We do not feel like if if somebody is hurting us that we can trust if we call the police and it was [REDACTED], that he would not be there, that he would not act in a way that caused us to be even more unsafe

Deputy Chief Burnham 40:49

Have you had anyone tell you that they've had contact with [REDACTED]. And that [REDACTED] has been anything but professional with that side from this right here. Aside from this entire thing, is there anything that you have indicated that, that has been the case?

Heather McMeekan 41:05

I don't have permission to relay that information...

Deputy Chief Burnham 41:08

Heather, you can't give me vagaries and not give me specific information.

Heather McMeekan 41:11

We're not talking about this issue.

Deputy Chief Burnham 41:13

That's correct.

Heather McMeekan 41:14

And if they will come forward and speak to you then that then yes, if they will, but I can't do that for them that is on them. But you can see why they are maybe if maybe you can understand a little bit about why they're afraid. If they're told that they have to subject themselves to a questioning process like this, that is just an intake process that is just like it would be if they were criminals, and they're already people who are traumatized and marginalized, and feel like they're not going to get a fair shake here. Why would they feel comfortable coming to you?

Deputy Chief Burnham 41:44

I keep asking you specific questions, you give me vague at ease. You don't give me specific stuff. I can't do anything.

Heather McMeekan 41:52

You can't do anything?

Deputy Chief Burnham 41:52

where I feel like this is adversarial because I'm trying to get more information from you. But you don't want to give me more information. It's like saying I have evidence of this. But you can't see because I don't want you to see stuff

Heather McMeekan 42:04

The stuff that they gave us obviously doesn't meet the criteria for those people being held accountable and court of law. Does that mean? Can you acknowledge that there are some men who are smart enough to be able to harm women, but they don't necessarily get caught for it?

Deputy Chief Burnham 42:19

Oh 150%! Yes, okay. Yes, correct.

Heather McMeekan 42:21

Okay.

Deputy Chief Burnham 42:22

Well, I agree with that!

Heather McMeekan 42:23

People commenting, are people who are known to our members, as people who have done that in the past.

Deputy Chief Burnham 42:29

And I'm saying I need to know some specifics about this. You can't just say this is what we're lumping everyone into because this person's done this, this person's done, that they've not made any threats.

Heather McMeekan 42:40

Our issue is not with those individuals, because it could be them or anybody. Our issue is that the conversation would never have happened on a tactical website, if not for your officer making that post.

Deputy Chief Burnham 42:50

And you can post what you want to post on your website that has no repercussion. I mean, is that not correct? You're violating someone's free speech to say what they want to say. Because everything that I'm sitting here when I talk to you about specifics, and...

Heather McMeekan 43:04

No, I'm not violating free speech. That is, let's talk about freedom of speech. Okay, I'm not the government. Freedom of speech only protects you from the governmental intrusions on your freedom of speech. [REDACTED] is the government and as a business department,

Deputy Chief Burnham 43:19

But he also is a private citizen.

Heather McMeekan 43:22

And as a private citizen, however, he is still a public figure.

Deputy Chief Burnham 43:25

That's correct.

Heather McMeekan 43:25

A public figure who is also employed as a law enforcement officer can be held to a higher standard of ethical conduct outside of his normal duties when such conduct creates fear or is used in a way that it may create loss of trust in the public. And that could be a "Color of Law" violation, it could be an intimidation that could actually go against our first amendment rights, because of the intimidation factor of it. And that's where our concern is, our people were intimidated by this, whether or not you believe that any of this has merit to create that intimidation or not, that is the reality. And it caused a lot of our people's right to not feel safe.

Deputy Chief Burnham 44:11

You contacted Facebook, Facebook did not feel that any of that stuff violated their rules of conduct.

Heather McMeekan 44:17

We don't know if it did or not because it was already pulled down. He had pulled it down.

Deputy Chief Burnham 44:21

Okay.

Heather McMeekan 44:21

So it may have met their criteria, but he pulled it down before they got to it as far as we know.

Deputy Chief Burnham 44:27

They still have access to that information, believe it or not, Facebook still has access to things taken down.

Heather McMeekan 44:33

Yes. We're quite aware of that.

Deputy Chief Burnham 44:34

I've done enough investigations on online stuff that Facebook still has access to that. So if they felt that it was a violation, they would have pulled him, they would have put him in as we keep saying, Facebook Jail, is what everyone keeps saying. So they would have pulled his stuff off there instantly if they..

Heather McMeekan 44:52

Facebook does not deal with misogyny or racism very well at all.

Okay, well, um, and they definitely don't deal with threats of violence and Or people being scary. But this is a local issue as far as we're concerned, and you keep bringing up first amendment rights at them. Again, the first amendment relates only to government intrusion on first amendment rights. So if a member of our local government of which [REDACTED] is and a representative of an enforcement arm of our government conducts himself in a way off duty that causes our members to feel unsafe and and unprotected and fear calling the police department to help protect our rights to protest, that is our issue.

Deputy Chief Burnham 45:33

So what is he done to violate your rights to protest? What has he done? So you because you feel unsafe.

Heather McMeekan 45:39

To feel intimidated,...

Deputy Chief Burnham 45:41

[Interrupts] And it's just, it's exactly like the same thing I've talked to you about,

Heather McMeekan 45:45

I know, you're busy, he's not done anything. I'm telling you. This is all I got. And that's I guess I'll just leave it at that our perception, our fear, is that a member of your police department made it very clear that he really doesn't care about us at all, made it very clear what he thinks of us all as a group. And that description also described Alderwoman Tammy Lee Brown-Edwards, who was there that night and 12 of the WIU students that she had invited there for their very first protest ever. And now they had to read that about them, and how do you think that might have made them feel? And that's the thing, it's about how his behavior made our women and our guests feel. And he doesn't have to take responsibility for any of that. I mean, he did post an apology. And I guess that's all we will get from it. But we have done our due diligence of at least bringing it to your attention as a department. And so if there's nothing that comes out of that further than I guess that's, that's that. But we at least have done our due diligence of trying to get you all the screenshots and writing it up and getting impact statements and handing it off to you. And I guess from there, that's all that what you choose to do after that is out of our hands,

Deputy Chief Burnham 47:00

Are we able to keep that one section that you gave me.

Heather McMeekan 47:02

Yep. If you wouldn't mind making a copy of it for the city attorney so that she may have a copy as well.

Deputy Chief Burnham 47:08

She gets all of this, okay, we get everything.

Heather McMeekan 47:11

So, okay.

Deputy Chief Burnham 47:15

I'll go back through your stuff to compare it to what I have, but you still have not given me any specific information. That's all I need. Heather's I need specific information. I can't have generalities. I have to have specific stuff. So you're saying based on these posts, that you have people that do not feel comfortable with the police department based on these posts, even though he's made no comment, that he's that he works with the local police department? He's made no comment. I use [REDACTED], other than he owns the page. I'm not saying that he didn't post this. I'm just saying he never put out there his name, just his tactical website page.

Heather McMeekan 47:52

Okay.

Deputy Chief Burnham 47:53

I'm sure there's more pages that are out there that are probably much worse than what is on his,

Heather McMeekan 47:58

But they're not run by one of our own.

Deputy Chief Burnham 48:00

[Interrupts] I understand that because it's not where you want to be on that. I understand that. So if I can't get specific information,

Heather McMeekan 48:09

This is all the information that we have.

Deputy Chief Burnham 48:12

Okay,

Heather McMeekan 48:12

This is all the information we have. And we didn't dig any further. Because he's, you know, that's just one problem of many. But, but the fact that our young people were made to feel degraded, and, and intimidated and frightened, that should be a concern,

Deputy Chief Burnham 48:31

Based on these comments that are here?

Heather McMeekan 48:34

Yeah.

Deputy Chief Burnham 48:35

Okay.

Heather McMeekan 48:36

And all the shares, because we don't know where all those were shared to, and all the hundreds of people who responded on that, because that is a lot of people against 20. people standing up for Black Lives Matter to be afraid of. But that's, that's where, that's where it is for us. For us. It's about the fear and the intimidation, having a police officer, we know, maybe the one responding if we ever need help posting that how he feels about us.

Deputy Chief Burnham 49:03

You base that, based off of what that says you think that he's going to treat you differently than anybody else out there?

Heather McMeekan 49:09

We have concerns that that may be the case, yes.

Deputy Chief Burnham 9:13

But you have no evidence that that is ever, you're saying that you do but you don't want to give me that evidence. Am I correct?

Heather McMeekan 49:19

So the comments, those are the comments that people have brought in, we don't consider evidence until we get them to do a formal, you know, are having enough of them in the same vein, and they are not wanting to do that. And so we just let that sit. And we don't and we didn't write any of that in there because it is hearsay for that. This stuff directly impacts on how we feel and we're made to feel based on what we saw and try to write and respond to clarify and to calm people down. So we did try using our soft skills and our fancy manners to stop the hatred directly. And to try to help our members feel safer. And we couldn't even do that. And so at this point, all we can do is give you what the screenshots are, how people felt, and if you don't see anything wrong with that, or that doesn't violate any department policies, it doesn't, it doesn't violate the law. Clearly, it doesn't. And I guess if complaints are only for things for which we had evidence for which have violated the law, then that's asking a lot of private citizens to take on. We do our best. But we've spent a lot of time and our members have spent an awful lot of time attending to the mental health of the people who were especially frightened by this. Some of them are gun violence survivors, having comments about us on a tactical website for bait, for, you know, they're coming and standing with us cause them to feel degraded and unsafe in this community. And that is not a way our students should ever be made to feel that is not a way that that our people are, should ever be made to feel for standing up for Black Lives Matter. But we can't control how that went down. Of course, he's not responsible for what people actually said. But he is responsible for sparking the discussion in providing a forum for it. We appreciate that he said that he apologized after the fact, the damage was already done to both our org, our members, some of our members are our survivors of horrific violence. And they, they probably will not ever do anything publicly in our org again,

Deputy Chief Burnham 51:34

[Interrupts] But you have nothing specifically targeted towards your organization. Do you or do you not?

Heather McMeekan 51:40

Other than the comments made with our names on there? No.

Deputy Chief Burnham 51:45

Okay,

Heather McMeekan 51:46

And saying protesters and him posting it about the same time as our protest was going on? I mean, talking about how that went on the night before. And then him talking about how that is our protest? And that she was laughing at our protest? Yeah, that kind of links back to us in a way. Yeah.

Deputy Chief Burnham 52:03

But she was at your protest.

Heather McMeekan 52:05

Right. But it's a public park,

Deputy Chief Burnham 52:07

Correct.

Heather McMeekan 52:07

We don't control who shows up and we try to run off anyone who behaves in that manner. And we have run off many,

Deputy Chief Burnham 52:14

right, but it's your, it was at your protest is what I'm saying?

Heather McMeekan 52:18

No, she didn't do that at our protest. And she didn't do that at our protest.

Deputy Chief Burnham 52:22

Right after the protest.

Heather McMeekan 52:23

No, she did that before she ever came to our protest. Their interaction had nothing to do with us whatsoever. He made it about us when he said about these people, the caliber of these people,

Deputy Chief Burnham 52:33

Okay

Heather McMeekan 52:34

Because it felt targeted to our people whether or not the language reads that way. And that's what I'm trying to draw your attention to how it felt

Deputy Chief Burnham 52:41

[Interrupts] I know what you're trying to draw my attention to. I'm saying that I can't do anything based on what I have. I don't have enough to do anything with it.

Heather McMeekan 52:49

Okay. There's no provision for officers avoiding the appearance of unethical behavior, or avoiding...

Deputy Chief Burnham 52:56

[Interrupts] You consider this unethical by posting a statement that he had.

Heather McMeekan 53:00

I do.

Deputy Chief Burnham 53:02

I don't. And I can tell you that I mean, I have to base it off with a reasonable standard of what's there. You know, how many people can look at this and say, This is what took place? I mean, I'm looking at it. There's no threats made to anybody. He's posting a statement, saying and then making the second wave..

Heather McMeekan 53:03

Posting about protesters and equating a 110 pound woman to two large men who murdered police officers in cold blood when he talked, when he talked about LA

Deputy Chief Burnham 53:32

Does it say anything about a 110 pound woman?

Heather McMeekan 53:36

No, I did not put out her physical description on there.

Deputy Chief Burnham 53:38

Okay, but he didn't do that, though. Right?

Heather McMeekan 53:41

So no, he equated it like he was in big danger. Like he felt like he was in big danger. And our concern is that if he can't discern the difference between a 110 pound woman, with a coin purse,

Deputy Chief Burnham 53:54

[Interrupts] Here's my questioning whether you were a paramedic?

Heather McMeekan 53:57

Mm hmm.

Deputy Chief Burnham 53:58

Okay, so you don't think 110 pound a woman on meth could do any damage to a [inaudible].

Heather McMeekan 54:04

Are you accusing her of being on meth?

Deputy Chief Burnham 54:05

No, no, no, I'm not. I'm just saying we don't know what she's on. We don't know if there's anything there. We don't have any idea. But you're saying a 110 pound woman can't do anything to anybody.

Heather McMeekan 54:14

I didn't say that. I said that. You said that's not what I said at all. And again, you're putting words in my mouth.

Deputy Chief Burnham 54:19

I'm not putting in words, I'm trying to ask the question. You're saying that she's a 110 pound woman. This is not even mentioned here.

Heather McMeekan 54:27

Mm.

Deputy Chief Burnham 54:28

Nothing doesn't mention that.

Heather McMeekan 54:30

So let me finish please, without interruption if I could for just a minute.

Deputy Chief Burnham 14:34

Okay.

Heather McMeekan 54:36

She is a small petite woman. She relays that she was on the square and he drove up in his own personal vehicle, which has tinted windows. He is someone who is always armed and always says, you know, tactical gear at his disposal. And she relayed that she felt scared by the way that he drove up and kind of parked a little cock-eyed and they had words between them. If and yet he related as if he was attacked, he says he was reminded of, you know, shades of LA, that is kind of implying that there was way more to that than there was, that we have a concern about as well. Because why if he is really believing that he isn't as much dangerous of people in LA, by a woman holding a coin purse, you know, when it's fully light outside on our square, and she is someone who is not even that close to him, and she's outside and he's safely in his vehicle. And then he posts that as if he was in mortal danger. Uh, and but sets off that's that kind of

Deputy Chief Burnham 55:40

[Interrupts] you're doing the same thing, Heather, as far as you saying that people that drive by your protests and honk their horns are, are all racist because they honk their horns when they drive past your protests.

Heather McMeekan 55:50

No we're saying, I say all white people are racist, because all white people have racial bias. Yes. Okay. I'm saying that people who drive past but again, this is not about me in our protests.

Deputy Chief Burnham 56:02

Have you or have you not posted signs of people or posted trucks? I mean, they have a Trump sign in the back. I'm asking you the question because you're holding him to a standard that you feel that you should get to.

Heather McMeekan 56:14

A standard as a paid law enforcement professional. I'm a volunteer of a volunteer org.

Deputy Chief Burnham 56:20

Okay. I'm just trying to unwind a double standard that is here, Heather. I think there's a double standard here.

Heather McMeekan 56:31

I think we're done.

Deputy Chief Burnham 56:32

Okay. Cool enough.

Heather McMeekan 56:36

Thank you very much for your time. Thanks Essie.

Dr. Essie Rutledge 56:45

It is cold in here.

Deputy Chief Burnham 56:46

You've got a jacket on Essie. Come on.

Heather McMeekan 56:59

I'll turn off the recorder.

I'll tell Gina not to bother coming.

Dr. Essie Rutledge 57:10

But you'll be by yourself.

Heather McMeekan 57:19

Yeah, I can't send Gina into this.

Transcribed by SGR

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