



VIA HAND DELIVERY

January 22, 2024

City of Youngsville  
201 Iberia Street  
Youngsville, LA 70592

Attention:

K. Wade Trahan, Atty.

RE: Investigation of former  
Chief Rickey Boudreaux  
Youngsville Police Department

Dear Mr. Trahan:

Resulting from your request of July 26, 2023, the Lafayette Parish Sheriff's Office has concluded its investigation into the above referenced matter.

Per your correspondence, "several Youngsville Police Department employees/officers came forward and shared accounts of misconduct on the part of former Chief Boudreaux". Accordingly, this information was forwarded to our criminal investigation division.

### **THE INCIDENTS ADDRESSED**

The alleged incidents requested to be addressed were defined in your correspondence as follows:

- I. Property/Evidence
- II. Juvenile Citations
- III. Fuel Usage
- IV. Evalyn Harrison
- V. Methamphetamine located in Youngsville Police Department



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## THE INVESTIGATION

Detectives were assigned the task of reviewing the information provided concerning your inquiry. Once reviewed, specific tasks were assigned to each detective.

Numerous hours were spent reviewing documentation. That documentation included, but was not limited to, departmental policies, evidence records, vouchers, incident reports, citations, purchase orders, receipts and audits. Additional information was gathered by onsite observations.

Note that all Youngsville officers (including reserves) were contacted to provide statements if they had any information. Only two (2) came forward with allegations that had been previously handled internally or by other law enforcement agencies, which included the Louisiana State Police.

## THE FINDINGS

### I. PROPERTY/EVIDENCE

#### *a. Stolen Bicycle*

**Accusation:** In 2016 or 2017, a distinct green bicycle with yellow wheels was taken into custody following the arrest of an individual. The subject returned to take possession of his bicycle, upon his release, but it was unable to be located and the city had to purchase a new bicycle as a result. Several months later, while at a Christmas party being hosted at the Chief of Police's home, two (2) officers observed what they believed to be the missing bike.

**Findings:** Youngsville Police Department Evidence records provided by Sergeant Larry Holland (Evidence Custodian) listed *case # 16-168954 – property - blue and yellow huffy Warhawk bicycle SN# 562561911A, entered by Sergeant Scott Bernard and placed into POD1 on 6-01-16 at 14:39hrs and released on 2-7-16 at 08:05 hrs.* Relative to this bicycle, the evidence records indicate that the bicycle was released to the owner. *Noted are the dates of property being entered and the property being released to the owner.*

No receipts or paperwork were provided to indicate a bicycle was purchased by the city for this individual.

#### *b. Table Saw*

**Accusation:** On May 28, 2023 Sergeant Holland arrived at the Youngsville Police Department Patrol Center, 304 Fourth Street, and observed Chief Boudreaux's unit with a utility trailer



attached, backed up to the building. Chief Boudreaux was observed loading a DeWalt table saw into the trailer. Sergeant Holland noticed the CONEX container, used to store evidence, to have its door open. Sergeant Holland recognized the saw as being evidence related to an active investigation (21-347336).

Sergeant Holland confronted Chief Boudreaux stating the item was part of an active investigation and it needed to be placed back into the container. Sergeant Holland placed the item back into the container and secured the container with the lock. This same day Sergeant Holland observed Chief Boudreaux had again unlocked the storage container, removed the table saw and was placing it in the rear of his unmarked unit. Sergeant Holland again placed the saw back into the CONEX container and locked it. Sergeant Holland observed Chief Boudreaux with a set of keys he believed belong to second evidence custodian, Officer Fruge.

**Findings:** Sergeant Larry Holland was tasked as the Evidence Custodian in 2015. At that time, Sergeant Holland did not hold the rank of Sergeant. When tasked with this assignment Sergeant Holland was able to complete an inventory of only the one CONEX box, which was hand written, on legal paper. Later, Sergeant Holland was promoted to the rank of Sergeant and placed on patrol. At the time of his promotion Sergeant Holland was now responsible for a patrol shift as well as retaining his duties as evidence custodian.

The Youngsville Police Department Patrol Center has three CONEX containers located on the property. Sergeant Holland advised that one CONEX container is used to store items of property/evidence that are too large or items he didn't want to keep inside the evidence room. This CONEX box is the one Sergeant Holland observed Chief Boudreaux removing items from.

The practices of property/evidence handling were discussed, along with the need for Sergeant Holland to conduct an audit of the one specific CONEX container that had not been audited since 2015. It was also learned that the property/evidence submitted prior to 2015 were not linked to a case number. This was due to the agency switching from the old reporting system to the most current reporting system.

When asked about evidence keys and access to evidence storage, Sergeant Holland indicated as evidence custodian he had a key, and Officer Fruge, the assistant evidence custodian, also had a key. There was a third key that was placed in Chief Boudreaux's desk drawer, in the event someone locked their key in the evidence room. This particular key was placed in an envelope, and sealed with evidence tape. The envelope was later found to have been opened. It was also learned at this time, there was no video evidence of the encounter with Chief Boudreaux due to the surveillance cameras not recording.

The CONEX container located behind the Youngsville Patrol Center was described as being used to keep items of evidence/found property. The specific CONEX container was described by Sergeant Holland as being unorganized and filled from top to bottom with power tools, bicycles, and other miscellaneous items too large to be placed inside the evidence room. Inside the CONEX container on the floor were tags not attached to items. If you needed to get into the container and



locate an item, you would have to crawl around and/or take items out, locate the item you needed and then replace all the items you took out.

Investigators told Sergeant Holland in order to show that items were missing, an audit of this CONEX container needed to be completed. Sergeant Holland completed an inventory of the one CONEX container between August 3, 2023 and August 12, 2023. During this inventory several items were discovered missing and the confirmation of labels that should be on property, were found on the floor and documented.

Sergeant Holland reviewed both paper and electronic copies of the agency's evidence/property records for the missing items and confirmed there were no records of the items being released to their rightful owner and none of the items were listed on a motion of destruction.

Sergeant Holland provided a list of the following missing property:

- *Rigid miter saw (Model # MS12501) (SN: 0018710488) Case Number: 06-002740 (Lake Charles Police Department)* There is no evidence record of this item to indicate a disposition, only the LCPD report.
- *Hitachi air compressor (SN:0800878). Case number is unknown* – Only a picture of a computer screen was provided showing the category, make, model and serial number.
- *Electric hedge trimmer (Black and Decker) 18" (Model # 8134TA), Gas weed eater (Echo) (Model # SRM2601) (ID # 058835), and a Craftsman tool-set 154 mechanics. Case Number: 06-220376* – The property record with the report shows the ECHO weed eater was destroyed, the electric Hedge trimmer where a tag was located with no item attached, is listed in the YPD narrative, but not listed on the property report.
- Case number 12-227177 The craftsman tool-set listed in this case is listed as LAWN/YARD/GARDEN EQUIPMENT has a description of "Craftsman Tool Set" a make of "Milwaukee" model of "Sawzall" and a loss type of Acadiana Crime Lab. The *Echo weed eater 30" (SN 05152744) and Echo SRM225 edger (SN S03912450835). Case Number 12-227177*; The property report with this report, only shows the Echo straight shaft weed-eater, listing no serial number. There is no property record listing the Echo edger. The narrative indicates "*the aforementioned items located in the rear compartment area of the vehicle were released to owner*", One of the items listed is a Craftsman tool case. It's unknown if this is the Craftsman tool set.
- *Dewalt Impact Driver (Model # DCF885) (SN: 617386), 18-109882*, - An evidence tag was located but the item wasn't located. This is in the list of 24 items listed as missing.
- *Porter Cable plate joiner mod 557 type 3 with cord (SN: 0902772) Case Number: 18-109882*; This item is listed as "tag found" but the item missing. There is no record of the item listed in the property records
- *Pink/White 24" Women's Huffy Summerland bicycle (SN: HTC16MC3384) Case Number: 21-288952*. There is an evidence tag, but the item is missing.



There were an additional twenty-three (23) items provided by Sergeant Holland that had not previously been reported missing. These items were related to YPD case # 18-109882. The report and documentation attached show no indication of a status or storage location. These items were related to a traffic stop conducted by Officer Zach Schaubert on or about April 4, 2018, in the 1500 Blk of HWY 92. These items are not in the one storage location (CONEX) inventoried by Sgt Holland but contain no status or location data to determine their current status.

**NOTE:**

The table saw Sergeant Holland witnessed Chief Boudreaux to have removed was not missing from the CONEX box. The saw is listed in property under case 21-347336.

A review of the current agency policy, referred to as General Order #61 which covers the Agency's evidence/property policy provides officers with the following guidelines.

*Managing Recovered, Found or Seized Property and Money: Inventory/Inspection of the Evidence Unit shall be conducted:*

*A. The inventory and inspection of the Evidence Unit shall be conducted:*

- 1) Monthly by the immediate supervisor of the evidence custodian to ensure adherence to the property control procedures. This shall be documented by way of a monthly inspection log retained within the Evidence Unit and signed by both the Evidence Custodian and the supervisor conducting inspection.*
- 2) At least semi-annually, unannounced inspections of property storage areas are to be conducted to ensure accountability and adherence of security procedures. The Chief of Police may direct more frequent inspection as he sees fit.*
- 3) Annually to inventory property held by the Department to ensure integrity of the system. The inspection shall be conducted by a supervisor who is not affiliated with the Evidence Unit.*
- 4) Whenever a new evidence custodian is assigned. The inventory shall ensure that records are correct and properly annotated. The inventory shall be conducted by the newly designated evidence custodian and the outgoing evidence custodian and shall be documented.*

**Conclusion**

There was clearly a severe lack of internal (operational) controls, with no system of checks and balances. The lack of accountability permeated the Command Staff. From Chief Boudreaux to Assistant Chief Latiolais, to Deputy Chief Thompson, to Sergeant Holland, no one followed written policies and procedures of the Youngsville Police Department. There has been no audit of



the property/evidence since two thousand fifteen (2015). Per policy "inventory and inspections of the Evidence Unit being conducted monthly by the immediate supervisor" was never adhered to.

The investigation was presented with several challenges in connection with trying to assess whether any person acted with the intent of distorting the results of an investigation by removing or altering evidence. The record system is inadequate to nonexistent and lacks proper documentation that would allow for tracking evidence from intake to disposal. There is no organization within the storage container, as described by Sergeant Holland, and it is overfilled and in disarray from top to bottom.

There was a lack of experience and training among the evidence custodians necessary to manage the evidence effectively. There are no stringent labeling or standardized documentation protocols for the evidence at every stage to ensure accurate tracking. This is observed by the documentation provided by Sergeant Holland, and it is apparent that the applicable policies and procedures are not being followed, particularly those specifically listed in *Youngsville Police Department's General Orders #61- The inventory and inspection of the Evidence Unit being conducted monthly by the immediate supervisor*.

The recommendation is a full and complete audit of the evidence section by the Youngsville Police Department, as it is unknown if any of the property listed as missing is indeed missing or alternatively, could be misplaced and/or documented incorrectly. Also, moving forward, all evidence in the custody of the Youngsville Police Department should be maintained in one centralized system. All items should indicate location in an organized and detailed manner. Items that are not able to be identified should be disposed of by correct procedures and in accordance with statute.

It is also recommended that the Youngsville Police assign a person or persons whose primary responsibility is the management of evidence. This person(s) should be properly trained and adhere to all policies set forth by the agency. Due to the inappropriate evidence controls, Youngsville Police Department should immediately report any possible "Brady" issues to the District Attorney's Office.

The "Brady" issue addresses exculpatory evidence which is favorable to the person charged and material to the issue of the guilt of the person charged. The prosecution is obligated to disclose to the defense evidence that is favorable to a defendant. See: Brady v. Maryland, 373 U.S. 83 (1963).

## **II. JUVENILE CITATIONS**

**Accusation:** It was believed that numerous juvenile citations issued by Youngsville Police Officers were not being sent to the District Attorney's Office as per statute.



**Findings:** A list of Juvenile citations was provided to investigators, starting in January 2018 and ending in April of 2023, totaling 1,035 citations. An audit of these citations was conducted by the 15<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Attorney's Office. After the audit it was found that 234 citations were reported not to have been received by the DA's office. These citation numbers were provided to the Youngsville Police Department Criminal Investigations secretary to attempt to locate. Investigators received copies of the citations from Youngsville Police Department of 141 juvenile citations out of the 234 missing, 104 of these citation copies were stamped as being received by the DA's office.

A count of 71 juvenile citation copies listing out-of-parish addresses for violators were not stamped as received by the District Attorney's Office. A count of 6 juvenile citation copies were notated to have been sent to other Parishes, due to the violator addresses being outside of Lafayette Parish. One juvenile citation copy was notated to have been "given to" the Youngsville Police Chief. Of the 234 missing juvenile citations missing by the District Attorney's Office, 212 of them were retrieved by Lydia with the Records Section of Youngsville Police Department.

Juvenile citations were being sent from the issuing officer through a patrol secretary to one of several traffic clerks then to the Criminal Investigations clerk. The Criminal Investigations clerk then forwards them to the District Attorney's Office by anyone going to the District Attorney's Office. This leaves numerous steps for citations to be lost, mishandled or pulled, with no accountability at any point.

A recommendation that would help with this situation would be electronic citations. This give accountability for each citation, record of the status of each citation and less manpower required to handle citations.

If this recommendation is not able to be accomplished then a single repository of all citations, to include juvenile citations, within the police department should be established. The citations would then be forwarded to the prosecutor for dissemination of juvenile citations and review and prosecution of all other citations.

### ***Conclusion***

Noting the provisions of La R.S. 14:134, 32:398.2 and 32:398.3 (which are summarized below), the finding concerning Juvenile Citations has been forwarded to the District Attorney's Office.

La R.S. 14:134      Malfeasance in Office

La R.S. 32:398.2      Disposition of Traffic Citations

"A. ... "shall deposit the original citation ... with a court having jurisdiction..."

La R.S. 32:398.3      Illegal cancellation of Traffic Citations



Additionally, La. Children's Code Article 302 clearly dictates that "District courts, ... , shall have original juvenile jurisdiction for the parish..."

Chief Boudreaux and the Command Staff failed to implement any checks and balances to properly track the processing of any juvenile citations

There existed no uniform policy or procedure to follow in the processing of juvenile citations. On occasion as many as nine (9) persons were involved before a citation made its way to the District Attorney's Office.

Therefore, due to lack of documentation and record keeping, there are citations unaccounted for.

### **III. FUEL USAGE**

**Accusation:** Inappropriate fuel usage from 2017-2023.

**Findings:** During the fall of Two Thousand Sixteen (2016) then Chief Boudreaux requested an "allowance" for vehicle expenditures. During discussions he indicated he would also submit fuel charges in addition to the allowance being allotted. The City Attorney apparently attempting to clarify the "allowance" indicated that Chief Boudreaux can receive the allowance, but the "City cannot pay for any expenses on the vehicle".

Within calendar year Two Thousand Seventeen (2017) Chief Boudreaux began submitting his fuel expense to the City of Youngsville for payment. The City of Youngsville, after processing the fuel charge submittals, paid same.

Concerning complaint of fuel usage from the auxiliary fuel tank located on the premises of Youngsville Police Department, the following is submitted. No apparent records existed as to what, if any, amount of fuel was removed from the fuel tank, when, and by whom. No policy as to the use of said fuel existed except the stated use was for emergencies. No one monitored the consumption or use of said fuel.

### ***Conclusion***

Accountability was lacking or absent at various stages from the submittal of the fuel charges from 2017-2023 by Chief Boudreaux, to the authorization for payment and payment of same by the City of Youngsville.





Once again there were no systems of checks and balances. No policy or procedures were in place for usage of fuel from the tank at issue.

#### **IV. EVALYN HARRISON**

**Accusation:** Evalyn Harrison residing in portable building on premises of Youngsville Police Department. Contracted lawn services provided.

**Findings:** The city administration was made aware of an individual (Evalyn Harrison) residing in a portable building situated behind the City of Youngsville's Police Department.

City administrators promptly directed Chief Boudreaux to remove her from the premises.

The Police Department was utilizing this structure for the storage of records. The City could not determine when her occupancy began.

Interviews and documentations indicate she had access to all areas of the Youngsville Police Department with the exception of the evidence locker.

Evidence shows that she was paid for "lawn services" as per Purchase Orders submitted by Chief Boudreaux, processed and paid by the City of Youngsville.

#### ***Conclusion***

Again, there was no system of checks and balances. Accountability was lacking or absent from the submittal of purchase orders, to the payment of purchase orders associated with Evalyn Harrison by the City of Youngsville.

#### **V. METHAMPHETAMINE LOCATED IN OFFICE OF THE THEN CHIEF OF YOUNGSVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**Accusation:** During 2023, a narcotic determined to be methamphetamine was located on the floor in the office space assigned to Chief Rickey Boudreaux.



**Findings:** The Narcotics Division of Lafayette Parish Sheriff's Office conducted the investigation which included, but was not limited to, numerous interviews and collection of various evidence.

### ***Conclusion***

Upon conclusion of the Narcotics Divisions investigation, their findings were forwarded to the District Attorney's Office.

### **SUMMATION**

The City of Youngsville administrators along with Mayor Ken Ritter acted promptly upon receipt of information alleging possible misconduct by then Chief Boudreaux. Lafayette Parish Sheriff's Office, at the request of Mayor Ritter, conducted a lengthy and thorough investigation.

The conclusion of this investigation clearly indicates that the practices commonly followed by members and the Command Staff of the Youngsville Police Department could be described as disorganized, chaotic and borders on gross negligence. The reported absence of then Chief Boudreaux on various occasions only contributed to the maham.

In many cases, evidence and written policies of Youngsville Police Department were ignored by all involved. Evidence was handled in what can only be described as extraordinarily careless and in a haphazard manner with less than adequate documentation or storage security. From a review of the evidence policy it appears that the agency has adequate policy should same have been adhered to.

Juvenile citations went through numerous hands prior to being sent to the prosecutor. There seemed to be some effort by some employees to maintain records(copies of citations), but the process is less than secure with little, if any, checks and balances.

The Chief of Police utilized fuel that he may not have been entitled to for an extended period of time which was not noticed by anyone involved in the process. Whether authorized or unauthorized, for seven years Chief Boudreaux submitted fuel expenses and same were processed and paid for by the City of Youngsville.

A civilian, who is known to be involved in criminal activity, was allowed in and around the police department and was even paid as a contract employee.

Though Chief Boudreaux holds primary responsibilities as the agency head, all members of the Command Staff as well as supervisors, hold some responsibility for not making efforts to correct the confusion that the agency operated in.

With Chief Boudreaux's resignation, only part of the inherent problems within the agency have been resolved. The entire Command Staff contributed to the inherent problems by continuing



deplorable practices and procedures. The magnitude of substandard internal operations of the Youngsville Police Department, as stated above, casts aspersions on any potential malfeasance in office concern.

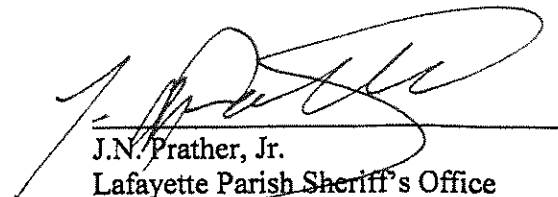
Knowing that the oversight of the Mayor and the city administration has over the Police Department is limited, it would be recommended that the interim, as well as the next elected Chief, be encouraged to review the agency policies and make any necessary changes. Through recent history the things that get law enforcement agencies in trouble most frequently is evidence and traffic citations. The Youngsville Police Department should report any "Brady" issues as defined in item "I." of this report. Any such issue identified is to be reported to the District Attorney's Office.

Technology is readily available to greatly enhance the security of both. Evidence and citation management software along with proper policy adherence would greatly reduce if not eliminate concerns for these issues.

If I or this agency can be of any further assistance please feel free to contact me.

With kind regards, I remain

Respectfully,



J.N. Prather, Jr.  
Lafayette Parish Sheriff's Office  
Assistant Legal Counsel

