

**STATE OF ARIZONA
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS SECTION
REPORT**

DATE SUBMITTED TO SUPERVISOR: March 19, 2026

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DATE APPROVED BY SUPERVISOR: March 19, 2026

CASE NAME: Tombstone Marshalls Office

REPORT TYPE: Tombstone Marshall's Office Case Closing Supplement - Supplement #14

AUTHOR: Cope, James

SUPERVISOR: Supervising Special Agent Daniel Miller

TMO Closing Report

Between February 24, 2025, and March 18th, 2026, AGO Investigations conducted targeted inquiries into the **Tombstone Marshal's Office K9 Program** and the **trade/disposition of firearms via West End Pawn & Gun**, following a referral from the **Cochise County Sheriff's Office (CCSO)** regarding both administrative and potential criminal concerns at TMO.

Key conclusions:

- **K9 Program Funding & Administration:**

All **identified monetary donations** associated with the TMO K9 program—**Walter Ferguson Foundation (\$18,000)** and **Dog Days of Tombstone proceeds**—were **accounted for**. No criminal violations were found in canine procurement via Knight Watch K9 LLC (Deputy Constance Baker's business), though the program operated without formal procurement documentation and appears to **violate City of Tombstone Purchasing Policy 118.1** (administrative noncompliance).

- **Walter Ferguson Donation Amount:**

Conflicting statements alleging a **\$25,000** donation and **\$7,000 unaccounted** were resolved by documents confirming **\$18,000** was donated via **Helldorado Inc.** to the **City of Tombstone**. No funds are missing.

- **Firearms Trade with West End Pawn & Gun:**

Evidence shows **14 of 23** transported firearms were accepted and traded for a patrol rifle and ammunition; **9 items were not accepted** and, per multiple accounts, were returned the same day (there remains a documentation gap for those 9 items). The transaction appears to be an **administrative matter**; statewide practice allows private resale/auction of seized firearms. No criminal findings established.

- **Allegations of OnDuty Misconduct / Record System Access:**

Spillman access and **onduty misconduct** concerns were as they need to be handled by a local agency and is an **administrative** issues for TMO to report to the Arizona Peace Officer Standards and Training Board, (AZPOST). No criminal inquiry conducted by AGO on this item.

- **Deputy John Coby (also referenced as "Coby") Background:**

Material discrepancies exist in Coby's pre-employment disclosures regarding prior internal investigations in Maryland. AGO subpoena was **not fulfilled** by the **Maryland Transportation Authority**; however, Coby's ex-wife Julie was interviewed and confirmed that she did receive a letter from the **Maryland State Transportation Authority, (MSTRAP)**, stating that the misconduct allegations against were **unfounded**. The letter also stated that John Coby was welcome to reapply with the agency for up to 3 years when his Maryland peace officer status would expire.

Scope & Method

- **Initiating Request:** CCSO letter dated **February 24, 2025** requested AGO review of: records access, on-duty misconduct, alleged prescription exchange, K9 unit funding/accounting, and firearms disposition.
- **AGO Focus:** K9 funding/administration and firearms trade/disposition (other items deemed administrative or previously addressed by CCSO).
- **Sources:** Interviews (telephonic/video/in person), device evidence, email/financial records, event finance summaries, pawn receipts, handler contracts, court warrant, and attachments noted below.
- **Limitations:** Some transcripts are **unverified** (speech-to-text + human edits; may include errors). A **Maryland subpoena** concerning Coby was **not fulfilled**. TMO's lack of formal documentation and templates hindered definitive administrative compliance assessment. Additionally, the Jim Adams bank records subpoenaed from **J.P. Chase Morgan** was **not fulfilled** at the conclusion of this report. It should be noted that this subpoena became unnecessary as the donation from the **Walter Ferguson Foundation** was accounted for.

Chronology (Key Events)

- **Nov 10, 2020:** Jim Adams sworn as Tombstone Marshal.
- **May 24, 2022:** Baker attends a handler class with her own canine (not billed to TMO).
- **Nov 19, 2024:** K9 **Hawk** bites handler Deputy **John Coby**; Coby kills Hawk with his duty weapon. **CCSO** later deemed shooting **within policy**.
- **Apr 4, 2024 → Jun 7, 2024:** **Walter Ferguson Foundation donation processed as \$18,000** via JP Morgan Chase DAF → **HellDorado Inc** → **City of Tombstone**.
- **May–Jun 2024:** **Dog Days of Tombstone** raises funds; \$6,000 to **City of Tombstone** K9 fund and \$6,000 to **International Alliance of Disabilities** (Joey Adams' charity); operating costs deducted; balance retained for future event.
- **Jun 3, 2025:** Interviews of Deputy **John Coby** re: Maryland cold case and pre-employment disclosures.
- **Jul 11, 2025:** Meeting with **Mayor Dustin Escapule** and Marshal **Bob Randall/Randle** re: firearms concerns.
- **Sep 24, 2025:** Telephonic interviews of **Deputy Constance Baker** (two parts due to tech issues).
- **Oct 20, 2025:** Remote video interview of **Jim Adams**.
- **Dec 3–4, 2025:** Telephonic interview and records from **Evidence Custodian Lecia Wilkins**; spreadsheet "Guns West End" received.
- **Dec 11, 2025:** Telephonic interview of **Joe Ortega** (Walter Ferguson Foundation).
- **Jan 13–14, 2026:** **Work cell phone** used by Adams located; seized as **Evidence Item #SG1** by SA Scott Glass.
- **Feb 4, 2026:** **Search Warrant #2026000907** signed by Judge **William Cawthon** (Maricopa County Superior Court); extraction period **Jan 1, 2024–Feb 10, 2025**; **no pertinent information** found.
- **Feb 16, 2026:** In person meeting with **Joe Ortega**; donation documentation confirms **\$18,000**.
- **March 18th, 2026:** Telephonic interview with TMO Deputy John Coby's ex-wife [REDACTED].

Findings

1) K9 Program Funding & Administration

- **Program Purpose:** Address narcotics trafficking/human smuggling/pursuits along Hwy 80 near the border.
- **Purchases/Training:** Initial purchase/training approximated **\$7,500 per dog**, funded by donations/grants; **Year 2** City line item **\$6,000** for veterinary only; food donated; handlers purchased initial equipment.
- **Dogs:** **KEYU** (handler Marion Baer), **Dayak** (initially John Coby; later Sergeant Doreo), **Hawk** (John Coby), **Stinger** (Marshal Sharp), **Gnomes** (Baker's personal dog). All trained for **drug detection** (cocaine, heroin, meth; fentanyl added; no marijuana).
- **Records:** Training/deployment logs in a canine software starting with "AP"; personnel files (vaccinations/certs) created at the Mayor's request; purportedly held at Marshal **Bob Randall's** office.

Funding Streams Documented:

- **Walter Ferguson Foundation:**
Confirmed **\$18,000** via JP Morgan Chase DAF (Check #0000018894) paid to **HellDorado Inc.** and then to **City of Tombstone (HellDorado** Check #6256, June 7, 2024).
 - Ortega initially alleged **\$25,000** donation and **\$7,000 missing**, but subsequent documentation and inperson provision (Feb 16, 2026) confirmed **\$18,000** with purpose "at the discretion of the charity for TMO purchase of a drug detection dog."
 - **Conclusion:** No missing funds; amount is **\$18,000**.
- **Dog Days of Tombstone (2024 Event):**
Net proceeds **\$17,199.89** after **\$5,411.18** operating costs; allocations:
 - **\$5,199.89** retained by HellDorado Inc. for 2025 event;
 - **\$6,000.00** to **International Alliance of Disabilities** (Joey Adams' service dog charity) – Check #1008, May 24, 2024;
 - **\$6,000.00** to **City of Tombstone (TMO K9 Unit)** – Check #1009, May 24, 2024;
 - **GoFundMe** (Deputy Marshal Sharp) **\$1,401.33** processed via American Southwest Credit Union Check #002230182, paid June 28, 2024.
 - **Conclusion:** All donations traced and **accounted for**.

Procurement/Policy Compliance:

- **Knight Watch K9 LLC (Constance Baker):** Registered AZ entity #L21529411. Baker sold/trained canines for multiple agencies.
- **Contracts:** Handler level contracts dated **Nov 9, 2024** (Coby/Hawk; Doreo/Dayak; Sharp/Stinger) included clauses passing financial responsibility to "my department."
- **City Purchasing Policy 118.1:** Authorizes only **City Clerk** or Mayor/Council designated purchasing agent.
 - **Issue:** No formal City contract with Knight Watch K9; arrangement described as "handshake agreement."
 - **Conclusion:** **Administrative violation** (policy noncompliance). **No criminal violation** found.

Notable Incident:

- **Nov 19, 2024 – Hawk Bite:** Coby attacked, discharged firearm; **CCSO** determined shooting **within policy**. Program later suspended/terminated; dogs transferred to handlers for **\$1** each paid to the City of Tombstone.

2) Firearms Disposition – West End Pawn & Gun

- **Transport:** Evidence Custodian **Lecia Wilkins** transported **23 firearms** to West End Pawn & Gun; acted alone; list created; receipt delivered to **Jim Adams**.
- **Outcome:** West End accepted **14** firearms; **9** were rejected (described as BB guns/nonfunctional parts in Wilkins' account) and, per Adams, were returned the same day as required by FFL practices.
- **Trade Value/Items:** Receipt #11264 in **Lecia Wilkins'** name; total value **\$2,370.00**; exchanged for a **patrol rifle** and **match-grade ammunition**. A **vintage Colt 1849** revolver handled on consignment and later sold. Adams provided check #151015004733 from West End Pawn in the amount of \$850.00 to the City of Tombstone on April 16th, 2025, for the sale of the **vintage Colt 1849** revolver.
- **Documentation Review:**
 - Spreadsheet "**Guns West End**" (received Dec 4, 2025) lacked serials on lines 1–23 and listed "long guns" (lines 24–34) and "hand guns" (lines 35–40). Receipts accounted for all accepted guns except **line 38 ("M1911A1 67 45acp")** due to poor descriptors/no matching receipt.
- **Conclusion:** Practice aligns with **common administrative disposal** methods (private resale/auction); **no criminal findings**. Documentation gap remains regarding the nine rejected/returned items and the item at spreadsheet line 38.
- **Recommendation:** The City of Tombstone conduct a complete audit of the Tombstone Marshal's Office evidence room and the department and evidence custodian complete a complete audit of the TMO evidence room and become compliant to the standards set by the **International Association of Property and Evidence, (IAPE)**.

3) Deputy John Coby ("Coby") – Pre-Employment Background

- **External Contact:** Howard County (MD) cold case detective **Danila/ Daniel Branigan** sought interview (May–Jun 2025) regarding Coby's possible involvement in a 2017 homicide/body dump and internal affairs matters at **Maryland State Transportation Police (MSTPD)** involving relationships with informants.
- **TMO Application:** Coby stated Maryland internal investigation was **closed/unfounded**; later asserted his wife received a letter stating such but it was **lost** during relocation. Confirmed by Julie Coby on during an interview on March 18th, 2026. Former **MSTPD** supervisor reportedly believed it was closed/unfounded but is no longer employed.
- **AGO Action:** Subpoena to **Maryland Transportation Authority** for IA records was **not fulfilled**.
- **Conclusion: Resolved.** The background process appears **factual**.
- Former Marshal **Jim Adams** did not know and did not confirm whether prior contact was made to Coby's prior agency and if a **personnel review** was performed by TMO. No criminal issues.

4) Other Allegations from CCSO Referral

- **Spillman Records Access:** to be addressed by a local agency and/or TMO.
- **On-Duty Sexual Misconduct / Sleeping on Duty:** Reports characterized as **rumor driven** or **staffing/shift length related**; these are **administrative** for TMO to address via policy and supervision.
- **Prescription Medication Allegation (CCSO Deputy Williamson to TMO Deputy Marian Baer):** Included in the original referral list but not investigated further; no AGO criminal finding found.

Interview & Evidence Highlights

- **Adams (Oct 20, 2025, remote video):**
Detailed program purpose, funding approach (donations/grants), training scope (drug detection only), records (canine software “AP...”), administration via **Helldorado**, a binder with receipts/expenses, and firearms trade rationale. Denied personal financial benefit and alleged affair; criticized background process for Coby; described Hawk bite incident and program suspension/termination.
- **Constance Baker (Sep 24, 2025, Telephonic; Interview #1 & #2):**
Provided handler contracts; described role of **Knight Watch K9 LLC**; fund flows (Dog Days/GoFundMe; checks for City and charity), training courses, and retraining of Coby’s dog. Stated no access to City K9 account; cited hearsay of a \$36–\$38K account but no knowledge of disposition; offered documents/records.
- **Joe Ortega (Dec 11, 2025 phone; Feb 16, 2026 in-person):**
Initially asserted **\$25,000** donation and potential misuse; criticized acquisition of free dog with bite history; later **provided documentation confirming \$18,000** donation via **Helldorado**; agreed to supply correspondence and check copies; expressed ongoing support for other agencies, and victim posture if misappropriation were proven.
- **Lecia Wilkins (Dec 3–4, 2025 phone + email):**
Transported **23** firearms; receipt to Adams; no personal retention of receipts; West End accepted **14**; the remainder were nonfunctional items in her recollection; sent spreadsheet “Guns West End” (serial numbers absent on lines 1–23).
- **Device Evidence (Jan–Feb 2026):**
Black **Samsung smartphone**, IME [REDACTED]; impounded **Evidence #SG1; Search Warrant #2026000907** authorized download/extraction (Jan 1, 2024–Feb 10, 2025); review found **no pertinent information**.

Conclusions

1. **K9 Program:**
 - **No criminal violations** found in K9 funding or canine procurement via Knight Watch K9 LLC.
 - **Administrative noncompliance** with City Purchasing Policy 118.1 and absence of formal contracts/procurement documentation.
 - **All traced donations** (Walter Ferguson \$18,000; Dog Days allocations) appear accounted for.
2. **Walter Ferguson Donation:**
 - **Confirmed \$18,000** donation via **Helldorado** to City of Tombstone; **no \$7,000 missing**.
3. **Firearms Trade:**
 - **14 firearms** traded for equipment; **9 not accepted** (documentation gap on return).
 - Practice is **administrative** and consistent with broader agencies’ accountability issues with the TMO evidence room; **no criminal findings** established.
4. **Deputy John Coby Background:**
 - **Allegation was resolved.** Facts show that John Coby was truthful in his TMO employment application. Indicators of **administrative deficiency** in background vetting as no contact was made by TMO background investigator with Coby’s prior agency and not internal personnel file review was completed. No criminal violations found.
5. **Other Allegations (records access; on-duty misconduct):**
 - **Administrative matters**; CCSO/TMO to address via policy/procedure.

Recommendations

1. **Procurement Compliance:**
Enforce **City Purchasing Policy 118.1**; require **formal contracts**, Council approval, and City Clerk purchasing authority for any vendor (including employee owned entities).
2. **Conflict of Interest Controls:**
Update/clarify **COI policies** for employees providing services/products to the City; require disclosures and independent approval.
3. **Documentation Standards:**
Implement standardized **K9 program SOPs, records systems, and audit trails** (training logs, certifications, donations, expenditures, asset tracking).
4. **Donation Governance:**
Use a single **City managed fund** with **passthrough 501(c)(3)** documentation preserved; reconcile with City Finance and event organizers (**Helldorado/Dog Days**) quarterly.
5. **Evidence Room Chain of Custody:**
Revamp evidence room policies and procedures consistent with the International Association of Property and Evidence. Require serial numbered

inventory lists, receipts, return documentation

6. Background Investigations:

Mandate **full prior agency verifications, documented reference checks**, and supervisory **review/approval** pre-hire; retain all materials.

7. Administrative Allegations Handling:

Direct **TMO** to address shift policies (sleeping on duty), fraternization guidelines, and technology usage via **written policy, training, and supervision**.

Attachments & Evidence Index (Placeholders)

- **Evidence Item #SG1:** Black Samsung smartphone, IMEI [REDACTED] (impounded Jan 14, 2026).
 - **Attachment A:** Email from Deputy City Clerk **Shelly Kazda** re: Verizon contract dates/logistics.
 - **Attachment B: Search Warrant #2026000907** (signed Feb 4, 2026, Judge **William Cawthon**).
 - **Attachment C: Search Warrant Return** and Extraction Report (no pertinent findings).
 - **Attachment D: Dog Days of Tombstone** financial summary and bank records (including GoFundMe deposit, operating expenses, allocations).
 - **Attachment E: Helldorado Inc.** check copies and ledger entries (**Check #6256** to City of Tombstone; **Checks #1008 and #1009**).
 - **Attachment F: JP Morgan Chase DAF** check copy **#0000018894 (\$18,000)** to Helldorado Inc.; copy of cashed check; JP Morgan/National Philanthropic Trust letter (Feb 16, 2026 meeting).
 - **Attachment G: Handler Contracts** (Nov 9, 2024) – Coby/Hawk; Doreo/Dayak; Sharp/Stinger (Knight Watch K9 LLC).
 - **Attachment H: Recorded Interviews** (Baker #1/#2; Ortega phone; Adams video; Wilkins; Coby; Mayor Escapule/Randall meeting) + **Unverified Transcripts** (noted as such).
 - **Attachment I: "Guns West End"** spreadsheet (Dec 4, 2025) and **West End Pawn & Gun receipts** (e.g., **#11264**).
 - **Attachment J: AG submission May 2025 final** (84page document from Jim Adams).
 - **Attachment K: Subpoena** to Maryland Transportation Authority for **John Coby** IA/personnel records (unfulfilled).
 - **Attachment L: CCSO referral letter** (Feb 24, 2025) detailing allegations.
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RELATED PERSONS

