



City of Forest Park

DEPARTMENT OF POLICE SERVICES

Chief Nathaniel Clark

INTERDEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM

To: Chief Clark and City Manager - Ms. Redding

From: Lieutenant Koth *S Koth*

Subject: IA 190005

Date: August 07th, 2019

On August 06th, 2019 at approximately 0826 hours, I was advised by Chief Clark that a situation involving a gun had occurred at Public Works and I was advised that an investigation would be needed. Chief Clark advised that Director Eady was aware of the situation and I would coordinate interviewing his employees with him. I called Director Eady and advised him I would be there by 0900 hours and would need a private room to speak with some employees. The employees I spoke with were in the following order: Tommy Higgins (employee and alleged victim), Bobby Jinks (supervisor and witness), Vincent Hicks (supervisor and witness), Kirk Sims (employee and witness), Bruce Robinson (Deputy Director and alleged suspect), and Chad Bruce (employee and witness). I spoke to all six employees in a private office at Public Works.

At 0912 hours I met with Tommy Higgins. I explained to Tommy that I was investigating a situation that occurred on July 2nd, 2019 and I asked him to tell me what occurred on that day. Tommy advised it was about 1430 hours when Vincent called Bruce about the ditch they were digging and Bruce arrived at the location. Tommy told Vincent he was taking the truck to go use the restroom and Bruce made a comment about using a bush or a bucket. Tommy told Bruce he was talking to Vincent since Vincent is the supervisor and Bruce made a comment how he is over everybody. Bruce then made a comment "I got something for you" and walked to the truck. Tommy said he made a swatting motion (indicating he did not care) and walked away. Tommy said he did not think that they were arguing nor did he take Bruce's comment as a threat. I asked Tommy if he and Bruce got a long and he said Bruce is the type that "flexes" and makes comments but they aren't serious. Tommy said that he always makes a



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comment back to Bruce and then Bruce doesn't say anything else. Tommy referenced a comment he made about Bruce's wife being "thick" and maybe Bruce needed assistance because he is a "little guy" but said they just make comments, they do not mean anything.

Tommy said when he got back from using the restroom, comments were made that Bruce said "I don't want to kill him, I just want to touch him up." Tommy said he asked Bobby to document the incident just in case something came out of it. Tommy said he never saw a gun and he never heard any threats made. Tommy said he and Bruce have not talked about the incident at all. Tommy repeated before he left the office that he did not feel threatened by Bruce.

At 0943 hours I spoke with Bobby Jinx. Bobby said at about 1315 hours he was at fleet to check on equipment and he saw Bruce talking to Nigel, Brad, and Lifus. Bruce was talking about a gun he had bought at Army Navy at lunchtime and paid like \$264 for it. Bobby said he did not see the gun at that time. At approximately 1420 hours, Vincent called Bobby and Bruce over to Puckett St. about a job they were doing. Tommy told Vincent that he was taking the truck to use the restroom and Bruce made a comment about clearing things through him because he is the boss and Tommy replied that Vincent was his supervisor. Bobby said the guys joke around like that a lot and this is usual behavior. Bruce made a comment about buying a gun at lunch time and was going to name it after Tommy. Tommy was walking away and possibly did not hear that comment. Bruce then made a comment about buying the gun and showed it to everyone around the truck. Bobby said he saw the black handgun in the box and never saw Bruce take it out. Bobby said he was walking towards the back of the truck and did not hear or see anything else.

I asked Bobby how long Bruce has been Deputy Director and he said about six months. Bobby said that even though everything that was said was "joking around", he did not think having a gun in the work truck and then showing it to employees "on the street like that" was smart and he made a comment to Vincent that Bruce messed up. He said he used stronger language when he said it. Tommy asked him to document it because Bruce always says to document things and Bobby did. He said he did not report it because he did not think that there was anything to report. There was no



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verbal altercation and no threats so there was nothing to tell Director Eady when he returned to work on July 8th.

Bobby said he is not sure of the exact date but the morning they met with Ms. Redding, Vincent told him that he "better have his ducks in a row because it's going down today." Bobby said it was after that, he met Ms. Redding city hall. He advised that after the meeting he heard that Vincent said that Bruce pulled a gun out of the box and also showed bullets. I asked him if everyone gets along and he said yes, but Vincent does not care for Bruce but they got along before and after this incident. Bobby said he was surprised that I was investigating this because he was under the impression this investigation was completed about two weeks ago. The interview ended at 1023 hours.

At 1033 hours I met with Vincent Hicks. I asked him to tell me about what happened on July 2nd and he advised Bruce threatened Tommy with a gun. I asked what exactly Bruce said and Vincent replied "I won't kill him, just shoot him in the leg or something." I asked him if he told anyone about this and he said Bobby was there and saw the whole thing. He said he asked Bobby if he documented it the next day and Bobby said he had notes but will document it. I asked Vincent if the gun was in the box and he said it was and then Bruce put in his palm and even showed the hollow point bullets. Vincent said he did not point it but it was a threat because he had the gun and made a comment about shooting Tommy. Vincent also said that he did not take Bruce as joking when he made a comment back to Tommy about taking the truck to use the restroom. I asked Vincent who is immediate supervisor is and he said Bobby. The next day, Tommy asked Bobby to document the incident in front of everyone and he checked with Bobby later to make sure he documented it. Vincent said Bobby made a comment after Bruce left (on July 2nd) that "Bruce fucked up."

I asked Vincent if anyone spoke about the incident later and he said not that he was aware of. He said when Tommy returned, he did not see anyone talk to him about Bruce. He said everyone went back to work. I asked him if he took the mere presence of a gun as a threat and he said yes. Vincent then mentioned an incident that occurred shortly after Director Eady started where he was accused of having a gun and threatening someone. He was talking rather quickly but mentioned someone being fired and a BB gun and that he (Vincent) was interrogated at the police department and had his locker searched and no gun was located. He said this did not happen to Bruce.



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At 1130 hours I met with Kirk Sims. I asked Kirk to tell me what happened and Bruce made a comment to Tommy "I got something for you." And then said "I don't want to kill him, I just want to touch him up. I bought two boxes of hollow points and two clips." Bruce had the gun in his palms holding it. He demonstrated like someone holding something delicate in their hands and showing it. He said after Bruce left Bobby made a comment "he done fucked up because he had a gun in the city vehicle." Kirk said Tommy asked Bobby to write it up the next day.

I asked Kirk if he thought Bruce and Tommy were joking around at all and he said no. He said he did not take them as joking around and once he saw a gun, he took it as Bruce was threatening Tommy. He said you do not joke about shooting people with all the killing going on now. He said Vincent asked Bobby about writing it up and asked Bobby if he saw the gun and he said yes. Kirk said Tommy saw the gun too and left the area after Bruce pulled the gun out. In Kirk's opinion, Bobby should have told Jeff about what happened. I asked him what happened after Bruce left and he said everyone just kind of shook their heads and Bobby said how "Bruce fucked up". Kirk repeated three times that if he had done this, he would be in jail. Kirk said that Bruce "throws his authority around."

I asked Kirk if the magazine was in the gun and he said he did not know, it didn't matter because he had a gun. He told Vincent after Bruce left "this is some serious shit" and shook his head. I asked him to describe where everyone was and he motioned like a horseshoe and all the while repeating what Bruce said approximately 14 times. The only thing that changed was the following:

"I don't want to kill him, I just want to touch him up. I bought two boxes of hollow points and two clips."

Or

"I bought two boxes of hollow points and two clips. I don't want to kill him, I just want to touch him up."



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He then said that he was not lying for Bruce or Tommy. I asked him who he spoke to about this and he said just his wife and her lawyer friend and they all agreed it was wrong and there is zero tolerance. I concluded this interview at 1202 hours.

I spoke to Bruce at 1258 hours. I explained why I was there and gave him a Garrity form to read over and sign. I explained Garrity as well but asked him to look the form over and if he had any questions or concerns to let me know. I asked Bruce about what happened and he said he was thinking about this gun for a while and decided to purchase it while he was on lunch break. He said he does not think that it is against policy so he did not think he was doing anything wrong. Bruce said he drove over to Puckett St. shortly after getting the gun and it was in a box and in a bag on top of his console. I asked him who he remembers seeing and he said Vincent, Kirk, Tommy and Bobby. I asked about Chad and he said he does not remember seeing him there. I asked Bruce what was in the box and he said the gun (which had a lock on it) and the empty magazines. He said the ammunition (hollow point) stayed in the truck in the bag. I asked him what type of gun and he said a 9mm Scgy.

Bruce said he talked about the gun to other employees and told the guys on this crew about it. He said when he showed it to them, he never took it out of the box. Bruce said he never threatened anyone. He said he knew Tommy since before he started at Public Works and they have always had a joking relationship. He said he has never had a problem with Tommy and does not think Tommy has a problem with him. He said he feels like there is a target on his back because "someone" has a problem and runs to city hall instead of following their chain of command. He said he does not know who this "someone" is but they have an issue with him because Ms. Wells does not seem to care for him. He said Ms. Well's husband, Jaquez (sp) used to work there and he and Jaquez never had any problems but Jaquez and Vincent are good friends and Vincent is the mouthpiece at every situation that occurs at Public Works. I asked why he thinks Ms. Wells would have a problem with him and he said all he can think of is she thought Winston should have gotten the Deputy Director position and not him. Bruce said that he is not from Forest Park and feels that some people consider him an outsider. Bruce repeated that he has never had an issue with his employees.

I asked Bruce who he spoke to about this and he said he never considered it a situation until the City Manager spoke to Jeff about it and he and Jeff spoke about it



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after that. He said he also spoke to his wife about it after he spoke to Jeff and realized something was being made out of it. Bruce said that there is not a policy that he is aware of about having a gun in the city vehicle and he put it in his personal vehicle after he came back to fleet after leaving Puckett St. I asked Bruce if he had any questions or concerns he wanted to ask me and he said "do you know who somebody is" because I would really like to know. I told him I did not. Our interview was concluded by 1421 hours.

At 1437 hours I spoke to Chad Bruce. I introduced myself and explained why I was there. Chad said that he normally is a street sweeper and does not work with this crew. Chad said Vincent called Bruce over to go over a plan and Bruce pulled out a gun in a box with two magazines. He said Bruce mentioned that he purchased four boxes of ammunition as well. Chad said he walked away after Bruce got the gun so he is not sure if he pulled it out of the box or not. He said he felt that he was going to and he was not comfortable around the gun so he walked away. Chad said that the trucks are diesel and kind of loud so he did not hear anything that was said. Chad did say that Bruce made a comment "I got something for you" to Tommy. He thought Tommy and Bruce were just joking around but he wasn't sure if they were after Bruce got the gun. I asked Chad if anyone else walked away and he said someone did, but he was not sure who. I asked Chad if there is a lot of joking around and he said yes, the days are pretty long and the jokes break it up a little. He then said that you cannot show weakness, or they will pick on you even more. Snappy comments are always made back and forth. Chad said he was leery about the situation because he does not know any background Bruce has on weapons. I asked Chad if he knows how this incident came to light and he said Tommy went on vacation and he thinks he reported it when he got back to work.

Chad said he thinks Bruce should be suspended and I asked him why. He said he had a gun in the city vehicle, he bought it on city time (unless he bought it at lunch), and he was wearing a uniform when he bought it. I asked if there was a policy about guns in a city vehicle and he said yes, guns have to be in your locked personal vehicle. Chad mentioned another incident that Vincent told him about it. Bruce came in to the building and it was dark and made a comment that "someone may get popped." Vincent did not say anything else about it. Chad also said that Bruce abuses his power and his harder on people than he needs to be. He said he does not think Vincent likes Bruce. I asked Chad if there was anything else and he said about eight years ago, two



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employees were arguing and one of them threatened to shoot the other and that employee was talked to about it. He said he really does not remember the details.

When I spoke with the Public Work's employees I spoke about Garrity and explained what it meant. I gave Bruce a Garrity paper to sign and date. Prior to speaking to everyone I received statements and a flow chart from Director Eady and put them in my folder. I did not read them until after I was done interviewing everyone so I would have a fresh understanding of their individual point of views.

In conclusion, I have reviewed all of the interview notes and there is no intent in this case. The alleged suspect and alleged victim stated that there was no threat (outright or veiled) made nor was there a verbal altercation of ill will between them. I called our city attorney to give him a synopsis of the situation but I was unable to get a hold of him. I left him a voice mail message.