

Memorandum

To: Village Board

From: Karl Frantz

Date: 8/12/2016

Re: Follow up on specific listening session comments

During the listening session there was an allegation that a member of the Shorewood Hills Police Department made a homophobic comment. The allegation has been investigated independently by the Chief of Police and the Village Administrator. There was an inability to corroborate or substantiate the comment thus far. The reporting person learned of the comment via hearsay and did not hear the comment directly. No one else was willing to come forward or provide additional information regarding the alleged comment. After discussing the comment with the reporting person, it was agreed by the reporting party that the Village was unable to pursue the allegation. Had there been substantiated information supporting the need for further investigation, the Village would have continued the investigation. If additional information is discovered, it is likely an independent agency or individual would investigate further. If a homophobic comment was made, it is unacceptable and intolerable. If the homophobic comment was not said, it is unfortunate. The allegation has damaged the reputation and morale of the police department staff. After the listening session, and investigation it was clear that this allegation was most concerning to the Chief and department staff.

Secondly, it is vital for the Village of Shorewood Hills to communicate with the residents regarding the needs of the department. During the community listening session there were concerns raised about the type of equipment used by the Village police department. The Village discovered there may be a need to communicate the specific needs of the police department and how funding decisions are determined. Additionally, there was a question regarding the “grade” of equipment utilized by the police department, which was referred to as “heavy” equipment. While there may be some confusion about the definition of “heavy,” it should be noted the police department has far less military grade equipment than that of the surrounding agencies. In some critical incidents, where the need for such equipment arises, the police department requests mutual aid. The responding agency then provides the resources needed based on the totality of the circumstances (bomb threat, active shooter, death investigation). The second issue that came to light was the department’s access to certain types of firearms (AR-15 rifles). In most cases the use of rifles is safer due to the accuracy and ability to acquire a target at further distances. Unfortunately, the possibility for the use of these types of firearms is present. Including the police vehicle, which acts as

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a mobile office, the officers only have their personal firearm, taser, handcuffs, ballistic vest, and in car rifle. The Village does not possess riot gear, shields, battering rams, or SWAT style vehicles.

Lastly, there was an allegation regarding nepotism within the department. While it is true the Chief's son is employed as an officer by the Village, the Chief of Police was not involved or present during the hiring process or interview. The Personnel Committee and Village Board made the decision to hire the Chief's son fully aware there might be a perception of nepotism. Additionally, the Lieutenant is Nicholas Pine's direct supervisor. At the time of hire, the Board and Personnel Committee were willing to accept the risk of criticism and ultimately made the decision to hire Nicholas Pine. This was due to the belief Nicholas Pine was the most qualified for the position given the field of applicants at the time.