



Police Department – Brian O’Hara, Chief of Police

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TO: Aimee Linson, Badge #4172
CC: Internal Affairs Division
DATE: April 5, 2023
RE: Administrative Investigation Case #21-07522

CHIEF’S DECISION: Letter of Reprimand


This memo summarizes my approach and reasoning for my decision as Chief of Police that the listed policy violations by Lieutenant Linson are sustained. The memo accompanies the enclosed Notice of Discipline.

Summary of the Basis for Decision:

The facts noted in the case investigation support the conclusion that Lieutenant Linson violated Minneapolis Police Department Policy 5-102 Code of Ethics, and City of Minneapolis Communication Policy Section III(D)(1). I concur with the recommendation from the Police Review Panel that there is Merit to the allegations.

Allegations:

Allegation #1: MPD P/P 5-102 Code of Ethics

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- On April 23, 2012, then Sergeant Linson, forwarded a chain e-mail to several other Minneapolis Police employees.
 - The subject line contained, “Only in the Ghetto,” and contained 16 pictures
- Of the 16 pictures, seven included images of African Americans portrayed in a negative light, and most of the photos had a label indicated they were taken from “ReallyGhetto.com”
- Lt. Linson stated that she did not remember sending this e-mail, which was sent 10 years prior to her interview with Internal Affairs
- MPD P/P 5-102 Code of Ethics requires that sworn members of the department conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner at all times and not engage in conduct that would tarnish or offend the ethical standards of the department
- The Police Conduct Review Panel (PCRP) provided a unanimous recommendation of **Merit** to this allegation
- I agree with the PCRP, that the conduct of (then) Sgt. Linson violated MPD P/P 5-102 Code of Ethics and this allegation is **Sustained**

Allegation #2: City of Minneapolis Communications Policy Section III(D)(1a)

- The City of Minneapolis Communications Policy, Section III (General Conditions), D. (Unacceptable Use), 1a. (Ethical Conduct), states “Users shall not intentionally transmit, access or store material that is offensive...Among material which may be considered offensive are messages that contain...racial slurs, or any other comment that addresses someone’s...status with regard to public assistance”
- On December 27, 2001, (then) Officer Linson signed a receipt of acknowledgement stating that she understood that she was accountable for knowing and abiding by all policies and procedures contained in the MPD P/P manual

- The e-mail sent by (then) Sgt. Linson contained several instances of the word, "Ghetto," which is offensive based on race and/or socioeconomic status
- The Police Conduct Review Panel (PCRP) provided a unanimous recommendation of Merit to this allegation
- I agree with the recommendation of the PCRP, that (then) Sgt. Linson violated the City of Minneapolis Communications Policy when she forwarded an e-mail that contained content that is offensive based on race and/or socioeconomic status. This allegation is Sustained

As Chief of Police, I am responsible for providing clear expectations about behavior and conduct in all situations, not just when it is convenient. These expectations extend from myself to the command staff and all levels of the Minneapolis Police Department. My predecessors have also borne responsibility for setting expectations, and it is incumbent on every Chief to hold officers accountable for breaches of those expectations. Legitimacy and reputation are of critical importance to police officers. Officers carry a badge and gun and are called upon to make some of the hardest decisions possible. It takes countless actions to build a reservoir of trust, and only one action to completely drain. We cannot afford to lose legitimacy with the people we serve, a loss of legitimacy with community is a critical safety concern not just for residents but also for our officers.

I hold officers of the Minneapolis Police Department to a high standard. I expect them to live up to our oath of office, our professional code of ethics and our departments core values of trust, accountability and professional service. Furthermore, I expect them to demonstrate procedural justice and respect for the community we serve in their work. In this instance, Lieutenant Linson failed to meet our standards when she sent an e-mail that contained content that was offensive based on race and/or socioeconomic status. The violation in this matter undermines public trust.

The decision of whether to impose discipline in this case was based on a variety of factors.

Discipline History

- Discipline is intended to be corrective. In the past 10 years since the conduct occurred, there is no evidence that the conduct has been repeated. Therefore, it is clear that discipline would not need to be imposed to correct the behavior
- Lt. Linson has been a Minneapolis police officer for 25 years (1998) and has had no discipline
- There is only one documented complaint against her, [REDACTED] (19-18230) [REDACTED]

Distinguished Service

- Lt. Linson has advanced through the ranks and is a respected leader within the MPD. Her duties in the department include:
 - Crisis Negotiator since 2010
 - Supervision of the Field Training Officer Program, building it into a program based on national best practice
 - Internal Affairs Division investigator, based on her reputation of integrity, intelligence and fairness
 - Mounted Patrol Unit, where she served both as a rider and trainer
 - Lieutenant of Professional Development (Training), based on her experience as a professor of Law Enforcement at Metropolitan State University
 - Lt. Linson has received the Chief's Award of Merit and the Unit Citation Award

[REDACTED]

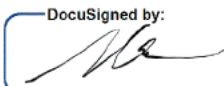
- It is my view as Chief of Police, that Coaching is not an acceptable or sufficient consequence for conduct by an officer that undermines the public trust.
- [REDACTED] our communications as public officials can cause harm to the residents we serve. There is no line of public service where our relationship with the community and their perception of us, is more important than as police officers.
- In her Loudermill Hearing, Lt. Linson expressed remorse over her conduct in this incident and more importantly, how instances such as this threaten the fragile relationship that our officers hold with residents.

Time Elapsed Since Conduct Occurred

- The conduct of Lt. Linson occurred over 10 years ago, and there has been nothing further in her work history that would demonstrate any level of bias or discrimination
- If this conduct were criminal, nearly all crimes in Minnesota have a 3-year statute of limitations. Even Bribery of a Public Official has a limit of 6-years and Financial Exploitation of a Vulnerable Adult in an amount in excess of \$35,000 has a limit of 5-years. Only the most egregious criminal cases like Murder and Criminal Sexual Conduct, have a statute of limitations of 10-years or more

As Chief of Police with authority to discipline for violations of policy under Minn. Stat 626.89 Subd. 17, I am going to impose discipline for the reason listed above. [REDACTED]

I am sustaining the allegations in this case and directing that Lt. Linson receive this Letter of Reprimand for these policy violations.

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Brian O'Hara
Chief of Police

CC: Internal Affairs Case File
Commander Granger