

03/17/2021

Michael Barrera, City Manager  
City of Mathis  
411 E. San Patricio Ave.  
Mathis, TX 78368

RE: Statement in regards to Chief Roush and other PD employees.

Mr. Barrera,

- On March 17, 2021 at approximately 3:30 PM, myself and [REDACTED] met with you to discuss several issues of concern that are important for the safety and efficiency of our organization. At that time, you requested that I provide you with a written statement of said issues for your review. Below you will see an explanation of the issues and attached to this statement you will find documentation(s) to substantiate my claims.
- I was hired by the Mathis Police Department in October of 2019. I was hired by Chief Marshal Roush. I was excited for the opportunity to utilize my skills, experience (Former Chief of Police) and education. I re-located to accept this position from the West Texas area.
- Once I arrived and settled in, I started to notice several issues that concerned me. Almost immediately, I was welcomed to the department, and was included in many conversations. At first, the conversations were mostly about operational plans/issues of the department. As time went by, the conversations became more and more uncomfortable. They were uncomfortable because Chief Roush, Brandon Villegas and Stephanie Wood-Garcia would talk about intimate personal information. The conversations would include talking about sex, sex lives, etc. and graphic details about women and genitalia. Women were being degraded by Chief Roush and by Brandon Villegas. These types of conversations and comments became a daily thing. As time went on, the conversations seemed to become more frequent throughout the day. Other employees [REDACTED] of the department were also witness to them. It made me extremely uncomfortable and unsettled for I have worked in many professional positions in my life and this type of activity is disgusting and completely inappropriate in the workplace.
- Shortly after these conversations, new information would be talked about with Chief Roush, Brandon and Stephanie. In addition to the above comments, additional comments about employees (Current and former), started to take place. The three of them would make fun of and ridicule these employees. It went on all the time and became severe to the point that the three would discuss how much they hated this person, or that person. It felt like a daily thing and escalated to the point where some comments were made on how

they were going to get these people fired. Most of these comments were about the [REDACTED]. The three appeared to target [REDACTED] and several of his [REDACTED] members. During one conversation I distinctly recall [REDACTED] that they wanted to get [REDACTED] fired so they could both take over [REDACTED]. The two would state that they try and make "life rough" on certain [REDACTED] staff members to push them out of their jobs and in turn, would raise overtime to make [REDACTED] look bad. Roush, Stephanie and Joey would call [REDACTED] names like, spineless, clueless, crappy director, etc. Before [REDACTED] moved out of the PD building there was talk by the three that they were going to serve him his eviction papers, and kick him out. On more that one occasion Roush told me he's kicking [REDACTED] out. I asked Roush, "and if doesn't want to leave the PD, or complains, then what." Roush said, "well I guess I will have to kick his scrawny ass and drag him to his own [REDACTED] building." I was disturbed with Roush's tone and demeanor.

- One afternoon, Brandon and I went to have lunch at Van's. When we were seated, a waitress came up to Brandon and gave him a hug and appeared to be excited to see him. Once she took our order, Brandon had a strange grin on his face. I asked him about it. He stated, "She's cute right?" referring to the waitress. He then stated, "I'm doing her on the side, shhh don't tell anyone." Having heard from Brandon myself that he was with his long-term girlfriend, I didn't like that comment. He then mentioned that he has had several girls in town that he has or was sleeping with. He went on to say that he had even slept with dispatchers and EMS staff. He stated that he's been trying to get with one of our Officers. I asked him who that would be (I believe we had two female Officers at the time); he then stated "you can't figure out which one?" Of course, I knew he was hinting that it was [REDACTED]. I then told him to stop and that I didn't want to know anything further. We then received our order and when we were finished dining, the waitress then gave Brandon a hug and we left the restaurant.
- On another day, Brandon mentioned to me that he wanted to get [REDACTED] terminated as he had heard that [REDACTED] had told another staff member that Brandon was trying to, "get in her pants." He stated that even though that was true, that she needs to go because "she couldn't keep her [REDACTED] mouth shut." I ended the conversation immediately. I had advised LT Todd Thurmond of the nature of this specific conversation, and Thurmond replied, "I'll take care of it, dang man hoe." I'm not aware if anything was ever said to Brandon or Chief Roush in this instance.
- Toxic conversations (Roush, Villegas, Wood) were now the norm and happened so often that I started to not pay attention to them. Morale in the department suffered, as well as my own personal excitement for working here. I would hear employees talking about being targeted and being mistreated and not listened to by Villegas or Roush. At a time, Roush even joked around that he should just "fire all these [REDACTED]"
- A turning point for me was in regards to an incident that involved Chief Roush. On or around October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020 I believe it was in the afternoon, myself, Chief Roush, Sgt Villegas, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were having a discussion together in Sgt Villegas's

office. It was at this time the conversation turned to the subject of Viagra. It was brought up by Chief Roush as there was a blister pack of Viagra pills on Villegas's desk (this pack of Viagra pills was found and seized on a traffic stop. Villegas is the Officer that found the pills and seized, see attached call details sheet call# 2000006069 7/9/2020 at approximately 2:36 PM). Roush asked if anyone ever used Viagra and Roush was looking up Viagra on his phone. I then witnessed him remove one of the pills from the pack and look at it. He then placed that pill in his pocket. I believe Roush then said well, "I'm gonna try this [REDACTED] out tonight," and laughed.

- The next day October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Roush, Villegas, [REDACTED] and I were back at Brandon's office. The Viagra was brought up by someone in conversation and Roush was asked if he tried the pill. His response was "I sure [REDACTED] did, it's awesome, I [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] this [REDACTED], it was crazy." I was upset that he would have done that and left the building.
- Later that day, Chief Roush stated that there had been an email sent to the City Manager Michael Barrera. I was told the email was sent for an anonymous email account. The contents of the email were explaining that alleged Roush stole evidence in the form of a Viagra Pill. It went on to say something to the effect that Roush had then bragged about using it to [REDACTED] women. Chief Roush met with Mr. Barrera and upon his return, was very angry and upset. He started asking everyone around if anyone here [REDACTED] did this. He went on and on about how mad he was that someone would talk about this. He also stated that in the email it said he's never at work. Roush said he had an arrangement with Mr. Barrera about his schedule. Roush continued to say that Mr. Barrera hates this kind of thing and that is [REDACTED] of someone to do and stated Mr. Barrera would fire someone for coming forward to him with this sort of thing. Chief Roush left the PD for several minutes and I was talking with [REDACTED] who was extremely concerned over this hurting his chances at becoming a Task Force Officer with DEA. Him and I discussed the possibility that there would be an investigation into these claims. Of course, this concerned all of us. I tried to lighten his mood and joked that he should open a drug case because of the Viagra being taken. We conversed a little longer about some fears we had, and then went our separate ways.
- Later, Chief Roush called a meeting in his office. Present were Chief Roush, Villegas, [REDACTED] Stephanie and I. Roush asked everyone to leave all cell phones and devices in dispatch for this meeting. Once we were in Roush's office, the door was closed. Roush had a hard time getting out what he was about to say, as he appeared highly agitated. Roush then told us very loudly, "If I find out if it was one of you [REDACTED] I will end you!" This threat worried me. I didn't know what to think of it. Did Roush mean end someone physically or career wise. I wasn't quite sure. Roush also went on to say that he was going to take everyone's (command staff and all other PD Employees) cell phones and have them "Dumped" meaning all the data pulled out to determine if one of us sent the email(s). Roush also stated he will Polygraph anyone he saw fit to get to the bottom of who did this. Roush then went on to say that he needs to be able to trust the people that work for him. "Whoever it was needs to shut up and shut up now!" Roush went on to speak about trust and having everyone's back and that he knows one of us had to have

said something because when he took the pill there was only 4 other people in Brandon's office. He then nervously laughed and said "well maybe I shouldn't have taken the damn pill and we wouldn't be here about this." Roush then laughed again and said let's go have a cigarette.

- An hour or so passed this day, and Chief Roush called me into his office and closed the door. He said, "Is it true that you want to open up a [REDACTED] drug case on me?" Roush stated he was told by [REDACTED] that I conveyed that to him. I advised Roush that [REDACTED] must have taken this out of context as I was trying to lighten his mood. Roush then asked me, "Are you that worried about one pill that much?" I stated that "Yeah, I'm worried about one pill, it's kinda an issue and should have never happened." I then told Roush that I felt what he did maybe criminal in nature and that it concerned me. Roush then assured me that, "nothing will ever come of this." I felt like Roush was staring at me as to intimidate me without having to say anything. I then left his office and went back to work.
- There are many instances that Chief Roush and Brandon Villegas treated employees unfairly. Reprimanding Officers, Dispatchers, etc. in front of groups of people/other employees. Acting unprofessional while addressing an issue such as yelling, threatening, and making fun/calling names. Specifics of time and what employees, I cannot recall as this was a daily occurrence that almost appeared routine to many.
- Sometime in November of 2020, I was asked by an anonymous city employee, if I knew why Stephanie is never in her office and/or answers her phone. The employee asked is she ever there, and asked if Roush was ever there. I stated that it was complicated, but I've been suspicious of the amount of time that both Roush and Stephanie were working. Knowing that working from home for a couple of weeks during the initial COVID-19 outbreak, that they were not working from "Home." I then started a daily account (see attached timesheets and time log) of when Stephanie and Roush were at work and when they were not. I determined quickly that neither had been working the hours scheduled/expected of them. After a couple of weeks, I noticed that Stephanie did not report her time properly. Numerous times it was reported on the timesheet that Stephanie was here at work, when I observed or had first hand knowledge that she was not here and not working. There are also a few cases where she came in late in the day and/or left early but falsely reported on her timesheet that she was here the entire day. In late January or early February, I spoke with Chief Roush about what I had uncovered. I asked him if he wanted me to show him the paperwork confirming this information. Roush told me to be quiet about this and to not discuss with anyone. I then asked Roush what he was going to do about this? He stated he knew he has signed (Roush doesn't sign time sheets, Stephanie uses a rubber signature stamp) lots of absence forms for her and that is what she's doing. I advised him he is mistaken. She is not using vacation or sick time she is lying on her time sheet. Roush then stated that he will tell her to stop doing that, and left. Nothing was ever done about this and it has continued ever since.

- I have provided this statement of my own free will, and without bias/prejudice. I do fear retaliation from Roush, Villegas and Stephanie. This fear is not imagined as instances where being threatened from the three that occurred on a weekly and daily basis. Not only me receiving these threats, but other employees as well. To me this constitutes a hostile work environment where the only staff at MPD that feel safe is Roush, Villegas and Stephanie. We have to walk on egg shells and walk in fear every day of loosing our jobs. It's not a conducive place to work, we have enough to handle in our line of work than having to fear our supervisors and peers.
- I have been approached over the last few weeks from several staff members that have told me that they feel like I'm the only one that cares about them. I had also been told that I work too hard because they see I'm the only one working and trying to do 4 or more person's job. I have been told that staff want to leave, but they are scared of what may happen to them. I have attached several statements from current and former staff of the Mathis PD, who would like to have their voices heard and to change the hostile environment. I also believe that what they have witnessed and/or endured, is confirmed as most instances are similar accounts of the same mistreatment.

- I will provide more documentation and statements as they become available (waiting on some).
- I respectfully request a full investigation into the activities of these individuals and that everyone remain professional and not discuss, harass, threaten, or intimidate myself or any of the staff that have come forward.
- I'm available at any time to answer any further questions or clarify any unclear information.
- I know this will be a difficult time in our organization, but addressed appropriately and professionally, we will get through this and enhance our team.
- Recently (last couple of days), I was advised by a staff member who wished to stay anonymous, that on Thanksgiving night 2020 on or around the 2-3 AM timeframe that one of our dispatchers [REDACTED], while on duty, received several messages on her phone from Sgt Villegas. From what I'm learning, Villegas was highly intoxicated and was making inappropriate comments to her. At one point Villegas was attempting to face time [REDACTED]. This made [REDACTED] very uncomfortable and she had put the call on speaker phone. [REDACTED] witnessed this call. In speaking with [REDACTED] our communications supervisor, I had asked if he was aware that this incident occurred. Ian stated he was told about it from [REDACTED] but she was afraid to do a formal complaint about as she felt nothing would get done about what happened. I will obtain a statement from [REDACTED] as soon as possible and will submit it to you once received. I have also attached a memo from Ian explaining what he knows of the situation.

Respectfully,



LT Brent J. Grundstrom  
Mathis Police Department