



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

RIVIERA BEACH POLICE CHIEF RESIGNS FOLLOWING FINDINGS OF INVESTIGATIONS

RIVIERA BEACH, FL. (April 1, 2022) – Nathan Osgood resigned on April 1 as Chief of the Riviera Beach Police Department following the findings of an Internal Affairs investigation and an independent inquiry that found he deviated from proper procedure during the brief detainment of Councilman Douglas Lawson last year.

A 156-page Internal Affairs report and a 128-page investigative report by Blue Prints 4 Safety, a Miami-based firm hired by the City with public safety and investigative expertise, concluded Osgood did not follow state and Riviera Beach Police policy when he directed Captain Rochelet Commond to file a probable cause affidavit with the State Attorney's Office for simple battery (domestic) arrest stemming from the incident. Osgood directed the un-arrest of Lawson without direct on-scene knowledge and with limited information, the independent report states. The independent inquiry also found allegations of misconduct against Osgood were inconclusive.

Captain Commond was reinstated to active duty from paid administrative leave on March 16 at the conclusion of the Internal Affairs report on March 14.

"It's disappointing that this investigation uncovered members of the command staff had a gross misunderstanding of the statute, as well as their own policy that governs the handling of domestic violence incidents," City Manager Jonathan Evans said.

Osgood believed Lawson committed no act of domestic violence, incorrectly directed the filing of a probable cause affidavit and recommended the City Manager fire Commond as a result of insubordination for allegedly failing to file a probable cause affidavit. The incident between Lawson and his then fiancée at their residence was caught on surveillance camera.

State Statute and Riviera Beach Police policy dictate a probable cause affidavit must only be filed with the State Attorney's Office if an offender is not on scene and a warrant must be issued for his or her arrest. Riviera Beach Police Policy mirrors the State Statute. Lawson was on scene at his residence on Aug. 29, 2021 when he was questioned and arrested before he was released.

State Attorney Dave Aronberg's Office subsequently found probable cause existed for Lawson to be arrested for domestic battery, but no charges were filed because his then fiancée refused to cooperate with investigators.

Major Joshua Lewis has been named Interim Police Chief. Lewis has been with the Riviera Beach Police Department for 25 years.

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