



## CITY OF KISSIMMEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

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February 21, 2025

Dear Media Partners:

On October 31, 2024, I was appointed Interim Chief of Police for the Kissimmee Police Department (KPD). Over the last four months I have seen this agency come together and represent the City of Kissimmee in a positive manner. I have been thoroughly impressed with the men and women of KPD as I was not sure what to expect stepping into this agency back in October of 24'. During this time, I have seen the hard work and dedication of our sworn and civilian personnel. There is no doubt in my mind our personnel are committed to keeping Kissimmee a safe place for all. We have made great strides moving in a positive direction and learning from mistakes in the past. I feel morale of our employees is high and they appreciate our staff's transparency and changes made from an operational and administrative standpoint.

Many of the outlets have asked if I was going to take over as chief or if I was in the running for the position. I was honored and humbled to be asked to come into this agency and be their Interim Chief of Police. This move was not expected, nor did I feel there would be a chance to take over permanently. However, during my time here, I have experienced the great pride our employees take in KPD. This agency has exceeded my expectations in a positive way, and it started on day one. I would be thrilled to serve as the Kissimmee Police Chief; however, I have a great position at the Orange County Sheriff's Office and have committed myself for another few years serving the citizens of Orange County. I truly appreciate Orange County Sheriff John Mina and staff for giving me the ability to experience and learn all aspects serving as a chief. These past four months have been one of the highlights of my career and I will never forget my time here, furthermore, I will be heading back to the Orange County Sheriff's Office in March.

The reason for this letter to show transparency and what steps we have taken as an agency over the last four months. On October 31, 2024, I was provided, for the first time, a copy of the Grand Jury Presentment regarding KPD's response to a use of force by Officer Andrew Baseggio on April 22, 2023. Within the Presentment, the Grand Jury made numerous suggestions to the City of Kissimmee Manager, the City Council (Commission) and any official responsible for ensuring the effective functioning of the Kissimmee Police Department. As the Interim Chief of Police, it was my responsibility to begin implementing the recommendations of the Presentment and ensure KPD was operating effectively.

Below you will see the Presentment's recommendations in order and what steps have been taken over the last four months. Prior to former State Attorney Bain leaving office he was provided an eight-week update covering the months of November and December. Once State Attorney Worrell took office, I provided her with the same update so she was aware of our efforts.

**1. *Conduct an evaluation of the current command staff to ensure those individuals are prepared and able to lead the Department with experience and integrity going forward;***

- On October 28, 2024, City Manager Mike Steigerwald accepted the resignation of the previous chief, who was ultimately responsible for the daily operations of the Kissimmee Police Department.
- The “Command Staff” is currently comprised of 1 deputy chief, 4 captains, 1 lieutenant, and 1 legal advisor. A second deputy chief position is vacant. This position was previously filled, however, the deputy chief resigned prior to my arrival. This deputy chief was listed in the October 21, 2024 letter authored by M. Ryan Williams, Chief Assistant State Attorney with the Ninth Judicial Circuit. This letter raised concerns about the conduct and truthfulness of eleven members of KPD during the investigation of the Baseggio case. The remaining Command Staff members were not listed in the October 21, 2024 letter.
- During my time at KPD I have evaluated the Command Staff and found that this team has the capability, experience, and integrity to perform their important roles with appropriate oversight and guidance from the Chief of Police. I have met with Command Staff numerous times to explain my expectations and emphasize the importance of serving in this role with the highest integrity. I have instilled simple leadership techniques and delivery methods for Command Staff when dealing with their subordinates and I am very pleased with their positive outlook for this agency.
- Since I am on loan from the Orange County Sheriff’s Office and serving temporarily as Interim Chief of Police, I feel that the permanent Chief of Police, once selected, is best suited to fill the Deputy Chief vacancy and continue to perform an evaluation of Command Staff. As of today’s date, city management is in the process of evaluating the potential candidates.

**2. *Ensure the Department’s leadership has the resources to quickly address the following issues:***

**a. *A culture of acceptance and non-reporting, particularly surrounding use of force or officer wrong doing;***

- Upon arrival as Interim Chief of Police, I discussed with Command Staff the importance of adhering to and having a deep understanding of KPD’s policy and procedures. I reviewed KPD’s policies and procedures and identified seventeen policies as “High Liability Policies” that are critical to officers’ ability to conduct their jobs safely, lawfully, and effectively. On November 25, 2024, I tasked one of my captains with ensuring that all members of KPD review these seventeen High Liability Policies. Members had until December 16, 2024, to complete a review of all High Liability Policies and affirm that they have read and understand each of these policies. Even though members had previously reviewed these policies, I wanted each member to review each policy again so there was no misunderstanding on the content of those policies.



- One of the High Liability Policies, General Order 401, Response to Resistance, specifically addresses a member's duty upon witnessing the use of excessive force in the following manner:

*"Employees have an affirmative duty to intercede to prevent the use of excessive force if the employee has reason to know excessive force is being used and there is a realistic opportunity to intervene to prevent harm. The action required by the employee shall depend on the circumstances of the incident. Appropriate action may include, but is not limited to:*

- a. Verbal or physical intervention;*
- b. Immediate notification to a supervisor; and/or,*
- c. A direct order by a supervisor to cease the use of the excessive force."*

- b. Provide extensive and detailed training to officer in multiple areas, including but not limited to:*

- i. Crisis Management and dealing with citizens experiencing a mental health emergency;*

- Beginning on January 6, 2025, every member of the agency has been enrolled in Crisis Management Training. The crisis management training will last six hours and will comprehensively address how to interact with an individual in crisis. I reviewed the 112 slide Power Point presentation and all related educational material. Our officers will be better trained once this training is completed. This training will be completed for all sworn by the end of February 2025.

- ii. The law on search and seizure, particularly warrantless entry into residences;*

- During this year's annual legal training for KPD members, which began in September 2024, KPD members received instruction on excessive use of force, unlawful searches, including warrantless entry into residences, the duty to intervene, and other important topics. Since my appointment as Interim Chief, officers are receiving training on this topic on an on-going basis during line up briefings. Furthermore, this topic was covered in supervisory training and by issuing a new training bulletin focusing on 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment issues.

- c. Update existing Department policies in several areas, including, but not limited to:*

- i. Formalizing when a criminal investigation should occur as a result of a Response to Resistance and laying out the factors that should be considered in such a decision;*

- KPD is committed to considering whether an officer's Response to Resistance, when excessive, constitutes criminal conduct prior to initiating an internal investigation of the Response to Resistance. Any such consideration will include



input from the Internal Affairs Manager and, where appropriate, the KPD legal advisor and the State Attorney's Office.

***ii. Establishing formal discipline for officers who fail to comply with orders not to discuss pending IA investigations;***

- KPD General Order 202 states the following on page 15 of 21:  
“No employee is to discuss the contents of any internal investigation until it has become public record. If an employee is unsure of the status of a particular case, they shall contact the Internal Affairs Supervisor.”
- KPD has amended this GO that states: “All employees shall protect the integrity of active internal investigations and any conduct that interferes with or compromises any active internal investigation shall result in a violation of this policy and may lead to formal discipline.”

***d. Undertake a complete review of the IA Section of the Department, providing that section appropriate staffing and implementing procedures to guide investigations and reporting;***

- A new Civilian Internal Affairs Manager has been hired and started on January 6, 2025. This manager has over 30 years of law enforcement experience and has overseen an Internal Affairs Section for a large agency. This manager will provide training, leadership, continuity, and consistency to the Internal Affairs Section. Furthermore, KPD has assigned two sergeants as investigators to the Internal Affairs Section, who will directly report to the Internal Affairs Civilian Manager. Prior to my arrival, the Internal Affairs Section was staffed by one corporal, who reported to the Professional Standards Lieutenant.

***e. Ensure the Department is in compliance with its reporting requirements to the Commission under Florida law, establishing procedures to ensure reporting is done moving forward;***

- Prior to my arrival, KPD corrected its prior failure to report the internal affairs investigations referenced in the Presentment to the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission (“Commission”). Going forward, all internal investigations will be completed within a 180-day window unless the investigation is tolled according to state law. KPD has revised our internal affairs procedures, and once an internal affairs investigation has concluded, the investigator or IA Manager will affirm whether the case needs to be sent to the Commission.

***f. Addressing any truthfulness or other concerns raised by the reporting of the Office of the State Attorney***

- The Orange County Sheriff's Office Professional Standards Section is in the process of investigating any wrongdoing by the eleven current or former members



of the KPD identified in the October 21, 2024 letter from the State Attorney's Office. If there are any sustained violations of truthfulness or any other KPD policy, then KPD will take disciplinary action. Furthermore, if there are any sustained violations involving "good moral character" or that could subject an officer to potential impeachment, then KPD will notify the Commission and the State Attorney's Office.

Please know the Kissimmee Police Department has taken this Grand Jury Presentment seriously and we will continue our efforts and provide our city a safe and secure environment for all.

Sincerely,



Robert Anzueto  
Interim Chief of Police  
Kissimmee Police Department

