

SUNRISE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Daniel J. Ransone Chief of Police

10440 W Oakland Park Blvd Sunrise, Florida 33351 (954) 764-4357



Internal Affairs Complaint Report Narrative

I. INTRODUC	TION:	
Subject Employee: Offic	cer	
Complainant: Offic	cer	
Witnesses: Office	cer , Officer	, Officer
Investigation, case #23-0 email containing two atta	fc. was the subject office 07-01. During that investigation, Ofc. achments (photos of text messages), request had no relationship to her then case, a state of the case, a state of the case.	sent me an ting they be added to her
pictures appeared to ha	and a text message exchange between at larve been altered. Both photos contained said the text messages were written	potentially inflammatory
The Investigative Narrati my conclusion with respe and Disposition section.	ive section outlines the details of my investig ect to any policy violations will be found in	gation into this matter and the Investigative Findings



SUNRISE POLICE DEPARTMENT

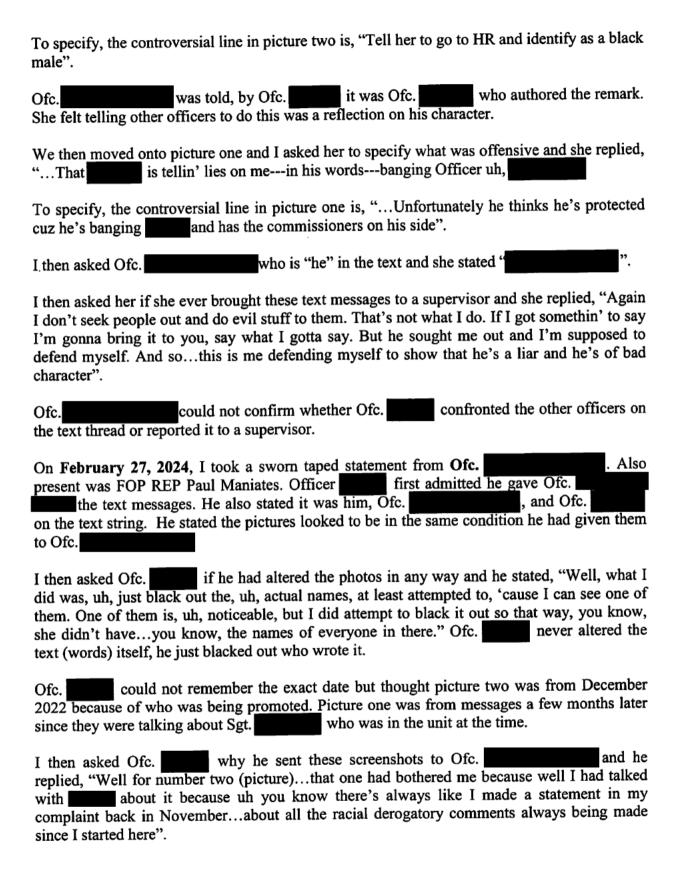
Daniel J. Ransone Chief of Police

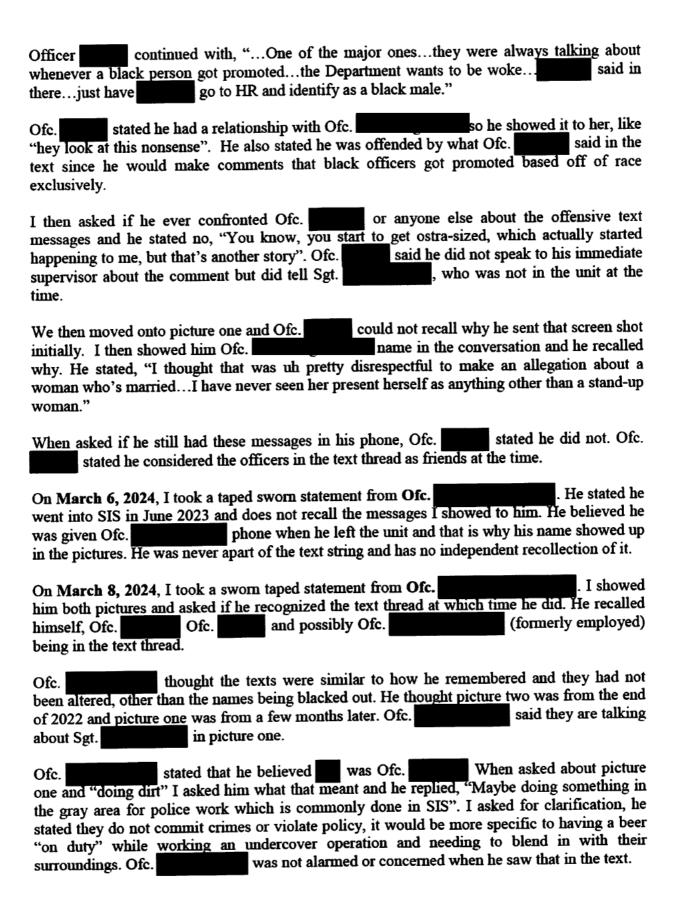
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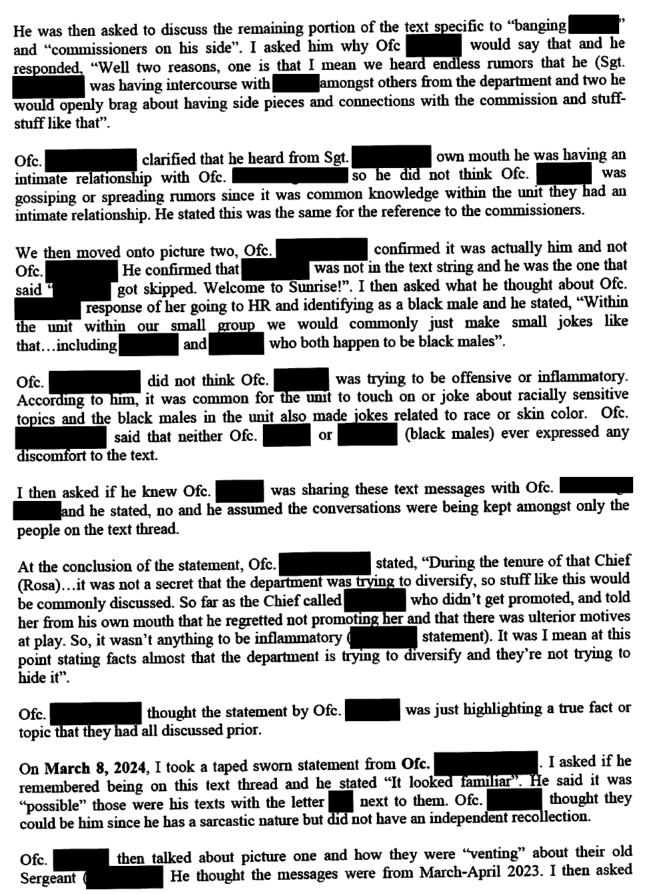


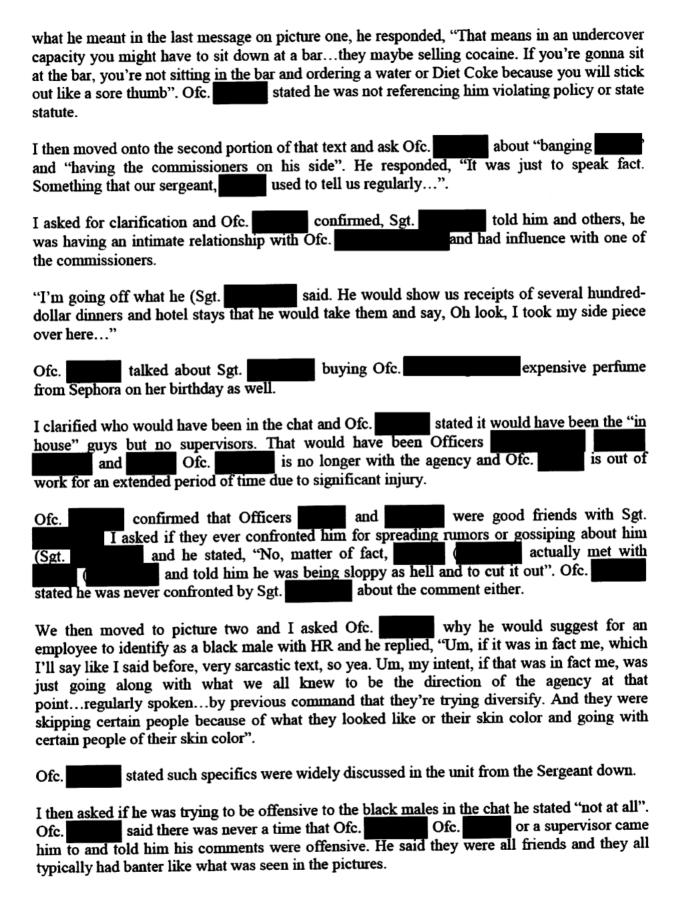
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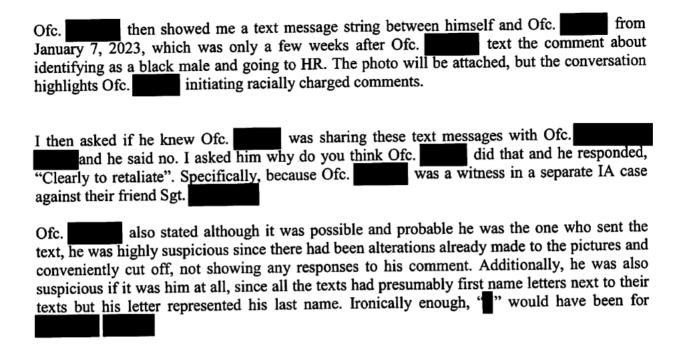
II. INVESTIGATIVE NARRATIVE:
During the months of August 2023-January 2024, Ofc. was the subject officer in an Internal Affairs Investigation, case# 23-07-01. Ofc. was the complainant.
On November 8, 2023, Ofc. sent an email to my work email account with two attachments. They were both pictures, screenshots of text message threads between at least two people. They appeared to be from two separate conversations. All but one of the names had been blacked out. Officer requested they be added to her current case.
On the same date, I responded to Ofc. email and declined the request to add the text messages to her case, since they were unrelated.
However, I did complete a Preliminary Complaint Form and attached the photos which was then sent to the Chief of Police via Chain of Command.
On November 8, 2023, Chief Ransone authorized an investigation into the matter.
On February 20, 2024, I took a taped swom statement from Ofc. She stated she sent me screenshots of text messages that had been sent to her by another officer. She confirmed she was not on the text message string. Ofc. said she got the pictures from Ofc. and had them for an undisclosed amount of time before she sent them to me.
Ofc. stated Ofc. told her this was a text thread that he was on with Officers , (former employee), and . Ofc. and he also confirmed the same officers were on the text string.
I then asked why she (Ofc. wanted these pictures added to her case file and she stated, "Because Ofc. is referencing having to go and have his lie and say she identifies as a black male because she was not promoted on the promotion".













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III. INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS and DISPOSITION:		
If Ofc. allegations are true, Ofc. would have violated the following policies:		
19.6.3.6. Members shall not commit an act that, brings discredit upon the Department or otherwise impairs the operational efficiency of the Department or an act that prohibits or impairs the ability of Department personnel to perform their assigned duties.		
19.6.3.20. Members will not criticize the Department or a fellow member when the criticism is reckless, obscene, unlawful, not based on fact, or tends to impair the efficiency or effectiveness of the organization, or the ability of supervisors to maintain discipline.		
IV: CONCLUSION		
On 11/8/23, Ofc. sent this investigator an email containing two screenshots, of text messages between Officers and It was two photos from separate days and conversations. Ofc. confirmed in her statement Ofc. had sent her the pictures sometime prior to her sending them to me, and that she was not personally in the text thread.		
Both photos had been altered to conceal the identity of the person texting. However, one name was left visible and it read, "Work". Next to each message is a letter, representing each officer's first name, except for Ofc. His messages were marked with a "", presumably for his last name. Ofc. admitted to altering the photos and said, "What I did was just black out the actual names, at least attempted to 'cause I can see one of them".		

During their statements, all three officers had some recollection of the text conversation, but commented it had been some time since it had occurred. The only date left visible was from picture two, which showed "Dec 5 at 10:18 AM". The above officers thought it was 12/5/22 since the message talked about promotions that occurred in December 2022. The second photo reflected a conversation from early 2023 since the text messages discussed their immediate . He was in the unit from January-April 2023. supervisor at the time (SIS), Sgt. At the completion of the interviews, it was determined Ofc. was not in the text thread, even though his name is listed. The phone had belonged to Ofc. prior to and the screenshots were taken after Ofc. updated his phone to reflect Ofc. the change. may have also been on the text (former employee) and Ofc. had no recollection of the text messages and did not wish to provide thread, but Ofc. was unable to be reached due to his medical status. a statement. Ofc. raised concerns in whether the text (actual messages) or letter identifiers next to Ofc. the messages, had been altered. He was forthcoming, stating the comments made in the messages were definitely typical of his personality, but questioned why the letters represented first names for everyone else, except him. In fact, if the pattern remained the same, " which is Ofc. first name, not Ofc. have actually represented also expressed concerns about potential content missing before and after the contentious texts. were members of the Sunrise and For reference, Officers Police Department's Strategic Investigations Section (SIS) at the time these messages were also in the unit around this time. Their immediate occurred. Officers and from January-April 2023. This was/is a full-time unit.

In Summary:

supervisor was Sgt.

Concerning the below policy, I find the following:

19.6.3.20. Members will not criticize the Department or a fellow member when the criticism is reckless, obscene, unlawful, not based on fact, or tends to impair the efficiency or effectiveness of the organization, or the ability of supervisors to maintain discipline.

When trying to decipher the outcome of this case, there were many factors to consider before reaching a conclusion. This would be true for both contentious statements in the text strings. Intent and purpose are important components in my decision.

First let us discuss the statement in picture one: and has the commissioners on "Unfortunately he thinks he's protected cuz he's banging his side". , at the time these The officers are discussing their current supervisor, Sgt. I messages were written. The tone of the message is clearly heated and more than one person is does as he likes behavior. The text suggested Sgt. frustrated with Sgt. because he is "protected" and receives this benefit because of the specific relationships mentioned. Although the messages are cropped, there is no indication of anyone disputing Ofc. comment which would only support his statement that the topic was commonplace. It would have benefitted the complainant to provide any opposing comments, if any were to exist. Also, said he was never confronted about his statement by anyone. Ofc. statements, they were adamant they were told the In Ofc. and himself. Their statements are corroborated in an unrelated quoted statement by Sgt. investigation (23-06-01), where numerous officers confirmed they were told or heard similar facts from Sgt. Additionally, it appears clear, the purpose of the statement was not to "gossip" or spread wrong information, but to comment on their direct correlation with Sgt. behavior. Ofc. chose to "vent" by texting his frustrations to fellow officers who shared the same frustrations. statement was not reckless, obscene, unlawful, or not based on fact, since Ofc. according to at least two of the officers, this was factual information being shared to them by at did not have such least one participating party. It could be argued that Sgt. relationships with the listed parties and he was simply grandstanding amongst his peers. But who conveyed the message with the that fact is irrelevant, since it was he (Sgt. intent for it to be believed. As their supervisor, it would be natural for the officers to receive stated "...he spoke about it pretty regularly and the information as the truth. Ofc.

Based on the totality of the circumstances, this investigator finds the listed policy violation:

showed evidence...".

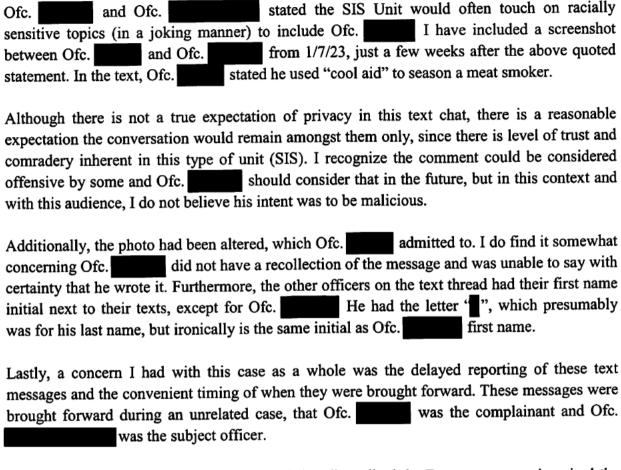
NOT SUSTAINED

Concerning the below policy, I find the following:

19.6.3.6. Members shall not commit an act that, brings discredit upon the Department or otherwise impairs the operational efficiency of the Department or an act that prohibits or impairs the ability of Department personnel to perform their assigned duties.

Like previously stated, there was a lot of consideration when deciding the outcome of this alleged policy violation and the appropriateness of this statement. Again, intent and purpose are important when making a final decision. I believe there must be great care taken when we attempt to censor officers and regulate their free speech, especially when it comes to officers' opinions.

opinions.
This policy is being applied to picture two, specifically:
"Tell her to go to HR and identify as a black male"
From the interviews, all parties agreed Ofc. is telling the group text who received the recent promotions. His proposed with the above quoted statement.
As stated above, the messages are cropped, and there is no indication of anyone countering or disputing Ofc. comment. Again, it would have benefitted the complainant to provide any such statements, had they existed. Another noticeable factor in this particular picture, it was cropped only to capture a portion of the conversation. The texts after Ofc. statement were intentionally blacked out since there was room left in the screenshot for more content.
Based off of his statement, Ofc. made the comment to emphasis information he had been told previously. Specifically, the Agency was diversifying their ranks, divisions, and the Department as a whole. Ofc. and Ofc. claimed to have been told this as a fact, by members of the prior command staff. I would add that our Department has done such in the recent years to proudly reflect the community it serves.
Even with that said, one must circle back to Ofc. statement and examine the appropriateness of such a comment. The comment was made to be humorous and not inflammatory. Ofc. text string included a small group of people who he considered friends. He was gym partners with Ofc. at the time these messages were created. It does not seem plausible Ofc. was trying to be argumentative or inflammatory with his friends.



There is no evidence an act was committed that discredited the Department, nor impaired the operational efficiency of the Department. Same applies to the latter part of the policy.

Based on the totality of the circumstances, this investigator finds the listed policy violation:

NOT SUSTAINED

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Sgt. Jessica Stewart, Internal Affairs	Date
Dana Swisher, Deputy Chief	Date
Daniel J. Ransone, Chief of Police	 Date

Sgt. Jessica Stewart, Internal Affairs

Dana Swisher, Deputy Chief

Daniel J. Ransone, Chief of Police

4/10/24 Date

4/15/24 Date

4/19/24.

Date