



SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

CRAIG N. MEIDL
CHIEF OF POLICE

Closed Case Summary

Complaint Number: C16-001 OPO Number: N/A

Date of Complaint: 01/08/2016

Allegation: Inadequate Response/Demeanor

Chain of Command Finding: Sustained

Final Discipline: Document of Counseling

INCIDENT SYNOPSIS

The complainant said that on 01/05/16 he was disturbed by males fighting near his home. He and his wife went outside to see what was happening. He saw three males and two of them threatened to kill him and come back to his house. He called 911 to report the incident and said the males were armed with knives. They began to leave and he followed them because he was afraid that they would return. The complainant states that when officers arrived they treated him poorly and did not do anything about the threat.

INVESTIGATION

Body camera evidence and dispatch recordings were reviewed. There was sufficient notes in CAD that an investigation should have been completed, yet no reports were completed or names were checked. The officers were given inaccurate information when they were dispatched. Dispatch told them several times that the complainant was refusing to stop following the suspects and go inside. The complainant was never told this. The complainant was being told by the suspects to go home and a dispatcher typed this into the call. It appears likely that there was some verbal communication between dispatchers, although neither has a specific memory of this. Based on the urgency the complainant is expressing, it seems unlikely that they would not communicate verbally as well. It also appears likely that miscommunication occurred. However, the dispatcher put an inflection in his voice that appears to minimize the allegation that the suspects had knives. The dispatcher stated in his interview that he had not received training on this.

The investigator had a radio supervisor listen to the recordings and her opinion was the same as the investigators: the dispatcher put an inflection in his voice and gave information that was not accurate.

The first officer to arrive controlled the actions of the three males. When other officers arrived he told them that the complainant was being difficult.

Officers contacted the complainant and one of the officer's voice was raised and he scolded the complainant. It appears that based on the officers belief that the complainant was uncooperative with radio, and that an officer told another officer that he was being difficult, led to his poor treatment. An officer did say in his interview that he drew some conclusions about the complainant based on his appearance and size compared to the suspects.

Officers did not get the names of the suspects and did not run them in the call. Officers did not explain to the complainant why they did not have probable cause. It is clear from the statements made by the suspects and complaints that threats were made. There was minimal investigation done into the allegations typed into the call. Officers took the suspects claims alone that they did not have knives.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

The officers did not complete an investigation or treat the complainant properly. The Officers and dispatcher were reprimanded.