



SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

CRAIG N. MEIDL
CHIEF OF POLICE

Closed Case Summary

Complaint Number: C17-038 OPO Number: N/A

Date of Complaint: 6/25/2017

Allegation: Harassment and Demeanor

Chain of Command Finding: Multiple

Final Discipline: Not Applicable

INCIDENT SYNOPSIS

An officer stopped the complainant and his dog during Hoopfest, and inquired if the dog was a service animal or companion animal, as dogs are prohibited at Hoopfest, with the exception of service dogs. The encounter became escalated.

COMPLAINT

The complainant alleged that the officer harassed him and was rude to him during the encounter. The complainant felt singled out because the officer did not address the other people coming into the event with their dogs.

INVESTIGATION

The Internal Affairs investigation contained an interview of the complainant, complainant's wife, and involved employees. As the involved employee is a lieutenant, and lieutenants are not issued BWC (body worn camera), thus there was no video to review. Another employee witnessed the last few minutes of the encounter, and that employee was interviewed.

The lieutenant explained his questions were to determine if the dog was a service animal or a companion animal—for example, if the animal performed a task to qualify as a service animal. The lieutenant and complainant initially disputed the dog providing comfort and that not being a qualifying task. After the complainant's wife explained that the dog alerted to low blood sugar, the lieutenant knew that the animal qualified as a service animal and allowed them entrance to the event. The investigation showed that the lieutenant was familiar with the applicable policy and law and his questions were appropriate.

The lieutenant noted that he had worked as the commander for the special event, and one of his tasks was enforcing the no animal prohibition, SMC 10.01.110, at the event. The day before, he contacted 20 individuals with animals and only one was a service dog. He had cited other individuals for this offense.

As to the demeanor complaint, the chain of command found there was insufficient evidence to sustain or exonerate it.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

During the review, the chain of command found there was insufficient evidence to sustain or exonerate the demeanor allegation; it was determined to be Not Sustained. The Harassment allegation was Unfounded.