



SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

CRAIG N. MEIDL
CHIEF OF POLICE

Closed Case Summary

Complaint Number: C17-059 OPO Number: 17-29
Date of Complaint: 11/6/2017
Allegation: Inadequate Response and Demeanor
Chain of Command Finding: Multiple
Final Discipline: Not Applicable

INCIDENT SYNOPSIS

An officer responded to an auto accident involving the complainant. The complainant disagreed with the officer's report about the accident listing him as the at-fault driver, the officer not contacting a potential witness afterward, and the officer being slow to call him back.

COMPLAINT

The complainant filed a complaint alleging inadequate response of handling the accident investigation. The complainant also alleged poor demeanor by the officer's supervisor after speaking to him about the incident.

INVESTIGATION

Investigators reviewed body worn camera footage, officer reports, and drawings, as well as interviews conducted with the complainant and involved officers. Video shows the officer's efforts to properly investigate the collision, interview involved persons and witnesses on-scene, collect information for the report, and attempt to contact the complainant, who was no longer on-scene. Investigators noted he was initially missing some information in his report, which he had added later.

The investigation showed that the complainant was at fault. The investigator consulted with the lieutenant of the Traffic Unit about reviewing collisions and citing violators as a result of the reviews. The lieutenant agreed that even under the circumstances provided by the complainant, the complainant remained the at-fault driver for Fail to Yield Right of Way, turning left. The officer had not mailed the complainant a citation because he was not sure how to do that, but would have issued a citation if the complainant had been on-scene.

The officer was opposed to adding the complainant's witness information to the police report because the complainant presented the information after his insurance company advised he was at fault, and the witness information is only relevant to a civil process separate from law enforcement interest. Finally, the witness was not present at the time of the officer's investigation and the witness's information was not presented to the other involved driver. The investigator agrees with the decision not to add the complainant's information after the fact as the officer cannot attest to its accuracy.

When the Sergeant spoke with the complainant, the sergeant told the complainant that he was at fault and that SPD would not be changing the police report. The complainant became upset and the conversation ended with the complainant hanging up.

CONCLUSION

The allegation of Inadequate Response for the officer was determined to be Exonerated. The allegation of Demeanor for the supervisor was determined to be Unfounded.