



SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

CRAIG N. MEIDL
CHIEF OF POLICE

Closed Case Summary

Complaint Number: C19-064 OPO Number: 19-53
Date of Complaint: 7/11/2019
Allegation: Policy/Standard Violation
Chain of Command Finding: Closed
Final Discipline: Not Applicable

INCIDENT SYNOPSIS

Multiple members of the Spokane Police Department were assigned to manage the crowd and traffic at an event held at the South Hill branch of the City of Spokane Libraries, 3324 S. Perry, on 06/15/19. Equal protest areas were established for protesters and counter-protesters for their expression of constitutional rights to ensure a safe and peaceful event. Journalists at this public event were afforded rights as any citizen, and were required to obey venue or law enforcement directives for their safety and the safety of other participants.

COMPLAINT

The complainant identified himself as a freelance reporter during the event. The complainant alleges officers prevented his access to the event, therefore violating his first amendment rights.

INVESTIGATION

The investigation consisted of a thorough review of videos from all involved officer's body worn cameras.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

Spokane Police Department TAC Team supervisors must staff the event with safety being paramount. These types of events can cause violent encounters between protesters and counter-protesters as evident from protests nationwide. They anticipate passionate individuals showing support for and in opposition to these types of events. Police presence at the event was meant to provide security outside the Library and ensure peace and public safety. Knowing about the controversial event, and how passionate people are regarding it, TAC had the duty to provide the safest avenue to participate for all parties. They determined that establishing equal protest areas for protesters and counter-protesters for their expression of constitutional rights was the best way to ensure a safe and peaceful event (Ward v. Rock Against Racism, Hernandez v. City of San Jose). Officers did not infringe upon the complainant's rights.

The case has been closed.