

- Purpose
 - Role
 - Excludes External Complaints
 - Complaint Docs – 12/3 Complaint
 - Bill of Rights Inapplicable
 - Initial Meetings to Better Understand Concerns
- Background
 - Current Position
 - Station
 - Supervision
 - DOE
- September Complaint
- October Grievance
- 12/3 Complaint
 - Confirm Alleged Wrongdoers
 - Reference Alleged Wrongdoing 1-9
 - Requested Relief

JORDAN HUTCHINSON

2/20/26

DOE 8/3/15 FF/EMT and then Paramedic

Station 1 for most of that time – A Shift

2/2/25 Lt. station 11 – C Shift

1/16/26 Demoted – Station 7 – C Shift

Station 1 – Reported to Cpt. Satchel Peterton

As Lt. reported to Division Chief Stefanic

Now Captain Chris Louis

Baldwin and I were at Station 1 together

Bladwin was moved to a different station

Know B outside of work – consider friends

9/22 complaint was about 70 pages plus about 1,000 of documents in support plus audio files

We weren't sure who to submit it to bc normally submitted to OIA but the three Respondents are in charge of OIA

So we went to Union and asked how to submit it. So, Union attorney reviewed and they asked Chief Lee and he said submit it to OIA. At that time, we didn't specifically name Chief Lee or anyone but Chief Lee knew that it was about OIA and about the handling of the prior two investigations. He did say that if it was against one of the 3 contract employees it goes to Fire Board.

So we submitted it to OIA late on 9/22

Received an acknowledgement 9/23 morning. And received dismissal letter.

That complaint was about: (1) off-record questioning; (2) how they were speaking to witnesses; (3) why only 3 people selected to be investigated out of all the ones identified in Pace's complaint – you, Baldwin, Doug B. and then a fourth, [REDACTED] (4) failure to act on death threat I had on me; (5) didn't interview a key witness; (6) called in only witnesses who left Station 1 and only certain people were asked about the cultural audit. Investigative summaries do not match up what was on the audio files.

What prompted you to look more closely at the audit

It didn't feel right from the beginning

We didn't have sufficient notice of the allegations against us until they turned the recorder on and started talking

Everything that had been going on previously with Chief Gonzalez – shady things like we heard that reports were changed or things missing and we had heard from others who were subject to investigation that they felt the outcome was already determined

Chief Gonzales, SG, Division Chief (at the time) Crouse attended my witness meeting – all asked questions – they asked cultural questions after they stopped the tape – don't know why and I didn't say anything about it – Chief Gonzalez focused on Pace related issues and SG focused on cultural questions.

BC Jimmy Myer was my union rep and attended with me and spoke up at the end of the investigation. I heard that in a separate investigation meeting he was asked to leave. Crouse also spoke up with concerns re the process.

October 6 grievance under CBA and October 20 was the Step 1 meeting

Ryan Sapp and Respondents were there at the Step 1 meeting

Ryan Sapp Union President and Lt.

The Step 1 denial was from Chief Lee

Believe Step 2 was how the denial was phrased from Chief Lee

Not pursued to arbitration

At the grievance meeting, I took notes and sent them to KS and asked that they be considered but KS denied that request and said not required

Why do you think you and / or station 1 targeted? Only think I can think of is Jonas, Chief Gonzalez's son hired, there was a prank involving a jumpsuit. Jonas Gonz. Hired in 2019 or so and just promoted to Lt. He was put in Station 1 as a rookie. There was a prank involving his jump suit – they cut off legs to a jump suit and swapped it out with his – I was on a call when it occurred. Captain P., Sam Smith, and R. Longchamp (retired) were there when it occurred. Later there was an inquiry opened and we all had to send emails but that was it. I was never made aware of a written complaint and we were trying to figure out what sparked it

The inquiry came via email from our Division Chief Mike Merrit at the time (retired at the time)

Sam Smith when he went to Station 15 with Jonas continued to have issues at 15 and it seemed like anyone involved in that prank has continued to have issues.

There weren't any discipline

Jonas thought the prank was funny. No issue. Chief Gonzalez never talked with me about it.

In 2024 a tier system was put into place where you had to have certain certifications before stepping up and it only benefited a few people including Jonas. It hurt a lot of people including Chris bc they could no longer step up. It didn't impact me because I was already on Lt. list at the time so I was still qualified to step up.

Any other reason you believe that you or Station 1 targeted? The prank incident is the only one I can recall.

Seems like anyone who has had any issue at all with Jonas has been treated this way in one form or another.

Informal Counseling "for it"

Another BC got an informal for it

Union Rep Myers also got an informal for it

Chris Baldwin got moved

Not intending or requesting that the summer investigations be reopened

I would love to get my promotion back but My biggest thing is to correct process and don't want people to be treated like this

Loudermill over termination recommendation was supposed to be today but has been pushed off

CHRISTOPHER BALDWIN

2/20/26

DOE January 27, 2020

Early on I was at several stations

Station 2 and Station 14 on A Shift

On 11/21/21 I was reassigned shifts due to “operational need” I was the second lowest paramedic on the shift at the time so not an issue

Moved to C Shift at Station 14 until October 2023

Then reassigned back to A Shift at Station 7 until about January 2024 when annual bid – I transferred to Station 1

I was there until 9/30/25 until I moved stations and shifts to Station 12 at B Shift – immediate sup is Lt. Dorian Jackson

Why Station 1? Early on when I was at various stations, I knew some of them at Station 1, went to fire school with some of them, around people that reminded me of firemen I wanted to be, gave you hard truths but helped you find strengths and weaknesses and pursuit of excellence – different environment like they would give me the shirt off their back

Developed good friendship with Hutchinson at that point

FF/Paramedic now – hired as FF/EMT and then waited 6 months for apprenticeship program and then released as Paramedic

At Station 1, sup was Captain Satchel Peterkin

I believe the 9/30 trx was improper and a result of the investigation I was part of on 7/19. Target Solutions is how I learned about the transfer. I didn’t get a head’s up beforehand.

I showed up for a formal investigation and just knew it was about misconduct and possible creation of a HOE. I showed up and they presented the allegations at the time of the meeting. I answered questions. Then they started asking questions about culture at Station 1. Didn’t think I did anything wrong and it wasn’t until after the investigation that I heard that I was being moved.

When I received notice of the investigation, never received anything like that before, something didn’t seem right about it, but it said you couldn’t talk to anyone about it. I was concerned so I consulted Union, FF Greene, Union rep, asking how the notice should be and if this was sufficient. FF Greene said he was not ultimately responsible and that there was another union rep Myer. So I reached out to him about my concerns trying to figure out what my rights were. Myer said he would see if could get any other information. He ultimately said he couldn’t and answer the questions as they come and basically it is what it is.

When the investigation concluded, I submitted a public records request for the records related to the investigation because it just didn’t seem right to me. 8/4 is when I made this request.

FF Doug B also at Station 1, also alleged to have harassed, etc., no finding of wrongdoing, and he only got moved stations and I got moved stations and shifts. You can move stations every year if you want in January through bidding, but you can only move shifts if you ask administration and they approve. You're at the will of admin as far as shifts. Unlike me, Doug B was told why he was being moved and he was able to ask questions and I wasn't. I raised this concern in a grievance and I was told I'm sorry no one talked to you but grievance denied.

I can't find a reason Doug was treated differently as far as transfer goes except because of my asking about the investigation and public records request

What prompted you and JH to submit complaint in September? After investigation was concluded and we were able to talk, and made public records requests, started seeing things and trusted JH and JH had more knowledge of Department. We just decided to do it after gathering information together and motivated in the same way that not right and this has been going on before this investigation.

The end of my meeting was not recorded. They ended the audio recording said this concludes the investigation and I stood up to shake hands and was prompted to sit back down and they rehashed stuff dealing with cultural issues with Station 1 and why I believed Station 1 was perceived the way it was. Same questions asked off the record were sort of the same questions asked on the record but Chief Gonzalez was not happy with way I answered questions on the record. I said something about Station 1 being known as cowboy and SG said why and I said I don't know maybe bc work hard and don't complain.

It was almost like they wanted to see if I would answer differently off the record

SEPTEMBER COMPLAINT AND WHY SUBMITTED IT TO THE OIA

Grievance Meeting - Chief Lee, Attorney KS, Asst. Chief G, and Sapp, and me and Jordan

They asked how we wanted to approach our filing and they started asking questions that veered off into formal complaint and not grievance

I took notes, Jordan took notes, and we combined them after the fact. KS did not agree to make the notes part of the grievance record. She cited an article that was not the right article.

The grievance was about the formal administrative complaint being ruled on by the three people being accused and we found out that they were the only three responsible for reviewing and deciding on our complaint. Grievance was based on rules and regs article. They said at the grievance meeting that they all reviewed it independently so it was impartial. I think that they believed that our OIA complaint was only against Chief Gonzalez even though didn't name him. So when the two of them jumped into a review with OIA, and I don't know if that is normal, but it was like they were trying to cure any issues with Chief Gonzalez but didn't realize our complaint wasn't just about Gonzalez

The other part of the grievance was about my reassignment. KS said what do you want us to do move you back to Station 1, then win an arbitration and move you back when we win an arbitration. She kept saying arbitration and I was trying to come to a resolution. This was the first time we had met with them and they had just denied our complaint. No indication that they were trying to come

to a meaningful compromise. Also grievance procedure just didn't contemplate that she would even be there. KS also said he already has such limited management rights and I am not letting you take any of them. I felt wrong and wouldn't have happened except that I had just made a complaint and it was against her.

Fire Chief Lee

9/19 I was contacted by the Union by phone asking how to take a complaint straight to the Fire Board and I said you don't

Then he sent me an email that was a little different and I said no process for that unless it deals with one of the contract employees

I think it said it was a complaint about the investigation

I directed that it be sent to OIA – I don't have an OIA – depending on the nature of the issue at hand, I may assign it to a lower level chief or asst chief Gonzalez.

Within about 1 years time we had 3 harassment complaints unrelated to this

A probationary employee during exit interview said she had issues at Station 1 and in light of the other 3 harassment complaints I was concerned that there was a bigger issue (she ended up filing a complaint with HR and FCHR). Bondenise was the probationary ee. I don't recall who investigated the Bondenise investigation.

During the Bondenise investigation, [REDACTED] was interviewed and said nothing going on that was of concern. The next day, however, she complained about Pace.

Of the harassment complaints, one led to someone retiring, one led to reassignment. They were not even related to Station 1.

According to what I heard - In one of the Pace investigations, Austin Hodge was being questioned and Union Rep Myer was there. Hodge, when he was being questioned, turned away and Myer turned towards him, and kept looking at the tape recorder. Chief Gonzalez says do you want to be taken off the record and AH said yes. So Chief Gonzalez comes to me and says can we go off the record. I say my goal is to get to bottom of it. And evidently AH unloaded after no recorder and union left. SG left appalled at ff actions in our department.

My understanding is that after that they started turning off the recorder. But Myer stayed in most of the time.

Within 6 months or so after getting to Station 1 AH asked to be transferred out of the station

Within 6 months or so after getting SG report we moved CB and DB. That was my decision.

I wanted to split them up and make sure not able to work together again – they were the ones identified by SG/AH as part of problematic culture together. I don't know if they were ever told that they were identified.

At the time of the investigations in Summer, [REDACTED] was at Station 17 and so was Pace. Then we moved Pace to Station 10.

Pace and [REDACTED] had a good relationship but during medical call, it lead to a PIP for both of them, they pointed the finger at the other and their relationship went

If I had known who the September complaint was about, I would still have said submit it the same way and then would have figured out how to best investigate. In past, if any of us is accused, we have handed off to have someone not named investigate or handed it off to an outside entity – we means it was decided by the board

The September complaint came in by hand. It came in by two giant packets and thumb drives. I pulled Chief Gonzalez and Kim in to look at it. Re-litigation of prior investigation. I asked them both to review it and said let's meet tomorrow and discuss. We were not going to re-investigate, so wanted to see if there was anything new. Then we met the next day in the afternoon. We went around and asked what was different. Decided to dismiss bc it wanted re-investigation – two Respondents filed complaint about investigation where they were being investigated – they were biased

The October grievance was about our handling of the September complaint. Under CBA, can only grieve dismissal, demotion, suspension. But we allow for a peer review process (two members from Union and two from management) and they decide other issues under the CBA. But, we heard it anyway.

I was Step I and there really isn't a step 2 except arbitration.

Even though it wasn't grievable, I denied it on other issues.

As a result of Pace investigations – Hutchinson received an informal bc of comments he made to Pace; Myer received something because when he was asked to leave during Austin's meeting he told Chief Gonzalez that he was going to cut his f---ing throat

Hit List Issue – [REDACTED] said that Pace had a hit list with names on it. My understanding, Gonzalez asked Pace about it that day, he denied it. They asked everyone supposedly on the list if fear of Pace and they all said no.

The person who Gonzalez disregarded their statement during Pace investigation was a student during the incident in which Pace got angry because other group took over car fire. That student became an employee and then provided a statement in Olver Pace investigation but it was about the car fire incident.

Not atypical to have attorney at grievance meeting. I do remember KS saying something about management rights and moving people around. Didn't seem out of the norm to me or a big deal – I don't remember it the way that they remember it. Just reiterating rights under clause. Don't remember anything about arbitration. I remember KS saying something like are you upset bc you got moved? You realize Chief has that authority.

When the December 3 complaint came in, I looked at it as now adding me and KS – trying to get to Fire Board. Nothing in rules and regs or charter that allows it to go straight to Board. So I denied it.

Hindsight – referred it out and that's what I did after thinking about it. Could have been after the February complaint.

My assumption is that one of the Division Chiefs would have told them why they were being split up but I don't know if that happened.

I know Jonas was one of the ones who used to be at Station 1 and was not treated well by these guys, but I don't think he every filed a complaint or anything. I don't think Jonas was interviewed.

How were individuals chosen to be interviewed – talk with Gonzalez about that.

Demotion – prior to being promoted, JH refused to wear a mask during COVID, got into a fight with an officer re safety glasses – concerned about his ability to follow all policies even though he doesn't agree; I was not going to promote him, talked to Chief Starrett and said I am really thinking about not promoting him and Starrett was advocating for him, and I said can you guarantee he'll follow policies even if he doesn't agree. So I thought, I am going to give him a chance – good tactically and hard worker – promoted him. He's in training division, and Chief Gonzalez stopped by training and JH in front of other officers in training said, I am going to get a reaction out of Gonzalez and get out of uniform and puts a Union buff across his forehead. Another Captain grabs JH and gets him in the right uniform – that mentality in and of itself, mocking Asst. Chief while on probation problematic. Then disciplined for calling Pace little boy. A couple of issues with a captain at station 11 and how he dealt with them – ff told a captain to go f himself and when JH wrote it up just said that they had a disagreement. 12/23 I sent Kim a letter re all concerns re JH and told her that I would make final decision late January.

They basically went to fire board about his demotion

BRIAN GONZALEZ

DOE 25 years

Close to 3 years as Asst. Fire Chief

Before that Deputy Chief over Operations. The Division Chief of Ops was a Deputy Chief and that's the position I had.

Before that Division Chief – areas of focus of division chiefs change.

When Chief Sparrow here, there was an investigation where the Union and Chief agreed that our attorney would not be involved in conducting investigations but would consulting. I was over HR at the time. Chief Sparrow said you'll oversee internal affairs but Kim will be someone you can consult with. I believe I was a Deputy Chief at the time. This was several years ago.

Courses in labor arbitrations and investigations.

I don't do all investigations but assign to division or deputy chief and keep me apprised of summary of investigation findings. We have a template for the summary findings we use.

Availability is what I use to determine who does the investigations. Not really nature of allegations or who is involved/who is accused.

We always have a minimum of two administrative chiefs during the investigation. When I do investigations, I intend for us to do pretty much everything together. Both of us discuss/review summary of findings before closed out. Allegations go in there, violations go in there, depending on weight of evidence other items included

Typically complaints go up to the chain of command

No separate office of internal affairs – but Chief Lee, Sabol, Asst. Chief Gonzalez responsible for internal affairs

Our secretary gets complaint, checks to see who the division chief for that ee, division chief gets it and determines if it can be handled at station level and then division chief will close it out. If the complaint is against a division chief, secretary would ask me about it or division chief's boss. If division chief received something station couldn't handle, would forward up the chain.

I think in past complaint against Chief Sparrow was handled by Kim Sabol.

I think the September complaint was about the investigations process.

After the 9/22 complaint I was not a decision maker – not my wheelhouse.

We had a Labor Management Meeting when this all came up and I took the Notice of Investigation template and said do you have any issues with it because this is what we have always used, but if you want something different, let's talk about. The Union had no issues with the template Notice. This was after the September complaint. The Union also said that they had no issues with the way I did the Pace investigations, but that they did have an issue with naming the complainant.

Somehow [REDACTED] Pace complaint came to my attention. Pace complaint – I used another division chief bc one from [REDACTED] – who was Vachon - was not available. So I used Chief Crouse. Crouse went back to Battalion Chief entirely voluntary.

Vachon prepared questions for [REDACTED] Pace investigation and sent them to Susan Gainey for her input. We outline who to interview together. Revisit through the process.

We audio record. At end, give it to Vicky, she takes it to audio and transcription and puts it into a file. Either me or Vicky used Ai to transcribe.

Union did not attend all of the meetings during the Pace investigation. (At the end of the [REDACTED] Pace investigation, he issued his own litany of complaints). As a group, we broke up each of the categories of allegations by Pace and provided notices accordingly.

I removed the Union rep, Jimmy Meyer. We were in the middle of talking to Austin Hodge. When Hodge said about Station 1, “well if I’m being honest . . .” Jimmy Meyer crossed his arms, turned his chair, and faced Hodge

Hodge said he was seriously considering leaving bc of the way he was treated at Station 1. Then he just kept sitting there and staring at the recorder. I wasn’t sure what to do bc you could tell he wanted to talk but wasn’t going to talk. I said you keep staring at this recorder, would you like to go off the record. Hodge says yes. Gainey says yes. Me and SG went to Chief Lee to explain the situation. Chief Lee said is there any discipline that is going to come out of this. I said a lot of this is he said she said and I don’t see any discipline coming out of this. He said as long as we aren’t going to discipline anyone based on that information – I want to know, knowing what the culture is out there is more important than disciplining someone. Either Chief Lee or Susan Gainey said something about Jimmy Meyer’s demeanor.

Crouse stayed back and we left Hodge and Meyer.

Jimmy Meyer has a history. Consistent with his history.

So we come back and tell Jimmy that we are going off the record and no need for you to be here. He gets up and says if anything happens to these guys I will split your f-cking throat and he had a big pocket knife when he stood up. I said really Jimmy? And he left. I remember SG saying that’s part of your problem right there. Jimmy went into Chief Lee’s office after that.

Then Austin Hodge proceeds to tell us about his troubles at Central.

In Bondadenise case we went back three years to see if it was more than her and whether cultural issue.

Chose people for workplace culture investigation based on roster.

I don’t remember how I got the September 22 complaint, but I remember getting the packet and a zip drive. I don’t know if I heard it was coming beforehand. I did review the complaint. Not all of the hundreds of pages. I reviewed it and would cross reference prior investigation and remember thinking I can explain why this happened or did not happen, because I was the one who did investigations. I felt very comfortable that there was nothing there. And told the Chief that. I didn’t discuss it with him in detail. I do not recall being involved in any discussions with Chief about how

we were going to respond/what we were going to do with the complaint. I do remember he asked me if there was anything I thought was concerning. There may have been general discussions, but didn't sit down and go through the complaint together. I think that they individually reviewed the email. I think I was given a copy because it had to do with my investigation. I think it came in via hand delivery and more than one copy.

It did come up in the Labor Management meeting because I brought it up bc I wanted to know if the Union had any issues with the template Notice or any other issues with how we conduct investigations. Initially they said they wanted a little more information but then we talked about how that would be a public record and they wavered.

Not involved in processing or responding to grievances. Chief Lee is. Not sure if he has every designated someone to respond.

I think Chief Lee told me about the grievance. I think I did see a copy of it.

Me, Chief Lee, and Kim Sabol sat in when they came in to talk about the grievance. I think/my understanding that Chief Lee thought we could talk it through and resolve concerns. But not what happened, interrogated. I remember Hutchinson saying did you read the complaint and I said I looked it over. So I didn't say much.

Kim Sabol said something about management rights. I don't remember how it came up, but I remember her saying something about our management rights – don't remember what it was in reference to.

Chief Lee primarily spoke of the three of us.

They were interrogating us about what we did or didn't do. They didn't go through the packet.

Didn't have a role in preparing the written grievance response.

I did hear that they wanted us to forward the September complaint to the fire board and I remember there being discussion with Chief Lee who was looking at Fire Board's Charter. I know Chief Lee was keeping Fire Board apprised.

Requests opportunity to address allegations that may arise.

KIM SABOL

DOE May 2017 as District Attorney

Martin County School Board 10 years prior to that Labor Employment Attorney

ASA before that

Fire Board appoints three positions, including Attorney. Three year contract but known that this is my last year.

Under Chief Lee, upon request I assist. I don't do investigations and have not done that since 2021 when it changed under the previous chief.

I am not in charge of IA but Chief could designate if he wanted me to investigate but I haven't since 2021 – It's Chief Lee and Asst. Chief Gonzalez – Maybe under Chief Sperra in the first year I might have been considered under IA but I haven't done investigations since 2021. Rules have not been revised to say Attorney no longer part of it.

Review chronology of key events

January 20 2026 – that email complaint to the Board is the first time learned about agency complaints

I knew about the [REDACTED] Pace investigations, and may have received periodic updates, but I was not involved beyond that.

I was involved in decision to bring in Susan Gainey. We had several complaints by females, new hires, probationary employees. Bondanise was at one station, received a good evaluation, rotated to next station and when she resigned complained about how she was treated – she said differently bc she was a female and she felt singled out because during a training exercise, she felt everyone focused on her and watching her and one of male ff filmed her and joke meme going around about her being a DEI hire. We didn't get any corroboration. She filed a charge. We prevailed. The last witness that Bondanise wanted us to speak to was [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] made a complaint.

Pace administrative leave. Then he filed a complaint.

Then a flight nurse complained about a male firefighter and another complaint re the way a female firefighter .

Chief Lee and I discussed it. Found SG through defense firm on Bondanise matter. Didn't know her or have any connection to her.

Didn't have any role in deciding questions asked, who would be interviewed, did not sit in on any of the interviews. Just briefed periodically.

I don't recall any questions or being asked to provide advice on either of the investigations

I did become aware after the fact that change in way recorded. I know based on my time here it's very hard to get any firefighter to come forward with what they know. I believe Gonzalez shared that

one of the firefighters was very uncomfortable answering questions and union rep turned and faced him and ee was uncomfortable. They wanted to go off the record not to discipline anyone but to know if something going on that needed to know about – wanted to resolve that problem more important than disciplining any one person

I think Gonzalez talked with Chief Lee first and I think Chief Lee asked if enough to discipline so far and no and so Chief Lee said I want to know if you have a bigger cultural issue. I think even at the Fire Academy there may have been rumblings about Station 1. Not sure if ees teach at Academy.

My impression is that Gonzalez did a first draft of investigative summary and SG added legal standard. SG did on her own the report on the workplace cultural concerns.

I was not involved in decisions that came out of SG report – i.e. moves.

When the 9/22 complaint came in, I called SG as a professional courtesy. She said she stood by the investigation.

We definitely discussed demotion, options

On 9/19, Union president emailed Chief Lee if an ee wants to complain send to me. Keep in mind that Fire Board doesn't handle any individual employee complaints unless it involves me.

There have not been any complaints about Chief Lee.

There were complaints about Chief Emerson and Chief Spera. Chief Spera, I handled that complain after consulting with the Board to see what direction wanted to go re hiring third party. We have also had a complaint re treasure and engaged outside counsel.

I knew something was coming on 9/19, but did not know it had anything to do with [REDACTED] pace investigations, etc. It was dropped off on 9/22 – two sets and a thumb drive.

Chief Lee says I want each of the 3 of us to review it and see if it is alleging anything new that would warrant further action/investigation or just realleging same things investigated. It was two parts – complaint and exhibit. I flipped through the exhibits but did flip through and I reviewed the complaint part of it.

The September complaint – I called SG. She said stand behind and if you want me to do anything else with it. I conveyed this to Chief.

Within a day or two we discussed and Chief Lee said this is what I intend to do about it. My main concern was for Board to be aware and make sure Board okay with what he intended to do about it.

I think Chief Lee notified the Board when he received the September 22 complaint and told them what he intended to do about it. I told Chief Lee that I talked to Susan and she had no concerns.

10/6 grievance - Chief Lee wanted me to sit in on grievance meeting with them

If it looks like a grievance is going to arbitration, they will get me involved

I have sat in on grievance meetings – it was common for me to do so between 2017 – 2021. I think here because we had hired an outside attorney, Chief Lee wanted me there.

Not sure if I have sat in on other grievance meetings with Chief Lee as Chief

Re that grievance meeting, Chief Lee thought it would be more collaborative, but it was not very productive. They thought they could interrogate us.

I think they wanted me to say how much time I spent reviewing the complaint. I did not review every since page and listen to every single recording. One of them was arguing that the bidding article was relevant, and in that article it says that if you bid to a station, the Chief can reassign you to another station after counseling. I didn't think that applied and said even if it did, you're saying counseling was the only piece he missed before changing your assignment and the management right article allows him to change your assignment irrespective of this other article. My impression of the grievance was that they were embarrassed that their team got separated, rumors may have been circulating, and that is what incentivized it. I think they were upset that there were not any transcripts to show who said what about them.

I think Chief Lee told me what he was going to do with the December 3 complaint. My concern is to make sure the Board is aware of it and knows the steps being taken. He was keeping the Board informed.

I was not involved in the decision to engage a third party to investigate the 12/3 complaint.

My impression of the 9/22 complaint was that it was about Gonzalez and Gainey.

Re SG's email about regrouping strategy it was about how to structuring billing/engagement or that she didn't see the need to interview a witness for example if we have interviewed 5 and just not 1.

DIVISION CHIEF NICK WILSON

DOE 20 years

Lt., Captain, Battalion Chief and brought into admin working with Gonzalez in Operations and did that for about a year. Slowly began picking up divisions, report writing, compliance (certifications, ACL/BLS, etc.). BC still part of bargaining unit. Also got training division and health and safety after about a year into BC and they also made me be the health and safety officer (lost compliance). October 2025 promoted into division chief and trained with Wayne Boyer who was in this role before as a Battalion Chief (not a Division Chief). I am Division Chief over HR, Health Safety, and Exposure Control.

As Division Chief I have a team of 4. HR – Risk and Liability; Standard/Insurance; Onboarding, Offboarding, Promotions; FMLA. We have over 500 firefighters. Kenny is the closest we have to an HR Manager. Wayne Boyer was over HR before me and started training Kenny. Exposure Control – meet with hospitals, follow protocols. Health and Safety – Behavioral Health Assistants who give firefighters resources during/after stressful event or if personal stressors at home. Team of 12-15 firefighters and 3 K9s, Personal Fitness trainers who do agility testing, Wellness.

I was notified that I would be the point person to provide materials. My first involvement was in Feb when we were engaged to investigate 12/3

In May 2025, I did have to discipline JH and 2 captains in training division and I wrote a letter to chief Lee to explain what happened. Making fun of Asst. Chief. Training Captain chided JH for doing it. I got a call about it and this is a high profile division – public figures in and out of there frequently. Light Duty in training division can be seen as a privilege. Captain called me about it. I didn't document this until later. What prompted you to document it? When I heard you were investigating.

I wrote statement re the above on 1/27 – may not have been that I wrote when you became involved. May have been after I learned of the complaints that came through HR. Chief Lee knew about the training incident though immediately. It was just that I documented it in January.

Not involved in JH demotion

DANE VACHON

DOE 2005

FF/EMT

FF/Paramedic

Lt in January 2014

BC in May 2022 and reassigned to administration

Division Chief in 2023, first over HR and Risk, then operations, now training and information technology. It was over 2 years ago that I was over HR.

I know that there is an internal complaint. A few weeks ago, Chief Lee called a meeting of Division Chiefs and above to let us know complaint and history of complaint. No details, but overviews. I think it was because some of us expressed concerns that we did not know what was going on and we work together as a unit and obvious that something was going on. So I think Chief Lee decided to provide quick overview.

As Division Chief, I have had role in investigating complaints. Normally Division Chiefs and above conduct investigations. At time, Division Chiefs new and didn't have a lot of experience. Gonzalez had experience conducting investigations and included and assisted him in investigation.

Involved in [REDACTED] Pace investigation. That was the only one I was involved in with Pace. I was not part of the subsequent one where Pace complained. I was out of town so Crouse assigned with Gonzalez.

[REDACTED] emailed complaint, sent to her Lt. who sent it to battalion chief, who sent it to division chief on shift. At that time, I was the division chief of operations so that complaint was forwarded to me. I reported directly to Gonzalez so I informed him of the complaint and we reviewed the complaint.

It wasn't my first investigation. I think the Notice of Investigation said we both would be conducting the investigation with the assistance of district counsel, so I don't believe a lead was designated on that notice. Usually questions created and usually would go to district attorney for review. I can't recall who prepared those questions in that investigation. I don't know of any investigation in which the attorney didn't take a look at the questions first. In this case, we may have sent the questions to SG. I can't recall for sure if the questions were sent to SG. I assume KS may have still looked at them but I don't recall exactly.

My understanding of SG involvement, we had a few internal complaints previous to [REDACTED] and my understanding was that Chief Lee wanted to make sure no systemic problem of any type and prior complaints were of a similar nature and he wanted to make sure there wasn't a bigger problem.

Witnesses to interview would be compiled based on complaint. We would normally ask is there anyone else you believe we should interview who would have knowledge. That investigation was unique in that when we interviewed Pace he produced a lengthy document/complaint that named multiple ees. A lot of names, but not a lot of detail, so we asked him to provide more details via email so that we could better evaluate. I can't recall who would have said/decided who to interview.

In my experience anyone named interviewed and could increase scope from there based on witness meetings. Pace wouldn't have been interviewed until the end. I believe normally we interview respondent last. Person who prepared summary of findings would have signed it. Typically both review it. Both audio and transcriptions would be part of investigative file.

Re Pace complaint, I believe I emailed him after the complaint and to ask him to provide additional information. And once he sent that information I wasn't involved from then on. Someone may have informally said something about it after that, but I don't recall anything.

Never served as [REDACTED] Pace, Hutchinson, or Baldwin's BC

I don't remember who took the lead on questioning in [REDACTED] Pace investigation. I do recall outside counsel asking a question at the very end of each.

I have heard that part of this complaint is that there was an investigation with a witness meeting off the record.

I haven't seen any complaint that raised concerns about the way in which the [REDACTED] Pace investigation was conducted. But I am aware that the complainants have concerns. I know who complainants.

Chief Lee since I have been in administration has never conducted an investigation or been in interviews during investigation. I can't even say for sure if he sees the questions. I don't recall ever doing that. The summary of investigation once complete goes to him. He gets findings and an opportunity to respond and Chief can make decisions based on same.

DIVISION CHIEF KYLE STIRRAT

2.27.26

January 23 went terminal so I have not been at work since then

And haven't been aware of a lot of the talk as a result

I know that two employees who worked under me filed a complaint or something and there was a demotion as well

Know that complainants are Hutchinson, Baldwin, and I thought Doug was also bringing it

Only time I heard about concerns from H or B was when I gave them a notice of investigation during Pace investigation and they had questions and they were trying to figure out what was going on

I was called upstairs to give them the letter advising them that they were under formal investigation

That was the only real interaction but I didn't know what it was about

I have had roles in conducting investigations before depending on what chiefs would want in terms of who would be asked to investigate and the nature of the issues and whether I was close to the situation

They brought me and Chief Starpoli after the investigation – us and Chief Gonzalez and he said that he did an informal after the formal, brought a few employees and that they weren't treated right but he didn't go into detail, so they were going to move employees out of Station 1 to stop it. He said that Chief Starpoli was showing favoritism towards these employees so he moved him to another shift. This was weird because Chief Gonzalez also said that there was no finding of bullying or harassment

DOE 31 years

Division Chief 6-7 years

Before that Battalion Chief

BCs get 5-6 stations. Division Chief is over a whole shift -so had C shift and before that B shift

As BC I had all stations at some point time. At some point I was BC over Station 1.

Not involved in either [REDACTED] or Pace investigations except to give notice of investigate

Paramedic Conte wrote in a write up that he was being targeted by Gonzalez – it was investigated. Not sure who.

Aware of September complaint. Chief Lee brought up that they had complained about Gonzalez. Chief Lee wouldn't really go into it. He just said that they had filed a complaint and that it was unfounded. Heard rumors, but Chief Lee kept it tightlipped.

I don't know if Hutchinson or Baldwin went to the Union but I knew that they were not happy and that they had submitted paperwork but I never saw what they submitted. They too have kept it quiet.

I don't dig in to it either.

I know Hutchinson upset about being demoted. I was asked for a letter from Chief Lee saying that JH should be promoted and he said that we had talked about it. I didn't remember talking about it. I always thought he would be good. That was on January 23.

I don't think the Captain was interviewed and they should have interviewed him. They should have interviewed Chief Shaw or Chief Starpoli or me.

SUSAN GAINY

Investigation process

Knowledge of Hutchinson/Baldwin or Station 1 prior to investigation

At what point did they become subject of investigation

Who decided to issue Notice of Investigation

Knowledge of complaints after your investigation

I had never worked for the District prior to this investigation. L. Reynolds was handling an EEOC claim for the District in South Florida and I had a case against him at the time. When the [REDACTED] complaint came in, Kim reached out to Reynolds and he said this is too similar to the one I am currently defending, you should get an independent person to observe/participate in the [REDACTED] investigation and there may have also been some discussion about it being an insurance claim and we do a lot of work for PGCS but it wasn't done pursuant to insurance claim.

[REDACTED] complaint turned into Pace complaint

Recall concerns re moral bc a lot of ff complaining

Notes from witness meetings were never requested. But I did not take notes of the non-recorded portions of the interview.

County sent her the entire file

DOUG BOUDRIAS

3.12.26

LKM/ZAB

- DOE January 8, 2018
- Current FF/Paramedic
- EMT until Jul or so 21 and released as Paramedic
- Station 6/A Shift
- Since Jan 2026 at Station 6
- A Shift for several years. I was on C shift then got moved to A as a low ranking EMT
- Before Station 6 at Station 8 from September or so 2025 through Dec 2025
- Before that Station 1
- Before that Station 6
- I had put in a request for Station 1 while at Station 6. Station 6 had special ops and I was interested in that at the time.
- I bid to Station 1.
- Station 1 really fun station. Had a special feel to it. I went to school in that zone and grew up in that zone/surrounding area. Being able to work there was pretty cool.
- Born and raised in St. Lucie County. Someone from Martin County might want to be at a Station closer to south border bc that's a more comfortable feel for them. Same thing with those who live closer to SLC
- What is your understanding of why you're here today. I assume something to do with what has been going on last year and harassment investigation – I was the subject of one
- Been off the last three months wife just had a baby so haven't been to work in a while
- Do you know who the complainants are in this investigation
 - o There have been rumors that it was Chris and Jordan.
 - o But I don't really know what's going
 - o Have they talked with you about it? No
- I would say we're friends – Chris / Jordan
- I was part of a grievance this past year because I was written up and I grieved it.
- I don't know what all is exactly pertaining to this.
- I was involved in investigation June or July 2025
- Chris and I specifically were being investigated for harassment and hoe
- Jordan was involved
- Someone else was being investigated
- The complainant was also being investigated
- Very confusing
- The complainant in the investigation was Pace
- I didn't have understanding of purpose of investigation until went it. The paper did not say. Said you are not to discuss. There was no context to it.
- NOTICE
- I think they mailed or emailed the paper and the division chief handed me physical copy. Considered formal notice. Just said under investigation for harassment and hoe. That was the only context. It didn't mention who complainant was.

- Didn't learn until after why under investigation. Had to pull public records. There were questions about Pace, about environment at Station 1, a lot of scenarios and rumors were being asked about but nothing really made sense. It seemed like after I pulled the records that we were mentioned in previous harassment case that we were mentioned as someone who said something to him or his family.
- I think Pace was under investigation and he related to them that other ees had given him a hard time and listed stations/names – that is the only thing I can find that resulted in them launching an investigation.
- I was not interviewed in connection with Pace being accused.
- Jamie Meyer was union rep and he called me to let me know he was going to be there as rep.
- I don't think I reached out to many people bc they told us not to.
- Concerns – didn't know what it was about or who it was about
- Had you ever been involved in an investigation prior – no I don't think so
- Who was present – Jimmy Meyer, Gonzalez, Crous, Gainey – outside legal counsel
- I believe all present during entire interview
- My understanding was that Gainey was outside legal counsel to keep things from being biased, going in with a clean slate, didn't know anyone
- But way asking questions felt like a gotcha – she would circle back to a question 5 questions later in a different way like trapping you into saying stuff
- All 3 were asking different questions but mainly Gonzalez, Crouse would step in here and there, Gainey was here and there asking little stuff spin off questions, like asking for more context
- We were going off record a lot and questions off record and felt like she would try to back track
- It was recorded but they were going on and off record throughout
- It was very weird
- There wasn't really a difference in who was asking the questions on versus off the record.
- I tried my best not to answer questions off the record
- It was so casual as far as going off and on the record that it was confusing.
- I don't know how many times it occurred. I have pushed it back and try not to think about it.
- I didn't feel good about any of it afterwards
- I don't remember if they asked if it was okay for us to go off the record.
- But when you haven't been involved in an investigation and something like that happens, what would you say
- I remember them asking about Pace, whether a danger to anyone, comfortable working with him. Made a point to get out there that I was the longest lasting member of Station and had been there the longest which led into him telling me that he heard rumors that environment at Station 1 is reason people don't want to apply or work there. All kinds of stuff that he heard. He mentioned that someone in their exit interview said that I was the reason he was leaving SLC. First time I heard that and it was not true – he left SLC bc more opportunity at different department and everyone different mentality and I don't feel like I was the sole reason and hard to believe that someone walked in there and said I'm leaving bc I don't like Doug
- Brynzi Gilles

- I can't remember if he mentioned the name on or off record
- He asked me how I think it makes him feel to know that I am making people leave or not apply and he said it infuriates him to the highest level
- Brynzi left years ago so that was not a new thing – he had been gone
- Above questions were G
- I remember C asking me about Pace and he said something like, don't you think by saying this it would make anyone uncomfortable
- They asked me who gave me Notice – Staret – and they asked if he had told me anything about it. No, not specifics, but he said sometimes this happens, have to go through the process. Seemed like Gainey was trying to get at whether this was true
- I don't think they asked whether anyone tried to influence, but they asked if I had talked to anyone about the investigation prior to the investigation and they asked what was said between me and Staret – and Gainey would say are you sure, are you sure
- They kept saying that they were doing a culture assessment I think and they tied that in with the hoe but it was not a district wide culture assessment it was Station 1
- Nothing made sense
- Culture assessment sticks out now that you ask that – note – ZB asked whether anything else stood out or was unusual
- I think Gainey taking notes – I think she was typing – she had her laptop and notepad
- Looking back now I wish Meyer had intervened
- Gonzalez and Crous were "Internal Affairs" but Crous was FTO at Station for a time so I would have preferred that he not be involved – everyone knew everyone and felt like wasn't completely down the middle
- I think at one time Crous said I have worked with you and I know how you work, we're not talking about that, talking about the way things are said
- It felt weird to have Crous conducting investigation / cultural assessment since he had worked with me and worked at FTO at Station 1
- What was your understanding of outcome
 - o When I read it, it was unsubstantiated so I didn't think anything was going to come out of it
 - o I think what I read was from Gonzalez
- When investigation notice went out, I had been stepping up and I believe I was FTO that day and half way through the shift I was told I was getting switched to rescue so I lost the step up. I went from stepping up quite a bit to I wasn't allowed to step up and wasn't stepping up at all but there was no understanding of what I did.
- After investigation cleared, I got a call from Staret and he said I need you to come down to Milner for a meeting. Vochon, Gonzalez, and Staret there. They explained why things and the investigation happened the way they did. Gonzalez said as I expected witnesses had nothing but good things to say about you. We like you as a medic, we like you as FTO, you take pride in your job, but you need to work on your delivery sometimes and then he said as for Chris not so much which is why we are only moving you to Station 8 per the recommendation of our outside legal counsel to break apart our crew there. She felt that benefit to breaking up the crew. They said Station 8 needed a medic.

- Re “Chris not so much” – Gonzalez said that after telling me the witnesses had nothing but great things to say about me. Indicated that witnesses did not have as great of things to say about Chris so not going to be as fortunate as me.
- Not sure who made the decision but to me could have been Gonzalez, Lee, I assume it was Gonzalez who decided
- All over the department people trying to figure out why me and Chris moved for an investigation that had no findings
- Station 8 longer drive.
- I did email Vochon asking if for childcare reasons they could consider backfilling it with another person because any other station would have been a shorter drive
- Response was we are not able to accommodate you at this time.
- That meeting was more relaxed than investigation. Gonzalez said I don’t want you to feel like you are walking on egg shells
- So I pulled the public records after this because confusing. And then I sent an email asking for a reassignment because of child care.
- I had heard that Jordan and Chris were also looking into it
- I pulled the records because I was trying to see where they pulled the questions from
- Jordan and Chris and I rarely see each other anymore, at different stations – note, said this in response to whether he became aware of any complaints about the way investigation handled

ROBERTO TAPIA
LKM/ZAB 3/12/2026

- Reviewed reason for no union representation – not subject of investigation, no reason to think that anything you say can lead to discipline
- Requirement to participate, truthfully, as personnel investigation
- Opportunity to consult with union rep, step out if like, and seek input
- DOE 5 years, in 6th year now
- FF/EMT
- Station 6, A Shift
- Prior to that Station 1, Station 10, Station 14
- Did not understand why I was called to be here
- Told to participate in Pace investigation – possible witness – my understanding was that Pace filed a complaint about statements made while at Station 1
- “have you ever seen, heard, any bullying or possibly bullying or anything that could be construed”
- We all got emails – everyone was on the same email
- When we showed up, everyone in same room waiting to be called
- I assume reason I was identified as witness was bc I was at station during that time
- Present, Chief Crouse, Chief Gonzalez, Meyer – that’s it – then says there was a “rude” lady to right.
- Show up and tell the truth you have nothing to hide
- Rude – seemed like everything bothered her. I think at one point she wanted to throw me out of the room. I think pretty much my response to everything was everything is different at Station 1 – it runs most calls in County so expectations and atmosphere different
- Guys are known to be tougher on people there
- I think it may come down to perspective
- I remember Gonz asked if Staret or Captain or I aware of anything going on, if trying to cover it up, if I have ever witnessed JH doing something he should not be doing. I said Staret, you could fool around but bullying is another thing. Captain – he says you only get one call. JH – a stud, works hard. Have to be mentally sharp to do Station 1, JH is that. He has been a mentor to lot of people including me.
- I know others brought up like CB and Doug. I spent more time at the station with them than with JH. There situation was different. How I view JH is different than CB. JH top notch. Best medic on A shift. And rep on calls. There’s a little horseplay no big deal. CB and Doug like to push the envelope with people.
- Gainey sort of reiterated qs if anything could be potentially or borderline hazing. I said I could see how things could be perceived that way. Felt that perception plays a big role.
- I felt like I got the screws put on me a little bit but it sounded like everyone did. They circled back over the same questions like with any investigation.
- There would be times that they would ask you a question, there was a piece of paper and they would turn off and say you can relax, and then turn back on and ask crazy questions and this was through the entire thing absolutely.
- They would say anything just press the button.

- No one influenced me.
- I think everyone but Meyer was taking notes. We had to keep waiting on them to write down everything. Meyer didn't say anything. I don't even know why he was there. Just bc he was there sitting next to me doesn't mean that he was on my side. Just taking up space. He would not have been who I would have chosen.
- It was definitely broader questions. I understood that we kept circling back to atmosphere and culture at Station 1.
- I had no idea of outcome of investigation.
- The individual who brought everyone there is nowhere to be found in this so I don't know.
- Everyone felt the same when they came out of that room. Mentally worn down.
- Prior to that, Richie Smith looked like he had been drug through the mud.
- We get a GO so we knew certain individuals moved around
- No other concerns re the investigation that haven't mentioned
- I know now that Baldwin submitted a complaint bc unhappy with the way things played out but that has nothing to do with me. They caught doing something and everyone knows it goes on.
- I did Station 1 to work under Jordan Hutchinson – he works hard to go over things with guys and I said this during that investigation too and he goes out of his way
- Do not know why JH no longer in Lt position
- When that GO came out no one knew. Usually when a GO comes out it says this person is being relieved of this duty and going to this duty. This GO didn't say that but put one and one together.
- Friends with Gonzalez outside work but didn't speak about investigation
- That investigation was my first time being part of something like that. I had run into Smith in his car sitting in his car and he looked terrible and I asked how he was and he said it's tough get mentally prepared. When I went in, I think Baldwin walked out and he looked the same way. That's how I knew everyone felt that way.

MARK CRISTALDI

3.13.26 LKM/ZAB

- DOE just over 23 years
- Deputy Chief – non-bargaining unit – just over 3 years
- Currently over risk reduction, grants,
- Been over other areas too
- Before that Division Chief
- Been in administration for about 6 years
- Really have no idea why I'm here. The last couple of months has been quiet but a little talk. Civil Service Appeal board and numerous records requests but overall, don't know why here
- I assume complainants are Hutchinson, Baldwin, possible Boudrias
- Don't have regular communications with them
- Don't have social relationship with them outside of work
- Haven't seen any written documents related to this investigation
- Haven't talked with Hutchinson, Baldwin, about this investigation or the complaints
- Not involved in any June or July investigation
- I have been involved in review committee re discipline rendered with Hutchinson and also involved in promotional interview with Hutchinson and discussions about concerns with him
- Not Baldwin, just Hutchinson
- If there is going to be a promotion we interview at least 3 people. Rule of 3. If 3 not qualified we would interview another 3 but never done that.
- I was part of panel who interviewed and Hutchinson was one of them. I don't recall who else involved but I expressed concerns about him in an administrative role. I gave some examples.
- The concerns – there was a situation where the FTO had concerns bc he and his partner weren't wearing safety glasses on a call and that was a recurring issue and when got back to the station and FTO got with Hutchinson and Captain to talk about the call, Hutchinson told FTO he was acting like an asshole so he was disciplined. He admitted that he said that. FTO had asked multiple times to put on safety glasses. There was a pattern of not following policy followed by disrespect. Hutchinson was honest about it, but can't have that level of disrespect. But he is a skilled gifted firefighter. He is very good at what he does. Concern is administrative part. I had also brought a situation up with him where he stepped up into a FTO or Captain role. There was a high acuity call with an MHV. Asst. Chief showed p to call and Hutchinson performing incubation and Hutchinson didn't have safety glasses on and that is a critical failure and he had a history of it. Gonzalez told incident commander to handle it and he didn't just did some sort of a write up. WHO – Ryan Solomon? When rendered the discipline, Hutchinson replied in writing with snarky comments with kind of a dig at Gonzalez for not coming to him man to man. And he said something like I always shoot for the moon and if I miss at least I'll be among the stars. I talked with him and told him concern was not following policies and procedures in administrative role. I read him his comments and I was amazed at his response. No sorry, accept accountability and say it was an honest mistake. It was not professional. Not an officer level response. Afterwards, I

think he requested a meeting with Chief Lee and Gonzalez and I think he told them that he was making a snarky remark directed towards the incident commander BC because of a dispute between them years before and that it was not a dig at Gonzalez. Chief Lee told me about this meeting and I actually commented and you're still going to promote him.

- Another concern re an evaluation he did on an Paramedic apprentice that was scathing and he actually said in the evaluation that the Paramedic was a complete waste of his time. I explained that was unprofessional and that he needed to include objective things.
- I want him to succeed. Very good at what he does. But I haven't seen someone call an officer an asshole, or write these types of comments – not typical concerns with someone we're considering for a promotion
- I think Andrew Wilmore is not in the Lt position that Hutchinson had on probation
- He did not make it past his probationary period. He filed a civil service appeal and they elected not to take the case because of jurisdiction and timeliness
- Not involved in civil service hearing but watched it. Vote was 3/2 that they would not hear the case.
- I did not participate in decision to return him to his regular status position
- Chief Lee took concerns into account
- He could retest and be promoted again we have had this happen
- Everyone knows that once you're promoted you're on a one year probation. It can be extended for a variety of reasons.
- After you've completed probation, has to be more egregious to be demoted
- Not aware of any discussions or indication that promotion or removal related to complaint or grievance.
- We have had someone demoted as Lt. and now they rose to Battalion Chief – James Meyer
- Was never asked for feedback on Hutchinson and how he was performing as Lt.
- I know of 2 others who did not complete probationary period as Lt. – Bobby Mancuso, and Custavo Santa

JIMMY MEYER

3.13.26 ZAB.LKM

- Yes, questions asked several times whether anyone called them or tried to influence their testimony after they were identified for interview. **No indication that occurred.**
- there was one rookie who said he asked to change shifts and when he was asked why he said because my friends there – itchy is what they call him
- they asked Tapia whether he had ever heard anyonec all his station and say be hard on your rookie we need to get this guy fired, and Tapia said yes he had heard that and you hear stuff like that all the time at the fire stations but didn't remember who
- administration good people and they all asked same questions and it was fine

DANIEL MICHAELS

3.13.26 LKM ZAB

- 9/19/05 DOE
- Division Chief – 6 months then demoted myself back to BC then back to Division Chief
- Work an 8 – 4:30 schedule
- Deputy Chief above me
- I am operations division chief and also help manage communications division
- As division chief, also been over building and grounds, fleet, and logistics
- November 1 roughly is when it changed
- Don't know why I'm here but assume some sort of harassment investigation but don't know – bc that's usually types that Division Chiefs get involved in
- Assuming complainants are Hutchinson and Baldwin but don't know who they are complaining about
- Haven't seen anything in writing re this investigation except I saw when Chief Lee presented demotion letter to JH and he was there with his union rep and I was there with Chief Lee and so was Chief Gonzalez
- I report to Chief Gonzalez
- I don't believe I have ever worked with JH or CB except maybe in passing
- No relationship outside of work
- Not involved in JH promotion or probationary period or input in his evaluations/decisions
- Other than being present did not have any role in the demotion meeting
- Chief presented him with a letter saying didn't meet the requirements of his probationary period.
- Hutchinson didn't get emotional or anything and nothing of note. I know Kim Sabol came in at some point. JH may have asked questions about if signing meant he agreed or something and I stepped out and got Kim Sabol.
- Generally aware bc Chief said there have been some complaints including to state and asked outside counsel to look into it
-
-

Susan Gainey

03.24.26 Zack and Lori

Partner with this firm for about 1/5 years

Practicing since 1999

Practiced in Indiana doing employment defense

Moved to Florida in 2018 and been doing defense work since then

Over the years done many investigations, employment law and labor relations. Have been the investigator. Have done primarily litigation investigations. Litigation attorney so primarily focus on litigation investigations.

Had never worked with the Fire District prior to last year. Our firm was referred by Lyman and Reynolds, a firm in South Florida. Referrals typically come through Roper or Townsend and they divy it up. Townsend is the one who initially contacted Kim and then turned over to me. Think he had an EEOC matter he was defending so he referred my firm to do the [REDACTED] investigation. Never met District leadership or employee before.

I don't recall if there was any specificity in engagement letter. I did not have a role in preparing it.

Role - To assist and operate as an independent investigator re the [REDACTED] complaint. Chief Gonzalez was primary. He did all of the questioning. Read them all the statements. Prepared the statements. We were in a conference room. Gonzalez did most of the questioning. I did some

My memory is that bc there had been an EEOC complaint they wanted some legal oversight and opinion. Cultural assessment came up later after initial engagement. We did the [REDACTED] investigation. Found unsub. Did the Pace. Found unsub. But there were many firefighters who seemed upset so I was asked to give my opinion about what I observed. That's what led to the letter. Chief Lee and Kim were fairly hands off. The conference room we used was in between their offices. There was a meeting with all of us. My memory is that it was after we told them unsub. It was over lunch. Presumably Chief Lee asked me to do letter but I don't have a specific recollection.

I was given a copy of [REDACTED] complaint, policies and procedures. [REDACTED] had a lot of docs. I remember those being scanned and sent to me. Pace also had AI docs and they were AI generated and those were provided to me.

I was not provided with any instructions or guidelines about how to conduct the investigation. Chief Lee and Kim did not give me direction on how to proceed. May have been scheduling assistance.

When we were interviewing Pace in the [REDACTED] investigation, Pace made his own complaint. We decided to conduct separate Pace investigation. Chief Gonzalez and I decided.

We took the same approach in the Pace investigation and my role was the same.

I have no memory of being asked to do a cultural assessment beforehand. It was something that came up afterwards based on the information that came to light during the [REDACTED] and/or Pace investigation. More so the Pace investigation.

Chief Gonzalez along with the other chiefs in consultation with me identified the witnesses. They were all witnesses who had been identified during the course of the investigation.

Not sure if we added witnesses based on things learned during investigation but as I sit here today, don't remember that occurring

There was a break between [REDACTED] and Pace. At least 2 and potentially 3 full days of interviews. When we talked to Pace, we may have continued his interview because needed time to review his complaint.

There were pre-prepared questions that I had reviewed prior to the statements. I think Gonzalez prepared and I reviewed ahead of time. I would also ask follow-up questions based on information shared during investigations.

As part of both [REDACTED] and Pace witness interviews were recorded/audio.

Not all of every interview. We advised Union rep that we had concluded Pace investigation. There was one ff who later lost his brother and he was reluctant to talk. We asked Union rep to leave bc not investigating at that point. FFs kept looking at recording and felt like they would be more comfortable. I did not take notes during the non-recorded part. This was done in consultation with Kim and Chief. There was more after that where they were not recorded all the way through. There was a real hesitation and reluctance to talk with rape recorder – so trying to see if workplace culture issue at the department. Union rep left for the day with that one – I think – but there were times when we weren't recording and Union rep was there.

Bc we were not investigating any firefighter, decision that Union rep not required/recording not required

No ff objected to not recording it. Union rep not happy about it and had choice words with Chief Gonzalez before he left. Something along the lines of "I'll f you over," but Chief Gonzalez visibly upset bc they were strong words

Questions re attempt to influence was in recorded interviews bc I think part of Pace's complaint was that one ore more ff attempting to influence – it came up during Pace investigation. Not sure if these questions were part of the preprepared questions

Most of the interviews were in person. There were a few via phone bc ff unavailable, at least one possibly 2. Most were brief. Pace's and [REDACTED] were longer. Most were under ½ hour.

I think there were situations where two witnesses waiting together.

When we were talking, it wasn't tell me about Station 1, it was general questions about workplace culture and Station 1 kept coming up.

I believe we had a good sense of what was going on and there was a problem at Station 1 –

Do you remember any names re unrecorded portion of meetings – those were general qs about workplace environment – I don't remember any names coming up during unrecorded

What stood out to me is what's in my letter in that there were a lot of firefighters who were near tears and that was concerning. There was definitely a concern. It stood out that there were so many ffs who were unhappy and felt that there was a problem that was not being addressed.

We didn't want to ignore something that was clearly an issue, including subjecting the District to additional lawsuits. Words like hazing, harassment, horseplay, clique, things of that nature, legal exposure and stood out to me

Didn't get into the specifics of who would be reassigned, etc.

We discussed training but I haven't done it.

I did learn at some point after my letter that some ffs had complained and there were some questions about getting the file but I have not had any specific convos about complaints until us

CASABIAN PARHAM

DOE 6/12/23 Originally as FF/EMT

Signed Paramedic obligation contract - apprenticeship

1/5/26 let go

3/3/26 rehired

My understanding is that nothing bad against me, but my name was brought up and I was interviewed in a prior investigation.

I'm hearing multiple stories so not sure why I'm here – more like gossip.

Don't know 100% who complainants are for this investigation

Haven't seen any documents, just gossip, nothing written

I remember being asked questions during Pace investigation but I said that I wasn't their person.

I remember them asking me if I felt intimidated and things like that and I didn't have any complaints.

I think at that time I was at various stations. I think on paper Station 14, but moved around. I have been at Station 1 for a shift or so, but hardly there. Stations varied per shift.

I was always A Shift but different stations on A Shift. I would sometimes work B or C shift on swap time. A Shift is my home shift.

Who was at your meeting? A female lawyer, Chief Gonzalez, Chief Crouse I think and Myers maybe. I feel like Myers left but maybe not.

She was asking majority questions – i.e. how do I feel at Station 1

Always a blessing to go to work – worked butt off to get here

My meeting had voice recorder – I remember that recorded her asking questions and my responses

Meat and potatoes was recorded, I remember they cut it off but that part wasn't serious and goofing off and I told an embarrassing basketball story and they were laughing. I grew up playing basketball and girl that I used to like, I went for a 3 and missed and hit the girl in the head. I don't know why I brought it up. I don't think there was a question when I wasn't recorded. No questions off the record about workplace culture. Those were on the record. Not when it was cut off. When cut off it wasn't anything related to investigation. I could be more myself. Less serious.

After my interview, I didn't know what else happened. I kinda forgot about it.

ALEJANDRO ECHEVERRI

DOE 2.5 years

Currently FF/Paramedic

Station 1 C Shift

Been on C Shift for a little over a year

Originally on A Shift

For the most part, been at Station 1 entire employment

No idea what investigation is about aside from what we have told him.

I don't remember exactly when it was but I did participate in an investigation while working here. Just one.

They wanted me to come in, ask questions, and I really had no information.

I received a call and was told to show up. The person who called me was Chief Wilson.

Once I was there I found out it was something about bullying going on in the Department

I don't remember if it was about District as a whole or specific stations

Don't remember questions asked during investigation

I remember Gonzalez was main person asking me question. Myer was also in room. There was an attorney there, too, don't know her name.

Don't remember questions they asked me – it's been a while and haven't really thought about it

My interview was recorded, voice recorded

Pretty sure all my answers recorded. I don't remember being asked any questions when it was not recorded.

I don't know outcome. No one updated me about what happened. Just kind of went away.

Why no longer on A Shift – nothing to do with work, just better schedule for me outside of work

I do remember ees switched shifts and left the station after investigation, but I was already on C shift at that time, so I don't know. Out of the loop.

Don't remember hearing any complaints about the way the investigation was conducted or anything

- Paul Langel 3.31.26
- Questions nature of investigation and who is subject of investigation and what it's about
- Explain it involves the way District responded to and handled various complaints beginning in summer of 2025. Hired by County who was asked to investigate by District.
- DOE 29 Years
- Currently Deputy Fire Chief – promoted in 2020
- My understanding is that Gonzalez, Lee, and Sabol under investigation
- My understanding is that Hutchinson and Baldwin are complainants
- I don't recall seeing a document with notification of investigation but may have. I haven't seen any other specific docs re this investigation.
- I didn't participate in the two investigations but aware of it and aware of third party attorney being called in from Orlando. I believe the end result was moving or redistributing the people to different shifts in some fashion.
- The concerns that we heard re those investigations were that certain ees more targeted than others and other individuals called but others not called. I do recall that concerns not entire group that should have been called was called. For instance, we would typically call company officer to discuss concerns with ees reporting to him.
- That did concern me that some ees not called in. But I understand facts could be different.
- I don't know for sure but believe third party attorney recommended separating because problem at that station
- I heard concerns from Starpoli. They were not happy with splitting up. I might of heard that they felt like they were singled out
- I couldn't say who Baldwin was until all of this happened.
- Hutchinson – I did a grievance or review committee on him years ago during COVID because he didn't wear mask or wear it right.
- Chief Lee and Chief Gonzalez at one point – Gonzalez says to me prob around October or November that I had a clandestine mtg with Huthinson and Morgan one of our Fire Board Commissioners. I said absolutely not that is absolutely not true. I left to take care of some things but got madder and madder as I thought abut it and when I got back I said to him tell me who is spreading this and he didn't tell me. Two days later we were going golf and Chief Lee said same thing to me and I said absolutely not and I said we have worked together for 29 years what is this craziness. But I was accused of having this clandestine meeting. It is absolutely not true. Part of my apprehension in answer your questions is because of craziness, paranoia, accusations going on
- Re Hutchinson Promotion to LT. I was not directly involved, I may have been Deputy Chief of HR at some point in that time, so indirectly because light duty personnel comes through HR, but as far as his promotional process or promotional interviews I was not involved in any of that – not my area that's operations
- Also not directly involved in his demotion. His was handled a little differently. Lt. Bobby Mancouso and Lt. Gustavo Santa both had their initial probation extended 6 months but neither ultimately made it off probation. I believe we moved one of them to Station 1 to try to give them more experience. Both of these occurred within the last 4 years. I didn't understand why it was different this time.
- I have not spoken with Hutchinson or Baldwin about their complaints

- Not aware of any facts to indicate ill will against H or B because of complaints but some differences in handling for whatever reason
- I was asked to pull Hutchinson's personnel file
- Also another formal investigation against these two people based on video that came to District's attention anonymously but typically don't have a complaint unless you can put a name to it – but not my area
- Request info from KB re who gets findings

- Peterkin
- DOE 21 years
- Currently Captain Operations
- Been in this role since 2018
- Assigned A Shift – Station 1
- Does not know why here today. Heard people being called for different investigations but not sure what this was is about.
- I do remember investigation last year. I believe it was about Anthony Pace. I believe it was complaint he made against someone else. I think that's the one I was there for, but know there was one against him.
- In my interview, Chief Gonzalez, Vishon, Kim Sabol, and maybe Cristaldi. I believe Serge Green, Union Rep was there – walked me back into the room but I don't think he sat in my meeting.
- I believe I received a call or email and that's how I learned of meeting. Just told me at admin at this time. I don't believe it was on the roster.
- There were other people coming and going that day when I came for my interview.
- I think Jordan Jackson was there, but can't be sure – think I saw him in the building.
- I think there was someone else outside the District at my meeting too
- I think all of my questions were related to Pace. I think my entire interview was recorded.
- The whole investigation was unusual. Did not know why I was there. They weren't forthcoming with a lot of information.
- Yes, I did hear rumors of concerns re the investigation. I heard that some individuals off the record.
- They were investigating my station so that was weird bc we hadn't seen Pace in a while.
- Don't recall questions of me re culture.
- I heard about results of investigation bc 2 people from my station got moved. I heard rumors beforehand that people were getting moved.
- I was also told that I needed to be at the station more by one of the chiefs as a result of investigation. Because I used to step up a lot as BC. But they had moved them so didn't know why I needed to be there more if they had moved them – didn't make sense to me
- We all complained about the moves.
- I worked with JH pretty much since I got to Central in 2018. My experience with Jordan is good, good employee.
- Not involved in demotion dec, found out like everyone else with GO. Re his promotion, I helped him study for the test.
- Were you asked to provide feedback before re his promotion – no
- I do speak with JH and CB once in a while – we have a text message group started like 2 years ago with ees assigned to station and they

This morning received a flash drive with 5 or 6 videos and some photos that look like they are screenshots of videos. Looks like created last night.

It was handed to me by someone who wishes to remain anonymous

Jordan, Baldwin, Bodreuis, Kayla in Vido with electric shock delivered to rookie, Loshe is the rookie – outside central

Hutchinson holding a device to hand of Edmondson – 18 volts bug zapper – Bay of central

Dumping water from roof - Central

Dead raccoon – Driver Engineer at Central

Kyle Kirkam shock – Central – not sure who is doing this one but shock to arm

All photos indicate 2024, March 2024, September 2024