



SLIPHER LAW

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April 18, 2023

McComb City Mayor,
Quordinah Lockley
121 3rd Street
McComb, MS 39648

Ms. Donjurea Davis
McComb City Human Resources Director
121 3rd Street
McComb, MS 39648

McComb City Administrator,
David Myers
121 3rd Street
McComb, MS 39648

McComb City Interim Police Chief
501 Beech Street
McComb, MS 39648

McComb City Chief Detective Carter
501 Beech Street
McComb, MS 39648

McComb Board of Selectman,
Tabitha Felder Isaac
121 3rd Street
McComb, MS 39648

McComb Board of Selectman,
Tommie McKenzie
121 3rd Street
McComb, MS 39648

McComb Board of Selectman,
Matt Coddling
121 3rd Street
McComb, MS 39648

Mccomb Board of Selectman,
Terri Waterman Baylor
121 3rd Street
McComb, MS 39648

McComb Board of Selectman,
Bruce Mullins
121 3rd Street
McComb, MS 39648

RE: Incident involving Capt. Steve Powell and Interim Chief Smith on March 21, 2023

Incident involving Capt. Steve Powell, Interim Chief Smith and Chief Detective Carter on April 10, 2023

Incident involving Sexual Harassment accusations of McComb Police Officer

To Whom It May Concern:

Please allow this letter to serve as notice of two separate complaints being filed by Captain Powell against Chief Detective Victoria Carter and Interim Chief Smith. The first incident occurred on March 21, 2023 between the Interim Chief Smith and Captain Powell. Smith called Captain Powell into a meeting at which time Smith continued to harass and berate Captain Powell with accusations of committing a felony by filing a false, sworn affidavit against Bryan Bellipanni.

I would have assumed that following the Civil Service decision exonerating Captain Powell of any wrongdoing, that Interim Chief Smith would have been advised of the legal ramifications of continuing to assert these falsities. Maybe Interim Chief Smith needs to be reminded of the definition of slander and the legal ramifications he places the City of McComb in by continuing to harass Captain Powell with these lies. Further, it might help to remind Interim Chief Smith that Bryan Bellipanni pled guilty before a Judge in the Municipal Court in the City of McComb to the charges in which Captain Powell filed his sworn affidavit. I truly do hope that this is the last that Interim Chief Smith mentions of this matter, or legal action will be taken.

Regarding April 10, 2023. There was a meeting called by Interim Chief Smith at the request of Chief Detective Carter to address an issue with Captain Powell. This meeting lasted no more than a few minutes and was the most gross display of insubordination, harassment, and intimidation by a lower ranking officer upon a superior officer that I have heard. Further, the inactions of the Interim Chief are among the largest case of incompetence that I have witnessed, next to his investigation of Captain Powell with the Bellipanni incident.

As a previous veteran of the McComb City Police Department, including the Detectives division, I am appalled and saddened for the state of the Department. The level of incompetence is inconceivable. The level of violations of the City of McComb's and the Police Department's own policies and procedures manuals is ridiculous.

Someone may want to remind Chief Detective Carter the order of rank within that department. She is a tested Sergeant. Powell outranks her as a Captain and is her superior. When reminding her and the Interim Chief of this, the definition of insubordination, incompetency, or inefficiency in the performance of assigned duties, wantonly offensive conduct of language toward fellow employee and

conduct unbecoming to an employee of the City should be explained to each of them and the disciplinary action of the City's own policies and procedures for each. While addressing these issues with Interim Chief Smith, it should be further explained that his silence in allowing Chief Detective Carter to commit continuous insubordination and harassment by yelling and screaming at Captain Powell is harassment and retaliation against Captain Powell.

I have attached the current City of McComb Policy and Procedure regarding grounds for disciplinary action, the rank structure of the City of McComb Police Department and the Schedule of Discipline for Rule Infractions.

Further, I find it might be plausible to explain to Detective Chief Carter what her duties as head of investigations are. The complaints she was making tend to show continued incompetence within the detective division. There is no reason why she should not have been aware of a felony case, needing to be presented to the Grand Jury since July 2022. Even if she was out on sick leave during July 2022, the fact that case file sat untouched and unrepresented with no knowledge by the head detective for nine (9) months is disgusting. Even more so, is that she chose to attack the Captain, who has no involvement with investigation and felony cases, for her gross inadequacy to handle her job duties. It is the Chief Detective's responsibilities to assign other detectives to investigate and present felonies to the Grand Jury. That is not the responsibilities of the Captain who maintains patrol division.

This leads to the latest and unsettling issue. It has come to my attention that an officer with the McComb Police Department has been accused of sexual harassment upon another employee of the City of McComb. It is also my understanding that this has been, as this letter is being prepared, already been complained to the Human Resources personnel of the City of McComb.

My question herein lies, why is this Officer still wearing the uniform and on duty today? I believe, with Captain Powell and Deputy Chief Nordstrom, upon the complaint being brought before the Chief of Police and the Human Resources Department, both of those officers were immediately removed from service and not allowed to return to duty. None of the complaints against either of them rise to the level of sexual harassment and the details of such harassment, yet he that officer is still on duty. Policies and procedures exist for a reason and for the protection of all employees: When they are only followed for certain employees and not others, it is suspect. Maybe the incompetence extends beyond the walls of the McComb Police Department.

Sincerely,


LeeAnn Slipher

To: Donna Davis HR Director

From: Captain Steve Powell, McComb Police Division

Date: April 14, 2023

HR Director Davis,

On April 10, 2023 I, Captain Steve Powell, was told by IC, Delre Smith, that Chief Det. Carter wanted to speak with me. I followed Smith into the investigative division where Carter was sitting at the evidence office desk. Carter began asking me why she was put on a DA packet that had been turned in on April 6th. I begun to explain to her that it was a felony that came into the lobby of the Police Dept. Carter started stating that I could not put her on a case that she had no knowledge of. This DA packet was done by Sgt. Kayla Moore since she was the report approving supervisor and she is the one that put Chief Det. Carter on as needed for Grand Jury to present. This was done because no other investigator was ever assigned to this case. The conversation got heated as I was trying to explain to her that no investigator was assigned to the case so we always put her, as the lead investigator, to present said case to the Grand Jury due to the fact that a civilian can not present their own case. She started yelling saying she was not even here during this time and that I should have gotten with an investigator about the case. This DA packet was giving to me in March of 2023 to get completed. While she gone on leave, she assigned Det. Sgt. Refroe in charge so, I believe she should have been having this conversation with him on why he didn't assign this case to an investigator then.

Chief Det. Carter continued to get louder and louder with me as I was telling her we always put the lead Det. down to present said case when no investigator is assigned. I attempted to tell her she doesn't have to yell at me when she stated louder that she was going to tell me what she had to tell me. I told her she wasn't going to yell at me and that this was over walking out the office. As I exited the office Carter stated, "no you're over with". I take that as a direct threat and do not feel save working in this hostile work environment.

IC Smith never intervned to attempt to mediated this situation. IC Smith attempted to ask me questions but never could because Chef Det. Carter kept yelling over him. I felt that he should have been asking her question, not me since he is the IC and has worked in investigation. This whole atmosphere was that they both were on me as if I had done something wrong when I was JUST the approving supervisor for the completed DA packet.

When I stopped this conversation and walked out of the office, Det. John Glapion was leaving the office as well. He stated that he heard all of what happened and stated it was ridiculous. We walked outside together and said that Carter was out of line and the Chief just allowed it.

Sgt. Kayla Moore called me a few minutes after I left the office and said that Chief Det. Carter was heard in the hallway by Officer Joey Roberts and her yelling saying "that [REDACTED] can't tell me how

to do my job when he can't do his own job". Sgt. Moore said IC Smith was standing with her and never stopped her from yelling. Sgt. Moore did say that Chief Det. Carter never said my name but they were under the impression that she was indeed talking about me. This is a clear violating of insubordination on Carter.

On March 21, 2023 IC Smith came into my officer to discuss an issue we were having about dress code. During this conversation IC Smith brought up the fact that he demoted me to keep me from going to prison. He said I violated 97-7-10 and that since I have my position back that those chargers could possible be brought back up. He asked me if I preferred prison or retirement. He was stating that he was trying to protect me by demoting me. This makes me feel as if he is going to bring all this back up since it was found to be done in bad faith on his part by the Civil Service Commission. How can someone come to work and have a normal work environment under these situation. I hope this fines you as concerned as it does me.

Captain Steve Powell