

CITY OF HALLANDALE BEACH, FLORIDA
MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 09, 2020

TO: Sonia Quiñones, Chief of Police

FROM: Officer Michael Haire, Sergeant Pietro Roccisano, Officer Christopher Allen,
Sergeant Geraldo Novoa, Officer Jaimie Cepina, Officer Derisson Francis, Officer
Jeusch Charles, Officer James Bembanaste, Officer Carmine Tufano, Officer
David Gonzalez

SUBJECT: Resignation from SWAT Team

Please accept this memorandum as a collective resignation from the Hallandale Beach Police Department SWAT Team.

The risk of carrying out our duties in this capacity is no longer acceptable to us and our families. The anguish and stress of knowing that what we may be lawfully called upon to do in today's political climate combined with the team's current situation and several recent local events, leave us in a position that is untenable.

The team is minimally equipped, under trained and often times restrained by the politicization of our tactics to the extent of placing the safety of dogs over the safety of the team members. Regardless, the team has continued to operate under these conditions with a growing sense of hesitancy. This hesitancy creates officer safety issues that cannot be ignored or overlooked.

The City Administration has shown a clear disdain for our agency and the team with their lack of willingness to provide adequate budgets to address the above mentioned equipment and training concerns. Human resources recently attempted (under the guise of membership in the pension board) to thwart Officer Distefano's attempt to collect a disability pension for a debilitating injury suffered during the execution of his duties as a member of this team.

The City Commission has openly disrespected officers individually, during campaigns and on the dais. The Vice-Mayor, Sabrina Javellana has openly made ignorant and inaccurate statements attacking the lawful actions of the city's officers and SWAT team both from the dais and her social media accounts. She has actively protested against us. She has shown that she takes pleasure in besmirching the hard work and dedication of the members of this professional agency, having the gall to compare us to the Minneapolis Police Department.

Lastly, and most shockingly, having members of the Command Staff taking a knee in solidarity with Vice-Mayor Javellana (who stated she wants the officers "fired and charged") and a handful of political activists while they chanted, "Howard Bowe, re-open the case, State Attorney, re-open the case." This case was investigated by a Grand Jury, The State Attorney, FDLE and settled in a civil action. The city also went so far as to hire Greenwood and Streicher, LLC, "A

CITY OF HALLANDALE BEACH, FLORIDA
MEMORANDUM

consulting company that focuses on government accountability and policing solutions” to assist in investigating the incident internally as well as to conduct an audit of the uses of force by this agency. Scott Greenwood has been general counsel for the ACLU and Tom Streicher is a former Chief of the Cincinnati Police Dept. (1999-2011). They too, found no misconduct on the part of the involved officers. This lack of support by members of the Command Staff is crippling to the agency and its rank and file.

Until these conditions and sentiments are rectified and addressed, we cannot safely, effectively and in good faith carry out our duties in this capacity without putting ourselves and our families at this needless increased level of risk.

Thank you for your understanding.

VIA CHAIN OF COMMAND:

Sergeant _____ Review/
Approval Date _____
Comments: _____

Captain _____ Review/
Approval Date _____
Comments: _____

Major _____ Review/
Approval Date _____
Comments: _____

Chief _____ Review/
Approval Date _____
Comments: _____