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CHICAGO LODGE 7

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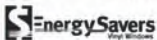
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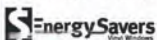
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**COVER STORY
PAGE 32**

What say you, Mr. Mayor ?

The U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Accountability called Brandon Johnson to Washington, D.C. to testify about Chicago's position as a sanctuary city. The question the committee apparently wanted to ask Johnson, as well as mayors from New York City, Boston and Denver, was not just whether he would take accountability for what has happened with Chicago providing sanctuary to migrants who are known criminals. But will he work with the federal government to clean up this problem that is making the City less and less safe every day?



COVER DESIGN BY JENNA RAMOS

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Gone For Good

The beginning of the end for COPA Chief Administrator Andrea Kersten came when Lodge 7 filed a lawsuit in August 2024. Additional lawsuits followed as well as CPD Superintendent Larry Snelling blasting Kersten. Then came a vote of no confidence from the Community Commission on Public Safety and Accountability and Kersten apparently saw that it was all coming to an end and resigned her position. A look into her tenure leading COPA shows the bias that led Lodge 7 to challenge Kersten, the relentless effort by the union to fight off her undue influence and what must happen now for the good of police accountability

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For information about advertising, subscriptions or editorial submissions:

Call: 312-733-7776

Email: kathy.spiewak@chicagofop.org

www.chicagofop.org

JOHN CATANZARA JR.

Publisher

john.catanzarajr@chicagofop.org

JENNA RAMOS

Art Director

MITCHELL KRUGEL

SEAN CARLIN

Contributing Editors

DAN CAMPANA

Contributing Editor

dan@dancamcom.biz

MAGAZINE COMMITTEE

Rob Noceda (Chair)

Michael Carroll

Carolynn Crump

Lisa Ford

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CHICAGO LODGE 7

Official Magazine
President's Report



Hawking COPA, sanctuary cities and some big wins



JOHN CATANZARA JR.

Mercy!

Sometimes, good news comes in bunches, and we had a motherload in mid-February. The Lodge 7 crusade to get Andrea Kersten out of COPA culminated with her resignation on Feb. 12. And then we get word that the mayor had been called to appear before Congress and answer why Chicago continues to be a sanctuary city.

This is like the 35-day wet-aged rib eye at Gene & Georgetti with a side of double pork chops. So much to feast on here, and both of these topics rise to the level of being our cover story for this issue. As members would imagine, I have a lot to say about both Kersten and Brandon.

Let me break it down.

Ding, dong, the...

The refrain that is truly appropriate for Kersten to resign as chief administrator of the Civilian Office of Police Accountability is not exactly about her being the wicked witch. Or anything that rhymes with witch.

I prefer to evoke that Chicago icon more outspoken than me. Allow me to go back to where I started this report and paraphrase the great Hawk Harrelson to make the definitive statement on Kersten:

She gone.

We saw it coming. And she probably did, too.

The Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability (CCPSA) had voted to make a recommendation for termination, and Kersten was going to be subjected to a hearing. Now, what the results of that hearing would've been, who knows?

Since her contract was coming up for renewal, the commission could have decided to let her finish out her term and not renew it instead of just outright firing her. But I guess she just didn't want the embarrassment of being fired because the mayor's office claimed it had no idea she was leaving until she gave the notice.

So to me, she knew that the referral for an investigation to the City Council was going to be made and figured, "Let me get out while I can." Good. Grab some bench.

The search for a new chief administrator will be conducted by the community commission, which will make a referral for a replacement to the City Council. That'll be an interesting process in itself. There's so much unknown to this all, but on the bright side, we have movement. We got change, which is what we're looking for, what we need. Then we'll go from there.

For the moment, this is more than a little duck snort. This is a big win. Lodge 7 should be getting more credit for "she gone" because we've been on COPA since the day we took over in 2020. More so than anybody else.

Put it on our board of directors, who finally approved supporting a group of officers for a class action lawsuit. That's really what started these dominoes falling. That's when the whistleblowers — investigators inside COPA — all popped up their heads and started talking about what was going on.

They didn't want to get dragged into this. That's when they started ratting her out. That's when she fired them, and that really initiated the inspector general to get off his backside and actually address it instead of just keep ignoring what was going on and all our complaints about the unfairness. So that's kind of how we got to where we're at today.

I want our board of directors and our members to know that it certainly wasn't a one-man show to kiss her goodbye. But Danny Gorman, our second vice president, deserves a tip of the cap from all of us. Danny put all of the data together as far as the increase in penalties and the unfairness of the whole process, and has been very diligent about it over the past five years, collaborating with other people in the office, other reps and then with our attorneys, drafting the language for the lawsuit.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

That made the difference.

Superintendent Snelling coming out as he did against the nonsense she pulled over the Dexter Reed shooting put some much-needed handwriting on the wall. And it certainly put some gasoline on a fire that we had already ignited and gave it a different spin that "Oh, it's not just the FOP complaining about this now." The newly appointed superintendent, who everybody loves, brought more credence to COPA's swings and misses under Kersten and got some people paying attention.

The next move now is a proposal working with the police-friendly group of aldermen, asking to draft changes to the ordinance detailing COPA's powers and eliminating its role in handing out discipline. We sent them what we are proposing. I'm sure they're going to track every condition to start with, but eventually we'll see the light of day, and I think whatever else is going on with this situation now will just be proof of the case we have been making.

We all want to know now whether COPA will be heading in a better direction. Good question. I mean, considering the selection process, it absolutely should. We shouldn't end up with something worse. And if we get the language changed, with discipline being tendered to the superintendent's office, our members will feel that process is a little more fair, and that might make more and more officers consider sticking around because they believe they can still do their job.

And that is one of the many victories, so say it with me:

You can put it on the board... yes!

If I only had a...

Brain, nerve, heart. The call to appear before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on Jan. 5 gave us a chance to see if the mayor had any of that. And would once and for all do the right thing to make the City safer by not letting Chicago continue to slide into the cesspool of a sanctuary city.

Oversight committee chair James Comer sent a letter to Mayor Johnson to testify at a public hearing along with mayors from other known sanctuary outlets in New York, Boston and Denver. Comer hit it right on by saying, "Sanctuary mayors owe the American people an explanation for city policies that jeopardize public safety and violate federal immigration law. This is unacceptable, and their leaders must be held accountable."

I thought it would be prudent that one of the first faces that Johnson saw walking into the hallway was me, standing outside the committee room. I went to D.C. because I wanted to hear what he had to say live.

There's no doubt in my mind that Johnson, Eric Adams from New York City and the mayors from Boston and Denver collaborated on their talking points in cooperation with the Democratic leadership on that committee. Between the softball questions from the Democrats and the hardball questions from the policy party, it can be a dog and pony show.

I figured it might be interesting to see what Adams had to say, especially in light of the drama surrounding the Justice Department wanting to get the charges against him dismissed. And I was hoping Tom Homan would be sitting in the corner with four pairs of handcuffs, just to give those mayors a little scare.

I did find it interesting, when Johnson received the letter and addressed it in a press conference, that the guy who always has something to say about everything became a deer in the headlights, froze and had to turn it over to his corporation counsel. That was the first time I've heard her speak in two years. He deferred to her because when he was notified that he was being summoned to D.C., he wasn't sure if he was he going to go. He absolutely just stopped talking and turned it over to counsel, who said they were looking at all the legal options.

What legal options? You were requested to testify, you weren't subpoenaed. It's not complicated. You just show up. Just say yes or no.

I think we certainly understand President Trump's feelings on this and Tom Homan's feelings as well. When these policies even started getting touted when Trump became president-elect, this goofy mayor couldn't help but get in front of the camera and try and talk tough along with the governor. And I mean, all you're doing is putting a spotlight on yourself. So I think it was only natural that they were going to be called in.

Hey, you want to talk tough? Back it up. Show some heart, if not some brains.

The question here about whether residents are tired of being saddled with the sanctuary city weight leads to the middle of the road. I think if the people being targeted are not criminals, great. Different story. But they also feel we shouldn't be using our tax dollars to supplement the lives of these criminals being given sanctuary.

It just shouldn't happen. They're not here legally. We should not be giving them our money. And Lightfoot started this by dedicating more than \$1.5 million to legal representation for migrants. So yeah, she threw it out there for that legal fund paying for people to break the law, basically. And we continue to do so by giving them tax dollars for benefits.

Listen, if you want to come here legally, you have to have a sponsor. Someone who is going to be responsible for making sure you have a roof over your head, employment and financial support. But if you come in illegally and think you're going to have everything handed to you, it just makes no sense.

I think that's kind of what people are getting sick of. Not that they're coming here, because a lot of immigrants do productive things in society. No doubt they respect the law. I try to be practical. Like I said, people are sick of the criminals that are being allowed to continue to go through the system and walk the streets. It's a PR battle on both sides. One side tries to make 'em all saints, the other one tries to make 'em all sinners.

I think the best we can hope for is that it forces a conversation about these policies and absolutely once and for all, gets those defending the sanctuary to acknowledge the insanity of their position. Does it happen? I would lean toward probably not, but they finally had a chance to say the things they believe and what they do in front of the House Oversight Committee.

I don't know how they maintain their positions as strongly as they can without jeopardizing anything else. I don't know how you walk that tightrope, but I'm sure that's why Rep. Comer convened this hearing. We will wait for the end result.

Right now, it's a no-win situation. But hardly a no-brainer for our mayor. If he only had a brain.

Back DROP

We received a favorable arbitration award on the rehire program, which basically reaffirmed the position and what the agreement was all along. Even though the City was spitefully trying to screw over rehired officers with their pay rate when they came back.

The Department of Finance came up with the bright idea that they were going to have to start all the way back, seniority-wise. You come back at step four, but you wouldn't hit step five until you did another four years, just like you were starting at step one. Just a stupid change of the policy and what the agreement was, which was not what we agreed upon.

Not everybody was affected by an automatic step increase by seniority. So as it does come up for each individual officer, the Department will have clarity, and they won't be able to keep playing games with our people as they move along on the pay scale.

The arbitration ruling reaffirms that the Department and the

City are not going to get away with just not defending agreements that they negotiated and blame finance. I mean, literally what happened was the City's Department of Management and Labor Affairs blamed the finance department, which is nonsense because they knew the agreement.

They should have been fighting finance, telling them that's not what we agreed upon. But they just let finance take the lead, and they just gave us the sales job, which was ridiculous.

I fully expect them to do what they're supposed to do. And it's not about doing management and labor affairs business on behalf of the Department or what the superintendent tells you, what finance tells you or what the mayor's office tells you. And not ignoring literally what we agreed upon in the language of our contract and what we fight for.

That's why this ruling went in our favor. And others will, too.

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Strength in Asking for Help: A Sign of Courage, Not Weakness



**MICHAEL
METTE**

In a world that often glorifies self-reliance and independence, the act of asking for help is sometimes misunderstood as a sign of weakness. Rather, it is a profound demonstration of strength, humility, and wisdom. Whether in our personal lives, professional careers, or moments of crisis, recognizing when we need support and having the courage to seek it is essential for growth and resilience.

For many of our members, the pressure to remain strong and composed under immense stress is a daily reality. I've seen firsthand how officers carry the weight of their experiences, often believing they must endure their struggles alone. I've been there myself - nights when the job feels heavier than the vest on my shoulders, when exhaustion and frustration take over, and when the silence of suffering seems like the only option. But the truth is, the strongest officers are not those who suffer in silence but those who recognize when they need help and seek it. The department has made strides in promoting mental health resources, peer support programs, and initiatives aimed at breaking down the stigma surrounding asking for help.

The CPD is more than just a law enforcement agency, it is a family. I've seen the best of this job when officers rally around one another in times of crisis, proving that no one has to go through hardship alone. We rely on each other for backup in the streets, and that same level of trust should extend beyond professional duties to emotional and psychological support. I've had conversations with officers who felt like they were drowning, only to see them come back stronger after reaching out. Seeking help fosters connection, trust, and collaboration among peers, reinforcing the idea that no one has to face their struggles alone. When one officer steps forward to ask for assistance, it often encourages others to do the same, strengthening the department as a whole.

Ignoring the need for help can lead to burnout, stress, and emotional distress - challenges that many officers face throughout their careers. I've seen how the emotional toll of the job can build up over time. I've had friends who struggled, who tried to tough it out alone, and I've seen the difference when they finally sought the help they needed. The department recognizes this and has implemented resources such as the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and peer support groups. Utilizing these services allows officers to process their emotions, gain clarity, and develop healthier coping mechanisms. Strength is not enduring suffering silently. It is shown by taking proactive steps toward healing and self-care.

Supervisors and senior officers within the department play a crucial role in setting the tone for a culture of support. I've learned that the best leaders are those who acknowledge their limitations and

seek guidance when needed. Demonstrating that vulnerability is not a liability but a pathway to growth encouraging open conversations about mental health and well-being. It creates an environment in which officers feel safe seeking assistance without fear of judgment or repercussions. True leadership is not about having all the answers but about knowing when and where to find them.

Asking for help is an act of bravery. Within the CPD, it is a declaration that officers are human, that they are striving to be better, and that they recognize the power of unity over isolation. I've seen officers regain their strength after reaching out, and I know from experience that we are stronger together. By normalizing the act of seeking support, we break down barriers of stigma and create a department that values connection and resilience. Strength does not mean suffering alone. Strength is having the courage to reach out, to lift others, and to allow ourselves to be lifted when needed.

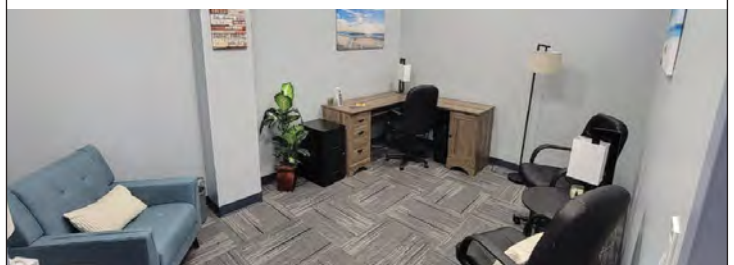
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Discipline Briefs



DAN GORMAN

Part of my report given at the monthly general members meetings include examples of arbitrators' decisions issued at binding summary opinion (BSO) arbitration hearings. Every investigation has its own individual circumstances, and in most cases, there are multiple allegations and redundant alleged "rule violations" (usually piled on by the investigators). However, below are examples of relatively simpler CR investigations and recent dispositions that have been awarded by the binding summary arbitrators. The following discipline briefs only provide a generalization of the allegations that were sustained in the CR investigation.

General Summary of Allegation	Original Recommended Penalty	Arbitrator's Award
Verbal/unjustified comments & unjustified vehicle tow/seizure	15-day suspension	5-day suspension
Unjustified vehicle search	5-day suspension	Expunged
BWC (3x's)	3-day suspension (3x's)	Expunged (3x's)
Remove star from uniform (riots)	3-day suspension	Expunged
-"Push" offender during a parking lot "take-over".	30-day suspension	3-day suspension
Fail to make arrest (2017)	5-day suspension	Expunged due to excessive delay

QUOTE BOARD:

To add context to some of the above listed dispositions, below are just a few notable quotes taken directly from the arbitrator's written awards/decisions.

Quote from the 8-page arbitration decision re:

Verbal, unjustified comments & unjustified vehicle seizure/tow
 "The evidence is convincing that the Grievant had only the thinnest of reasons to conduct an investigatory stop, simply because the driver had pulled out of a no parking, tow-zone when police arrived. It would seem most drivers would want to move their vehicle from a no parking, tow-zone to avoid a ticket."

"More importantly, Officer [REDACTED] explanation for the cause of this detention had not amounted to a reason 'more substantial than a hunch or general suspicion' and therefore did not

establish the Reasonable Articulable Suspicion required for an investigatory."

Quote from the 4-page arbitration decision re:

Unjustified vehicle search

"In the CCR review, Commander Bryan Spreyne disagreed with COPA's findings, holding:

"The search of the complainant's vehicle was found by the investigator to be improper, the R/Commander does not concur with this finding. The investigator properly cites related case law, however, the totality of circumstances were not properly applied which led the R/Commander to find the search of the vehicle was proper/lawful based on case law...."

"In making his finding, Spreyne believed COPA had ignored multiple factors relevant as to a totality of the circumstances analysis, including the event took place in a high-crime and gang-conflict zone; the owner's car, a 2016 Hyundai Sonata, is one of the most stolen and carjacked vehicles not only in the city but across the country; the driver's aggressive refusal to produce her license, and when Grievant tried to pull the driver from the vehicle, she began reaching around the vehicle. Spreyne believed there was "reasonable suspicion that the occupant of the vehicle was dangerous and could gain control of (a) weapon." Spreyne also notes that the Department's Education and Training Bulletin 09-04 listed a scenario similar to the instant incident as sufficient grounds to conduct a search."

Quote from the 4-page arbitration decision re:

Bodycam infractions (3 officers)

"...the BWC Order was less than a year old and clearly police officers throughout the city were still working at making BWC activation second nature..."

"In this instance, there is no evidence to suggest the officers intentionally ignored the BWC Order. Each officer failed to activate their BWC for a different reason -- two by mistake and one misunderstanding the Order -- and discipline of a reprimand or a one-day suspension may have been reasonable at the time for these infractions. Now, so many years later, these officers are now experienced with BWC protocol and it would serve no purpose to discipline for these earlier acts. Instead, at this late date, it would only be punitive to impose any sanctions contrary to the progressive discipline tenants of the parties' Collective Bargaining Agreement."

Quotes from the 5-page arbitration decision re:

No star on uniform during riots

"As with many BSO arbitrations, this matter started out with a more serious excessive force allegation of which the Grievant was absolved. Originally, there were five allegations against the Grievant that was investigated by COPA, which found Allegations

1 and 4 to be not sustained. The Police Board, upon a request for Review, agreed with the Superintendent that Allegations 2 and 5 should also be classified as not sustained. The only remaining allegation is the Grievant's decision to remove his metal star during the riots."

"The Grievant put forward a reasonable justification for placing his star badge into his pocket during the riot. His cloth badge and helmet visor had already been physically ripped off him by protestors, and he testified that similar acts also took place against other fellow officers over those two days."

"The Grievant, with no sustained discipline and an exemplary complementary record over 18 years of service, showed sound judgment when he decided to set aside his badge so it would not be torn from his uniform."

Quote from the 6-page arbitration decision re:

Unjustified pushing during a "take-over"

"In viewing the BWC video, which only captured part of the incident, the driver did not appear threatening only obnoxiously persistent and argumentative. The Grievant acted reasonably in

trying to guide the uncooperative driver back to his vehicle. The moderate pushes used by the Grievant was a reasonable use of force to move the Offender in the hope that he would leave the parking lot."

"However, the fourth and final shove is troublesome. The last forceful shove served no purpose as the Offender had already been pushed back to his car." "...that last shove was not justified and was an excessive use of force under the circumstances."

Quotes from the 4-page arbitration decision re:

Fail to make an arrest

"The Lodge raises a threshold issue as to the excessive and unreasonable delay in this matter."

"This incident took place on December 17, 2017, with COPA completing its investigation on October 29, 2018." "It was not until April 29, 2023 – four and half years later – that Officer [REDACTED] was serviced with a Notice of Suspension. The City offers no explanation for such a delay..." "Therefore, this excessive delay in discipline makes it unnecessary to consider the merits of the matter."

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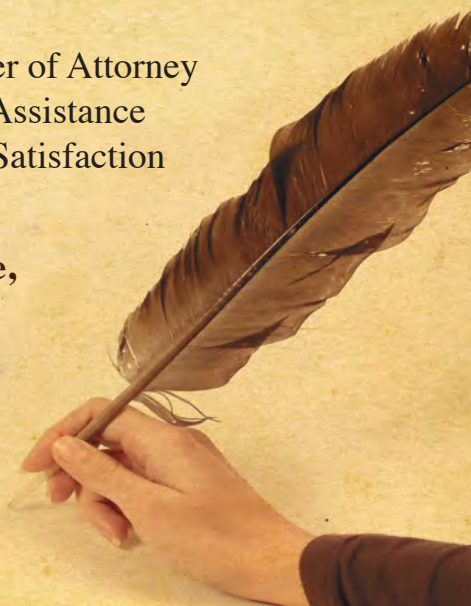


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When Do I Apply for Duty Disability?



MONICA
ORTIZ

I recently had a couple of officers on the medical for an injury on duty, and they applied for duty disability a couple of days before they exhausted their 365 days of IOD time. I am touching on this topic again because of the time that it takes after an officer file for disability. I will outline the steps for officers who have exhausted all their IOD time and know they cannot return to full or limited duty. If you are 60 days away from being out of your medical time, you should call FOP, and we can discuss your options and devise a plan.

Every active officer is entitled to 365 days of medical time per incident for an injury on duty and 365 medical days within two years. While on the medical roll, a member should prepare for the possibility of applying for disability benefits and begin the disability application process within two months before the 365-day medical time expires. The following steps need to be completed in the order listed:

Applying for Disability Benefits

1. Go to the medical section and let the medical section know you are applying for a leave of absence for DISABILITY. The medical section will have you complete a PAR form. You will also complete a medical release form allowing the medical section to copy and send your medical file to the pension fund.
2. Call Bob Crawford at the pension fund, (312) 676-0428 and let him know you are filing for disability. It would help if you made this call as soon as possible.
3. Complete your application with the pension fund after the disability manager, Bob Crawford, contacts you to notify you that the pension fund has received your medical files.
4. Attend an appointment for an examination by a fund physician called an IME (independent medical exam). Once the pension fund receives all medical documentation from the physician, the member will be scheduled for a hearing before the Board of Trustees. After the disability hearing, the board will vote on whether to grant or deny the disability benefits application. Please note that if you apply for disability benefits, there will be a period when you are without income. That period will be at least six weeks but could be up to several months. It is essential to know that signing the PAR form to take a leave of absence and the disability application does not lock a member into the disability process. Any officer may rescind the PAR form and disability application, and the claim for disability benefits will be terminated.

Three Types of Disability

Ordinary Disability — Provided to officers who become disabled due to any cause other than an act of duty or occupational disease. You are paid 50 percent of your current salary. You can collect one year of ordinary disability for every four years worked with a maximum of five years of ordinary disability. NOT TAX-FREE.

Duty Disability — 75 percent or 50 percent of the member's current salary at the time the disability is allowed. An active member who becomes disabled due to an injury that occurred in performing an act of duty.

Occupational Disability (Heart Bill) — Paid at 65 percent of current salary, tax-free. For officers with at least 10 years of service who suffer a heart attack or disabling heart disease.

I want to add that officers who apply for duty disability will pay the patrolman rate pending the officer's disability hearing for their medical benefits. If you have a change in your benefits account while awaiting disability and are being charged at a higher rate, please call FOP. I have listed the contract section covering the city's responsibilities.

Section 18.9 — Employer Responsibility for Hospital, Medical and Prescription Costs, and Pension Contributions.

Pending the final determination of benefits by the Policemen's Annuity and Benefit Fund, officers covered by this Agreement who apply for duty, ordinary, or occupational disability benefits will be required to contribute the same amount as active officers for health care benefits, and the employer will continue to provide the same healthcare benefits. Officers who receive duty or occupational disability benefits will continue to receive those benefits at no cost without any refund of their previous contributions. Officers who are awarded ordinary disability benefits will be required to contribute at the Public Health Services Act (PHSA) rate, reduced by the administrative fee of 2% as of the first day of the month following the Fund's final determination of the officer's claim. The employer agrees to pay all hospital, medical, and prescription costs of an officer who is on leave of absence for duty or occupational disability purposes, all at no cost to the employee. The employer shall make pension contributions on behalf of the employee as if the employee has remained in active service.

If you have any questions or need further clarification on the steps or benefits, please do not hesitate to call me at the lodge. I am here to help you navigate this process.

God bless, and always stay safe.

Strengthening Relationships at Work and at Home



ROB NOCEDA

Lodge 7, I pray this finds you well.

Over 20 years ago, after my Boot Camp, I went to Marine Corps Infantry Training Regiment, a.k.a. SOI (School of Infantry). We had to ruck march 15 to 20 miles at times with our weapons systems, plus 40 more pounds of gear. It was a little physically demanding to say the least. Marching up Mount Mother**** and Iron Mike at Camp Pendleton was quite the memory. We would march in columns of two. Whenever there was too much space in between marines, during the ruck mark our instructors would yell "AT&T."

Our company would then yell back in response "Reach out and touch someone." So, if you had too much space between you and the man in front of you, you would have to catch up and then proceed to touch the Marine's ruck sack in front of you. This action was to keep everyone together and accomplish our mission.

I say that, to bring up this. Too much space from close ones creates distance. Keeping an "AT&T" approach to friends and family is paramount. You can do this by small steps like text, phone calls, breakfast/

brunch or lunch time to meet up.


Recently, I was able to meet up with old friends for a quick dinner. These friends have helped me immensely on this job, and in life in general. It was much needed. There were good laughs and catching up. It had been way too long since we had sat down to share a meal. We will now plan something consistently, quarterly at least.


These relationships, the ones where you create strong bonds and good friendships, are a crucial part of our day to day. In law enforcement, we need the support of each other. It's a rough and tough vocation. These close relationships help encourage us on this race we are running. It gives us perspective and slows us down to see the big picture we don't always pay attention too.

So, the next time you hear AT&T? Did you reach out to someone? Did you encourage an old friend? Are you going to make plans with your old or new pals or gals?

We all need a little reminder to stay close to those in the columns, so we can march forward together.

God bless, and stay safe.





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<p>"Amazing, empathetic and tenacious in helping my family through our tragedy."</p> <p><i>Ofc. Daniel Hernandez Office of Community Policing - 024 District</i></p>	<p>"I was turned down by other attorneys and Ted not only took my case but achieved an incredible settlement."</p> <p><i>E.T. Daniel A. Vasquez (ret.)</i></p>	<p>"Ted fought one of the world's largest corporations on our behalf and we are forever grateful."</p> <p><i>Hengyi Yang, widow of Ofc. Kevin Meng, Dec'd</i></p>
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**JIM
JAKSTAVICH**

Hello again officers, both active and retired. The title of my article is among the writer William Shakespeare's most famous lines. This complicated phrase is often misquoted as a cheap shot at the legal profession but really refers to the importance of maintaining a fair rule of law that protects the people. Regrettably, this quote has been misinterpreted over time. This does disservice to both Shakespeare and lawyers. Lawyers are not just officers of the court. They are defenders of the principles that maintain the rule of law, justice, and fairness in our society. Apparently, the City Council has misinterpreted this phrase as well, and theirs should read, "The first thing we do, let's kill all the police officers." That was absolutely the offender Dexter Reed's first inclination when he encountered the 011th District police officers. The media and activists attempt to blow this incident up in their charge against so-called pretextual traffic stops citing 96 shots in 41 seconds by four officers on the scene. They continue to overlook the fact that offender Reed shot an officer simply conducting a lawful traffic stop! His partners responded as they were trained.

Now bottom feeding lawyers have come with their hands out requesting a seven-figure payout for an offender who shot a police of-

ficer simply doing policework on the west side of Chicago. The City Council has stalled the vote, and on Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2025, we will see if City Council's elected officials decide to give an offender's family a payday after he shot a police officer and suffered the consequences of his own actions. Offender Reed's actions were not justified. He had no right to fire upon a police officer conducting a lawful traffic stop and his family should not reap a monetary payout for someone that wasn't worth two dead flies. I couldn't help but find a comparison with the meaning behind Shakespeare's phrase and the blatant contempt towards law enforcement. How can anyone justify paying out money to someone who attempted to commit murder of a police officer? I will not offer any condolences to his family as their only mission has been about money. His sister organized protests around the 011th District station strictly to get camera time. She was not concerned about having police officers reassigned from their beats where they protect citizens, instead having them to maintain control of protestors. The officers involved in this traumatic incident must continue in their careers and lives knowing that their actions were completely justified. Let common sense prevail and allow the legal team employed by the city to fight this frivolous lawsuit even if the settlement amount is less than the cost to defend our officers' actions.

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In District/Unit CR/Log# Audio Recorded Statements



**MICHAEL
COLLINS**

Hello brothers and sisters, both active and retired. As you all know getting CR#'s unfortunately comes with the job and can be very frustrating. In previous years, minor allegations, infractions, and rule violations were handled in your district/unit of assignment in the form of a To-From in which the officer was to answer questions pertaining to the allegations made against them. The department has since started the process of audio recorded statements conducted by the district/units accountability sergeants. These audio recorded statements are generally very quick, consisting of only a couple questions. An attorney is not typically needed for these statements. I, along with other FOP field representatives, and your unit/watch

representatives, can be present with you for your statement upon your request.

Once you receive the notification of the allegations against you, the officer should not discuss the CR/LOG# with other officers. The officer should not view the BWC footage of the alleged incident, or answer any questions pertaining to the incident until the formal statement with the accountability sergeant. On the day of your statement, the officer will have the opportunity to view any BWC footage of the incident prior to the start of the audio recorded statement. This gives the officer time to refresh their memory of the incident. This also gives the officer time to discuss the incident with their representative if one is present.

Typically, these in district/unit CR/LOG# audio recorded statements are for BWC violations such as not activating, late activation, and early termination. Failure to render aid, failure to request a supervisor to the scene when asked by a citizen. Failure to identify yourself (Name and Star#) when asked. Failure to make

an arrest, failure to do a case report. Failure to inventory or lost arrestees property. Unprofessional language or conduct directed towards civilians on scene. No ISR, or no ISR receipt given. These are all examples of common allegations against officers when it comes to these in district/unit statements.

It is now time to give the statement. Once the audio recorded statement begins you will be asked if you have discussed this investigation with anyone else (FOP rep, unit/watch rep, partner), and if you are aware of any social media coverage of this incident. You will also be asked if you have reviewed any BWC footage of this incident. Before answering the questions pertaining to the allegation(s) the sergeant will ask you, are you ready to give this statement at this time? At that time, please make sure you read the disclaimer found on page 154 of your FOP handbook. "This statement is not being given voluntarily, but under duress. I am only giving this statement at this time because I know I could lose my job if I refuse the direct order being given to me. This statement should not be considered a verbatim statement but only a summary of requested information." The sergeant will then proceed with his questions. It should be known that the officer can ask to stop the interview at any time to consult with their representative if one is present. Once the statement is complete the officer will receive an email of the audio recorded statement. Please save that recording for your records in the event you get notified of a follow up statement, which rarely happens.

One last thing, please make sure you answer the questions honestly and to the best of your ability to avoid any Rule 14 violations. Please give me a call if you have any questions when you get notified for an in district/unit audio recorded statement.

Stay safe!

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A Beautiful Mind



KENYATTA
GAINES

For the past few weeks, I've been gathering information about my co-worker. I have watched him sit among the mountain of files, papers, and flash drives that occupy most of his desk. He has a small space carved out for his cup or his bag. The credenza cabinet beside him is also decorated with binders and file folders. With his door open, he sits busily attached to his computer, which he taps away during most of his tour, only stopping to answer the phone or wave someone into his workspace. I was not sure what he was working on, but the vast selection of binders, files, and paper alone looks intimidating. I soon realized that he was buried in research of arbitration cases involving legal defense.

In order to effectively prepare a case for an arbitration he gathers the officer's information, pulls videos of the incident (where available), COPA's file with discipline recommendation, general orders that correlate with the actions of the officer/offense in question, past arbitration decisions that are similar in nature, department policies, and, if provided, the department's disciplinary recommendation. Each video of the incident must be watched and scored adequately. Then he goes through past arbitration cases to find similarities, which help him decide how to approach his defense. The files he prepares are then presented to the legal defense team, which makes a decision on the direction of movement for the case. This is a strategic and tedious preparation. Gorman gives the same level of attention to each case.

Daniel is a 5-time elected board member under past presidents Michael Shields, Dean Angelo, Kevin Graham, and twice with current President John Catanzara. He has become a staple at FOP Lodge 7. John related that he first recognized Gorman as someone who appeared to be in the know with lodge infrastructure and happenings. Through several conversations at FOP meetings, he and Gorman seemed to have similar opinions of past administrations. They appeared to operate from the guise of me and my friends, then everyone else mentality. The members were not the priority. One day over lunch, John asked Gorman to be first vice present. Gorman took a few days to think it over. After some discussion, he conceded to Michael Mette and accepted the second vice president position. John adds, "The membership has never been better served. The level of meticulousness he gives every case is unsurpassed. He goes above and beyond to give each member a fair shake."

Gorman is the designated note taker during negotiations, but that didn't keep him from interjecting, asking pertinent questions, and making suggestions.

Adam Katz (retired detective and current FOP shooting representative) said, "He is great for this place! The guy just does everything. He makes himself available and is very reliable." He is the cornerstone of what the union is supposed to be. The Lodge Political Action Director Michael Cosentino and our in-house retiree, Co-Chair of the Disability/Pension Committee Tom Lonergan, agree that Gorman was one of the top detectives of CPD. They only had positive things to say about him and his work ethic. Fun fact: Gorman can deconstruct a motorcycle like he does department policies. He is also a decent guitar player.

Today, Daniel serves as second vice president, co-chair on the Grievance Committee, and on the Legislative, PAC & Voter Registration, Negotiations, and Legal Defense committees. If you ever need Daniel's help, present your problem, and be patient enough to let the man work! It's what he does best. It's what he desires to do. He takes pride in his work and has confidence in his process. At the end of the day, the numbers don't lie. Gorman has helped this lodge overturn many unfavorable disciplinary decisions. If you want actual numbers, take a look at his articles.

For those who think this union does not or has not done anything for you, it's the work you don't see that each Field Representative

does daily to garner micro-victories that make Lodge 7 successful for ALL of its members. Today, John Dineen Lodge 7 is responsive and proactive thanks to the direction from our leadership and the hard work of the entire third floor. I applaud our Second Vice President Daniel Gorman for a job well done. We appreciate your diligence, work ethic, and care of our members.

Hopefully, each of you will join me and offer Gorman a simple thank you. Stay safe!

At the last General Member's meeting, the Lodge presented Dan Gorman with a surprise award regarding his work on CR files; more specifically COPA cases (in the shadow of the COPA Chief's recent resignation), so I decided to share my observations about Dan Gorman.

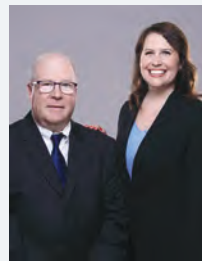


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City Ordered To Comply With Terms Of Rehire Agreement



PAT FIORETTO

On Feb. 14, 2025, the Lodge received a favorable arbitration award based on the new terms of the lateral and rehire agreement. Brian Hlavin and Fiona Lamb from our firm presented a grievance on behalf of an officer who had been rehired by the city and not paid properly. The arbitrator issued an award finding that the department violated the parties' agreement by not advancing the grievant from step four to step five of the salary schedule, as dictated by the agreement.

This case centered on an agreement reached during contract negotiations between Lodge President John Catanzara and LRD Commander Donna Rowling. The agreement aimed to address the department's man shortage by letting resigned officers return to the department at the salary step they had attained when they resigned. Under the agreement, the parties agreed that rehired officers would maintain their salary step when they previously resigned, but not their seniority for bidding purposes. The parties also agreed that returning officers would not be required to submit to another probationary period but only to a "retread" orientation period, and specifically that "(r)ehires will be placed at their last step prior to resignation on the current Salary Schedule," and that "(b)enefit days (Vacation days, Personal Days, Baby Furlough Days) for rehired members shall be prorated based on the date of member's return to service."

Initially, the department hired the grievant as a police officer in January 2018. After completing the police academy, field training, and his probationary period, the grievant worked for the department for a little over three years and then resigned his position. At that point, the grievant needed only three additional weeks of service to move from step four to step five on the salary schedule. After resigning from CPD, the grievant worked for a suburban police department for about two years. Grievant returned to work for CPD on May 1, 2023.

However, once the parties negotiated the agreement, the department claimed rehired officers (including the grievant) would not be able to advance up the salary schedule until they reached the number of continuous months required for that step after being rehired. In the grievant officer's case, this would mean that in order for him to progress from step four to step five, he would need 84 months (seven years) of experience to be paid the same rate as officers with half the experience. The department refused to honor its commitment, and the Lodge pursued a grievance.

The absurdity of the city's position is even more apparent when applied to officers further up on the salary schedule. For example, as presented at the hearing, under the city's interpretation, an officer rehired at step eight (after 15 years) would have to wait 20 years before qualifying for a step increase, at which point the officer would be mandatorily retired.

Fortunately, the arbitrator recognized that the city's interpretation could lead to "results that most likely were not intended," such as requiring a rehired officer to work seven years to receive the same pay as officers with less experience. The arbitrator found such a position would be inconsistent with the purpose of the rehire agreement. By aligning with the Lodge's interpretation, the arbitrator found President Catanzara's explanation of the bargaining history and parties' intent more credible than the city's argument. Rather than improperly adding to the parties' collective bargaining agreement as the city tried to claim, the arbitrator instead used "arbitral jurisprudence"

and "principles reasonably drawn from the agreement." He concluded that the new agreement requires that "rehired police officers have accumulated the requisite time within any given salary step when that time is calculated using the officer's time worked before his or her resignation combined with the time worked after his rehire."

Thus, the arbitrator determined that the city violated the parties' agreement and ordered the department to move the grievant officer from step four to step five on the salary schedule after he worked 42 days in step four, as determined by the combined time worked before and after his rehire. Additionally, the arbitrator also ordered the department to compensate the grievant for any economic loss suffered due to contract violation, including all wages and/or benefits.

Although the Lodge asked for any remedy awarded to apply to all other rehired officers similarly situated, the arbitrator refused to do so. According to the arbitrator, relying on the parties' grievance and arbitration procedure, his authority remained limited to the specific issues presented in the grievance (which did not request that any benefit gained in the award would apply to other officers). Nonetheless, this decision underscores the importance of fair and consistent treatment for rehired officers, ensuring their prior service is recognized and valued in salary progression. The Lodge will be able to use this award in other pending grievances.

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After You Discharge



TIM
GRACE

COPA, COPA, COPA. An amazing thing has happened as our favorite civilian oversight agency is crumbling from within. They claim CPD has problems? They are embroiled in whistleblower lawsuits, federal civil rights lawsuits filed by the FOP, and now are leaderless due to the resignation of the chief administrator. While that is a topic we could discuss ad nauseam, the real interesting new occurrence are the allegations being presented after officer involved shootings. The majority of the officer involved shootings are within policy

with respect to the general orders and are justifiably uses of deadly force. Our officers are very judicious and follow the order when they are placed in a situation where deadly force is the last resort. The amazing part of this is that as hard as COPA tries not to, they are acknowledging this. COPA's allegations after an officer involved shooting are less and less critical of the use of force. Trust me, this is not because they have become more knowledgeable and sympathetic to the plight of police officers. It has much more to do with the fact that the video and other evidence prove that our officers are acting within the law.

Before we call for a "for sale" sign to be placed at the front door of COPA, they have become incredibly petty in their allegations. A new approach seems to follow a "there must be some violation" as opposed to accepting the fact that the officer acted within policy. Hence, and to the main point, we are finding many more allegations involving the actions of the officer after the discharge. These allegations involve notifications and separation. Once again, COPA has zero understanding of the chaos and human element that permeates an officer's mind after he or she was required to use deadly force. All officers need to be mindful of the expectation of the general orders with respect to involved members of an officer involved shooting.

As always, we must look to the general orders. You will find the majority of that information in General Order G03-06. After you or your partner has made that very difficult decision to discharge your weapon, there are immediate notifications that are required. The first and very important notification is to OEMC that a shooting has oc-

curred. If the scene is still active and help is needed, call in the "10-1" and get more resources at the scene. This provides you with more bodies and makes the scene much safer for both you and your fellow officers. The general order requires that you provide all relevant information. If it is safe and feasible, you should give a description of what occurred ("shots fired at and by the police"), request an ambulance if necessary, and whether the scene is secure or if the offender (offenders?) is still at large. COPA believes that the "provide all relevant information" language in the general order requires a long essay and conversation of what has and is occurring. That is not within the spirit of the general order. The general order is simply requiring that general information get out and recognizes that it is a fluid and dangerous event. More and more COPA is claiming that the officer failed to be specific as to every point. How does "shots fired at and by the police, roll an ambulance and offender in custody" not get the message out? We don't need a speech. Not to mention that everyone is going on their radio and at some point no information can get out due to the air being "clogged" up.

Once back-up has arrived, we need to address what is in front of us. The first and most important is rendering aid to yourself or partner and then quickly thereafter, ensure that someone is rendering aid to the injured offender. I know it is difficult to switch from trying to stop the threat with your firearm to trying to apply a chest seal to someone who just tried to kill you. COPA believes different, but they also always believe that more de-escalation could have prevented a man from shooting at you. You are also required to keep that BWC running until directed by an on-scene supervisor. COPA will always believe that you turned it off because you had a nefarious intent. Get the order to turn off, it will be captured on BWC and it will end all speculation.

You are required to participate in what is called the public safety questions asked by the street deputy or the highest-level supervisor. These questions are very simple and to the point: injuries to officers or others, weapons used, subjects in custody, and if not direction of flight and description, identification of any witnesses or evidence, information about any involved damage to vehicles, and any officer-wellness related matters. These questions are

not to be captured by BWC. Make sure when you have this conversation no BWCs are around. It may be difficult but insist on this as it is right in the general order. You are then required to ensure you are separated and do not talk about the incident with any other officers. This is very important as you will be excited and your adrenaline will be through the roof. Take a breath, go sit in a car and try your best to relax. You did your job and you didn't ask for this.

Officer involved shootings are the most difficult part of this job. Hopefully you will make it through 30 years and never have to experience one. You have to prepare and if you can remember half of the rules during this trying time, you will be doing great. Make sure you have someone call FOP as soon as possible. We have a shooting team that consist of very experienced retired officers who are on-call 24/7. They are there to help. Our officers have been doing a great job on making that fateful decision to discharge. Mind you, COPA knows this but won't admit it. You can survive this, you just need to be prepared. As always, stay safe.



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An Update From Springfield



DAVE SULLIVAN

If one were to compare the Illinois General Assembly session schedule to the Major League Baseball season, it could be described as the time from the start of session in which legislators are sworn in early January to the governor's budget address is like Spring Training and that speech to a joint session of the House and Senate is Opening Day for the regular season. Since they were sworn in, legislators have been introducing bills for consideration as they prepare for committee presentations. And now they are ready for a busy few weeks of committee meetings.

This year's speech by Governor Pritzker was on Wednesday, Feb. 19, and contained much of the standard fanfare. The governor focused on the need to address healthcare issues, education, and jobs. He also expressed his frustration with the new Trump administration. There had been reports of the state budget would have a problem of over \$3 billion. But it now seems like there is

only a \$1 billion problem. The legislature will now debate many issues including these budget woes. There have been over 2,500 bills introduced in the Senate, while the House has seen over 3,800 bills introduced so far. The legislature will be busy as they work toward their May 31 scheduled adjournment.

We are working on several pension related issues in the house and senate as well as monitoring any ideas that relate to policing. This will continue to be a very busy session.

In the northwest suburbs, former Senate GOP Leader Dan McConchie resigned his senate seat. His wife is having serious health issues, so he is spending more time with her. His replacement appears to be Barrington Hills Trustee Darby Hills who is a former Mrs. Illinois.

The legislature will be in session almost every week until the end of May when they plan to pass a balanced budget and adjourn for the summer.

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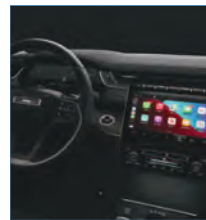
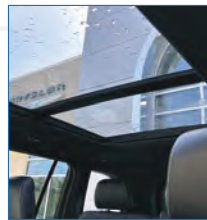
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Honoring Sisters and Brothers who have passed

Name	Status	Age	Date of Passing
James M. Grant	Retired	92	November 25, 2019
Marshall Christopher	Retired	77	July 9, 2023
James A. Maurer	Retired	78	January 2, 2025
Larry W. Canterbury	Retired	77	January 26, 2025
Frank Holan	Retired	85	February 1, 2025
Jasmine Hernandez-Debo	Unit 006	27	February 5, 2025
John R. Fleming	Retired	73	February 7, 2025
Joe A. Boyd	Retired	91	February 7, 2025
Gerald F. Burke	Retired	89	February 8, 2025
Angelo Richard Labriola	Retired	81	February 9, 2025
Daniel J. Powers	Retired	76	February 13, 2025

Retiree Meetings

Check the contact info listed with each location to confirm meetings are being held

North

First Tuesday of the month
@ 9 a.m.
D'Agostino's Pizza and Pub
7530 W. Oakton St., Niles
Steve Marchfield 773-771-0877

The Northsiders' Luncheon

Third Wednesday of January, April,
July, October @ noon
Suparossa, Chicago
Paul Vitaioli, 312-402-1040

South

Second Wednesday of month
@ 10 a.m.
Jedi's Garden, Oak Lawn

8-Ball Luncheon

Last Wednesday of month
@ noon
Les Brothers, Oak Lawn
Dorothy Piscitelli, 773-972-0139

Bomb and Arson

Second Monday of month
@ 9 a.m.
Fiesta Tapatia Restaurant
Chicago
Ross Horne, 312-613-9182

Crime Lab, ETs, Forensic Services and Mobile Unit

First Tuesday of month @ noon
Flap-Jacks Restaurant, Oak Lawn

Orland Park Law

Enforcement Organization
Third Thursday of month
@ 7:30 p.m.
Orland Park Civic Center
Orland Park

Survivors Lunch

Second Saturday of month
@ 11 a.m.
Beverly Woods Restaurant
Chicago

Public Housing Unit (North, South and Administration)

First Wednesday of month
@ 10 a.m.
George's Restaurant, Chicago
Maurice Brown, 773-577-0154

Arizona Retirees

Third Thursday of month
@ 11 a.m.
Eagle Buffet at Casino Arizona
524 N. 92nd St.
Scottsdale, Arizona
Brian DuFour, 623-521-6146 or
bdu4@aol.com

Arkansas Retirees

Third Friday of month
@ noon
Elks Lodge
Mountain Home, Arkansas
Bob Zdora, 870-405-5407

Florida Retirees

First Wednesday of month
@ 1 p.m.
Cop Shop, Cape Coral, Florida
Tom Faragoi, 239-770-7896

Michigan Retirees

First Thursday of month
@ 8 a.m.
Macks on Main
101 W. Cedar Ave.
Gladwin, Michigan
John Nielson
989-324-0877
jnnielson@gmail.com

Northern Illinois/Southern Wisconsin Retirees

Second Thursday of month
Herner's Hideaway
N202 Williams Road
Genoa City, Wisconsin

Hellenic American Police Association Northsiders Retiree Breakfast

First Monday of month
@ 10:00 a.m.
Burgundy Restaurant
5959 W. Irving Park Rd., Chicago

Hellenic American Police Association Southsiders Retiree Breakfast

Second Monday of month
@ 10:00 a.m.
Valois Cafeteria
1518 E. 53rd St., Chicago

25th District Retirees

1st Wednesday of the Month
Tavern on the Point
6724 N. Northwest Hwy
7 P.M.

Honoring Retired Members

January 2025

Name	Rank	Unit	Years	Name	Rank	Unit	Years
Marco A. Acevedo	Detective	610	30	Richard J. Layman	Officer	701	33
James W. Adams	Detective	650	31	Patrick G. Lee	Officer	008	27
Hector Alfaro	Detective	610	30	Nicholaus G. Lesch	Officer	193	21
Taras M. Andrushko	Officer	020	21	Craig J. Levins	Detective	620	29
Daniel E. Bacoulis	Officer	020	30	Luis A. Loaiza	Detective	640	34
Bradley J. Bertram	Officer	020	31	David Lopez	Officer	017	21
Marilyn Y. Bishop	Officer	002	25	Socrates W. Mabry	Detective	610	30
Everardo Bracamontes Jr.	Detective	640	24	Theodore Magno	Officer	020	25
Phoebe Brown-Rule	Officer	003	30	Thomas J. McDonagh	Detective	630	30
Colleen R. Burnette	Officer	012	32	James W. McGuire	Officer	051	29
Kenneth J. Carlyon	Officer	012	21	John W. Moran	Officer	009	31
Crystal M. Carter	Officer	020	28	Lolita M. Newell	Officer	124	29
David Cintron	Officer	019	21	Stephen D. O'Connell	Officer	277	26
Ramona Y. Coleman	Officer	171	31	Daniel W. Paluck	Officer	051	34
Carol A. Connolly	Officer	116	24	Steve J. Quint	Officer	124	21
Malcom Domio	Officer	015	26	Isidor I. Ramos	Officer	014	25
Daniel M. Echeverria	Officer	606	26	Carla M. Rodriguez	Officer	177	27
Karen J. Etti	Officer	145	24	Marian A. Rodriguez-Wade	Officer	017	20
Michael R. Ferguson	Detective	620	26	Elliot D. Rogers	Officer	003	20
April K. Fisher-Smith	Officer	121	19	Juan J. Santiago	Officer	014	28
Reginald E. Foster	Officer	019	34	Theresa A. Simon	Officer	050	31
Rodrigo D. Garay	Officer	001	20	Kirk A. Strauss	Officer	017	31
Roberto A. Garcia	Detective	630	30	Aisha Sultana	Officer	014	27
Daliah Goree	Officer	002	27	Sofia Terrones	Officer	050	32
Thomas K. Grimm	Officer	012	25	Robert J. Tholl	Officer	015	30
Allen C. Hadac Jr.	Officer	341	28	Chuck A. Trendle	Officer	008	30
Charlie H. Hall IV	Officer	701	31	Robert E. Trotter	Officer	193	20
Crystal L. Harris	Detective	610	34	Gerardo Vega	Officer	011	21
Michael T. Hennelly	Detective	650	29	Jeremy R. Volk	Officer	050	34
Marc S. Iskowitz	Officer	016	26	Marni L. Washington	Officer	542	24
Wesley J. Jackson	Officer	006	20	Ruben Weber	Detective	181	30
Daniel B. Jarvis	Officer	001	20	Michele L. Wilkoszewski	Officer	016	28
Tommie W. Jones	Officer	010	26	Kristy C. Witt	Officer	020	23
John G. Kaporis	Officer	017	30	John E. Wrigley	Officer	019	23
Claudette D. Knight	Officer	123	25	Juan F. Zaragoza	Officer	050	31
Supatchara Laksanaprom	Officer	019	23				

THE 4-1-1

Information about education, training, fundraisers, fun and more...

Announcing the 50th Reunion for CPD Recruit Class of 1975-1

Friday, May 16, 2025

Join us as we gather and reminisce with laughter, tears, and stories and remember those who are no longer with us.

**For more detailed information and tickets,
email cpd50threunion@gmail.com**

Reunion Committee: Ann (Martin) Shaw, Larry Pike, Roberta Bartik, and Helen (Rusinkas) Kliner (479-651-0927)

018th District Retiree's Lunch

1 May 2025 1100 hrs

European Chalet
5445 S Harlem

\$45.00 Lunch and open bar

Contact: John Wotring
520 631-0910
johannywo1@aol.com

Dance Like No One Is Watching



RABBI
MOSHE WOLF

The call comes over the radio of a working fire in an apartment building. I was in the area, so I responded to the scene. There was fire blowing out of the windows on the third floor. Our members are running to help those on the lower floors. Even though there was smoke in the halls they were not aware that the upper floors were on fire. One after the other our members came out helping the elderly and carrying out young children. Coughing and hacking, nothing stopped our members from going back into the burning building to help those in distress. I stood there in silent prayer that all made it out and that none of our members suffer any smoke related injuries. Speaking to one of our members who brought out five people, I said, "Thank you for the Holy work that you do," and she tells me, "Rabbi, I was just doing my job." I gave her a double candy bar, and we said a prayer of thanks that all got out OK, and there were no other injuries. That is what separates you (our men and women) from the rest. You go out every day put your lives on the line, doing G-d's work. Most of the time, your heroic actions never make it to the news, never garner a thank you, and never earn recognition. Those actions just give you that warm feeling inside your heart that you made a difference in someone else's life. So, on behalf of ALL your chaplains we say, THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU! WE APPRECIATE YOU AND G-D BLESS YOU. OUR QUALITY OF LIFE IS BETTER BECAUSE OF EACH ONE OF YOU!

As I was pulling away from the scene, it reminded me how precious life is and how grateful we need to be for the gift of every day.

"Dance Like No One Is Watching"

We convince ourselves that life will be better after we get married, have a baby, then another. Then we're frustrated that the kids aren't old enough, and we'll be more content when they are. After that, we're frustrated that we have teenagers to deal with. We'll certainly be happy when they're out of that stage.

We tell ourselves that our life will be complete when our spouse gets his or her act together, when we get a nicer car, are able to go on a nice vacation, when we retire.

The truth is there's no better time to be happy than right now. If not now, when?

Your life will always be filled with challenges. It's best to admit this to yourself and decide to be happy anyway.

One of my favorite quotes comes from Alfred D. Souza. He said, "For a long time it had seemed to me that life was about to begin - real life. But there was always some obstacle in the way, something to be gotten through first, some unfinished business, time still to be served, or a debt to be paid. Then life would begin. At last, it dawned on me that these obstacles were my life. And we ALL have our own challenges and burdens to carry."

This perspective has helped me to see that there is no way to happiness. Happiness is the way. So, treasure every moment that you have and treasure it more because you share it with someone special, special enough to spend your time with, and remember that time waits for no one.

So, stop waiting until you finish school, until you go back to school, until you lose 10 pounds, until you gain 10 pounds, until you have kids, until your kids leave the house, until you start work, until you retire, until you get married, until Friday night, until Sunday morning, until you get a new car or home, until your car or home is paid off, until spring, until summer, until fall, until winter, until your song comes on, until you've had a drink, until you've sobered up, to decide that there is no better time than right now to be happy. Happiness is a journey, not a destination. Remember, "every day of life is a gift, enjoy your present!"

Dare to Believe

EVERYBODY KNOWS ...

You can't be all things to all people.

You can't do all things at once.

You can't do all things equally well.

You can't do all things better than everyone else.

Your humanity is showing just like everyone else's.

SO

You have to find out who you are and be that.

You have to decide what comes first and do that.

You have to discover your strengths and use them.

You have to learn not to compete with others,

Because no one else is in the contest of "being you."

THEN

You will have learned to accept your own uniqueness.

You will have learned to set priorities and make decisions.

You will have learned to live with your limitations.

You will have learned to give yourself the respect that is due,

And you'll be a most vital mortal.

DARE TO BELIEVE

That you are a wonderful, unique person.

That you are a once-in-all-history event.

That it's more than a right, it's your duty, to be who you are.

That life is not a problem to solve, but a gift to cherish.

And you'll be able to stay one up on what used to get you down.

A little humor from the "Moshe Files" to keep you smiling.

"The Suspicious Man"

A little man and a lady were sitting next to each other on the bus. The little man was perfectly harmless, but the lady was a spinster, and suspicious of all males. So, since they were somewhat crowded on the seat, she pushed the umbrella between her knee and his and held it firmly as a barrier.

When they reached her stop, it started raining. The woman put up the umbrella. As she did so, she realized that the little man had followed her. She had guessed that he was a master, now she knew it for sure.

She walked quickly down the side street, and the man pursued through the driving rain. She ran up the steps of her home and rang the bell.

When she heard the doorman coming to the door, feeling herself safe at last, she turned about and addressed her pursuer angrily.

"How dare you follow me! How dare you! What do you want, anyhow?"

The drenched little man spoke pleadingly, "If you please, ma'am, now that you're home, I want my umbrella back"...LOL

On behalf of ALL your Chaplains, may G-d protect you, keep you safe and ALWAYS keep you in His loving care.

Should you need a shoulder to lean on, an ear to listen or perhaps have some good humor to share, please don't hesitate to give up a call. (I am serious, send me your jokes, don't worry about the content, I'll clean it up).

Available for you and your family 24/7. All our contact info available in your FOP books or the Police Chaplains website.

WWW.CHICAGOPCM.ORG

Compliments of your Chaplain

Rabbi Moshe Wolf, 773-463-4780

or e-mail:moshewolf@hotmail.com

Snail mail: 3008 W. Pratt Blvd., 60645



FATHER DAN BRANDT

On Jan. 29, Chicago Police Officer Ricardo Rivera received a handmade quilt from Quilts for Cops, who craft beautiful quilts for Chicago police officers injured in the line of duty.

On Nov. 11, 2024, while on patrol, Officer Rivera saw a person being stabbed several times. Officer Rivera intervened and was himself stabbed by the offender as he took action to save the victim.

The quilt was presented by Chaplain Hysni Selenica and Sgt. Erik Ruhnke (who is himself NO stranger to being on the receiving end of a stabbing!).

In recent months, Chaplain Selenica and our Chaplains Unit colleagues have been busy presenting quilts to deserving officers. To see all of them and read the related narratives, please visit our website's "Photo Album" page. Also, if you have a suggestion for a worthy quilt recipient, please contact Chaplain Selenica at Hysni.Selenica@ChicagoPolice.org.

What a blessing it was for the other Christian chaplains and me to see so many friendly faces while making the annual citywide rounds on Ash Wednesday! I pray your Lenten journey is fruitful!

To that end, during this season of Lent, many people try to pray more intentionally. So, just a reminder: every Friday at 1 p.m. the Chaplains Section continues to facilitate a Bible study/prayer/faith-sharing group at the police academy. No matter your faith tradition, ALL are welcome to share and hear words of encouragement at these brief Christian-based gatherings.

A similar (though more intimate in size) non-denominational Christian prayer opportunity is offered every Wednesday at 1 p.m. in the multi-purpose room at Public Safety Headquarters.

And Muslim (Jumma) prayers are offered every Friday at 1 p.m. in room 202 of the academy.

To confirm times, or if you'd like more information, please email Joseph.Jackson@ChicagoPolice.org, Kimberly.LewisDavis@ChicagoPolice.org, or Hysni.Selenica@ChicagoPolice.org.

In addition to our regular second and fourth Sunday Masses at Mercy Home (11 a.m. at 1140 W. Jackson Boulevard), we'll gather for Mass on Easter morning (April 20) at 10 a.m. Please note the difference in time for the holiday. More information can be found on the "Police Mass" link at www.ChicagoPCM.org

If the CPD Chaplains can ever be of ANY assistance/support to CPD members, retirees or families, please don't hesitate to call on us: Chaplain Bob Montelongo (773/459-5089), Chaplain Joe Jackson (312/771-6684), Chaplain Hysni Selenica (312/771-6692), Chaplain Kimberly Lewis-Davis (312/771-6638), Rabbi Moshe Wolf (773/463-4780), or me (773/550-2369). All of these numbers (also listed in your FOP directory under "Chaplains") are cell phones and receive text messages. You can also email us through the chaplains' website. As with our sister unit EAP, you can be assured of our non-judgmental confidentiality.

In case you're seeing this column before Thursday, March 13, our next Upper Room Club is that evening at 6:30 p.m. at Pizano's (21st and Indiana). Join us for some good faith-based conversation among like-minded folks.

On Friday, April 4, at 6 p.m., a charity comedy night will be held at the FOP hall. We will be raising funds for Light the Line, a police wellness charity founded by Ella French's mother, Elizabeth. Come on out and laugh with several Chicago police officers who will take turns on stage to compete for funniest cop bragging rights.

Also, next month, we have the "Battle of the Badges" boxing match between members of CPD and CFD. It'll be held Friday evening, April 25, at DeLaSalle High School. My friend and colleague Chaplain Hysni Selenica has been training for many months to compete in this event. Please join me in cheering him on!

Save the date! Your department Chaplains are hosting a day-long marriage retreat on Friday, June 27, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Lake Katherine Nature Center and Botanical Gardens in Palos Heights.

We are excited to invite all active and retired Chicago police officers and their spouses to participate in this program intended to strengthen relationships, improve communication, and achieve better work-life balance.

This retreat will provide a safe and supportive environment for couples to connect, share experiences and learn valuable relationship-building skills tailored to the unique challenges of law enforcement life. Childcare is included. Please contact Chaplain Kimberly Lewis-Davis for more information at Kimberly.LewisDavis@ChicagoPolice.org or 312-771-6638.

Keep up with all of the above and LOTS more at www.ChicagoPCM.org.

No matter your faith tradition, thank you for doing God's work! I leave you with this Lenten meme I recently received...



God bless you and keep you safe!

Fr. Dan Brandt, Directing CPD Chaplain
773/550-2369 (cell/text)
dan.brandt@chicagopolice.org | www.ChicagoPCM.org

Coping With Suicide in Law Enforcement



BRIAN
MCVEY

The law enforcement community is no stranger to death. Many of us can't grasp the fact that we see it daily, and we know we can't put a lot of thought into the sights, sounds, and smells of death. However, coping with the death (suicide) of a colleague presents incredibly different challenges. The shock, grief, and confusion that follow can deeply impact officers' mental and emotional well-being. As a former Chicago police officer, it was something that we didn't really talk about. We knew that it could be more than five members per year that take their own lives. We mourn our brothers and sisters and go about our business. This article will help explore strategies for coping with the loss of a colleague to suicide and provide guidance on navigating this difficult time.

1. Acknowledge and Validate Feelings: It's important for officers to recognize and validate their feelings of shock, sadness, anger, and guilt. These emotions are natural responses to such a traumatic event. Encourage open communication among colleagues, allowing them to express their emotions without judgment or fear of repercussion. Countless officers unknowingly will take some of their hurt and anger out in the near future on a person via a traffic stop: turning the traffic stop into a complaint or worse a lawsuit.

2. Seek Support: Encourage officers to lean on their support networks, both inside and outside of the department. This may include peers, supervisors, chaplains, mental health professionals, or support groups. Talking to others who have experienced similar losses can provide comfort and validation. Also, speak honestly to your spouse about how you are feeling as the scars of our job can severely fracture the confines of our home.

3. Prioritize Self-Care: In times of grief, self-care is essential. Encourage officers to prioritize their physical and mental well-being by getting adequate rest, eating nutritious meals, exercising, and engaging in activities that bring them comfort and joy. Avoiding excessive alcohol or substance use is also crucial during this time.

4. Honor the Memory: Finding meaningful ways to honor the memory of the colleague who has passed can provide a sense of closure and healing. This may include attending memorial services, creating a memorial fund or scholarship in their honor, or participating in activities that were meaningful to them.

5. Address Stigma and Misconceptions: Suicide is often surrounded by stigma and misconceptions, particularly within the law enforcement community. It's important to dispel myths and promote understanding about mental health and suicide. Encourage officers to seek help when needed and remind them

that asking for support is a sign of strength, not weakness.

6. Provide Resources: Ensure that officers are aware of the resources available to support their mental health and well-being. This may include employee assistance programs, peer support networks, counseling services, and crisis hotlines. Make these resources readily accessible and encourage officers to utilize them as needed.

It is imperative to create a culture in which law enforcement officers feel comfortable seeking help without fear of stigma or reprisal. Encouraging open dialogue and providing confidential resources for mental health support can break down barriers to seeking assistance. Training colleagues to recognize signs of distress and offering avenues for intervention can prevent suffering in silence and ultimately save lives. By fostering a supportive and compassionate environment, we can ensure that no officer struggles alone and that their well-being remains a top priority.

Losing an officer to suicide is a devastating experience for law enforcement officers, but with support and understanding, they can navigate this difficult time and emerge stronger together. By acknowledging their feelings, seeking support, prioritizing self-care, honoring the memory, addressing stigma, and providing resources, officers can begin to heal and cope with the loss of a colleague in a healthy and constructive way.

Remember, you are not alone, and help is available. Together, we can support one another through the darkest of times and emerge stronger on the other side.

Brian T. McVey, MAPP

Proud Father, Former Chicago Police Officer, Author
You can reach Brian @btmcvey77@gmail.com



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BETTER
WORLD



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CHICAGO LODGE 7 AWARDS



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Police Officer Melissa Altmayer #18489
 Police Officer Juan Brizuela #18490
 Police Officer Edwin Cruz #16885
 Police Officer Margarita Diaz #18029
 Police Officer Angel Gomez #11466
 Police Officer Denzel Green #18365
 Police Officer Raymundo Herrera #9994
 Police Officer Lawrence Kilgore-Wooden #19664
 Police Officer Michael Milburn #18185
 Police Officer Joel Rosales #19148
 Detective Karol Obartuch #21009
 Detective Alfredo Vivas Jr. #21021
 Sergeant Javed Ali #2340

Nominator: Sergeant Gabriel Ruvalcaba #872

The 206 Mission Team collaborated with Area One detectives to conduct a follow-up investigation regarding an armed robbery pattern involving Lyft and Uber drivers. One male offender's M.O. was to request the driver's phone to make a call and flee on foot with the cellphone. During the other encounters, the suspects would display a handgun and demand the victim's cellphone and flee on foot. Upon canvassing the area, the detectives discovered a name associated with one of the robbery suspects on a nearby mailbox linked to a previous crime pattern involving armed robberies. This prompted a link chart analysis which indicated a possible co-offender. The team sifted through POD camera video and private video surveillance footage which led them to identify a suspect by name. The detectives conducted a photo array, and two victims positively identified the offender as the person who displayed a handgun and struck them in the face with the handgun while taking their cellphones. The team conducted extended hours of surveillance in the area which yielded negative results. The detectives received new information that the identified offender was now staying at his mother's house on 6752 S. Crandon Ave. They relocated to that location with the entire team. Upon knocking on the door, the officers were met by the offender's mother. Sgt. Ali was able to explain and gain the cooperation of the mother who turned over her juvenile son to be arrested and prosecuted. The offender was charged with a class X felony for armed robbery and one count of robbery. This arrest led to the clearance of 18 armed robberies associated with this robbery pattern.

It is with great appreciation that Chicago John Dineen Lodge #7 presents these officers with the Distinguished Service Award. Nice pinch!

CHICAGO LODGE 7 AWARDS



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Detective
 Daniel D. Gorman #20275

 Elected second vice president
 of Chicago John Dineen Lodge #7

Nominator: President John Catanzara Jr. Chicago John Dineen Lodge #7

Ding-Dong! The witch is dead! I am referring to Andrea Kersten, the former head of COPA, and the head of the snake that slithers around at 1615 W. Chicago Ave. Ms. Kersten, feeling the pressure of a lawsuit brought on by FOP, resigned before she would be terminated. This would not have been possible if it were not for Danny and his diligent work done on behalf of the membership. Danny's monthly articles outline the allegations and heavy-handed penalties recommended by COPA that officers have faced at arbitration and binding summary opinion hearings. He has compiled stats from present recommendations and done research on the same allegations from the past which showed a massive disparity in fairness when COPA recommended suspensions. Anyone who has ever asked Danny for help can attest to receiving an FOP history lesson and complete step by step breakdown of the grievance and arbitration processes in place. Danny's tenacity and determination has been unwavering, just like his hair, in seeing this through.

It is with great appreciation that Chicago John Dineen Lodge #7 presents the Distinguished Service Award to Detective Daniel D. Gorman.

CHICAGO LODGE 7 AWARDS



**Nominator: E.T.O. Bill Papastefan
#9236 016th District Unit Rep**

On May 16, 2024, 016th districts units responded to calls of shots fired in the vicinity of Austin and Eastwood. Upon arrival, the victim flagged down the officers and reported that after hearing a “sawing sound,” he came outside to investigate and observed two offenders seeing the catalytic converter from his vehicle. The victim further related that one offender produced a handgun and began firing at him, striking the victim multiple times before they made good on their escape. The officers assessed the victim’s injuries and notified



EMS immediately. The officers utilized their LEMART training and applied a tourniquet to the victim’s left leg. The officers continued to apply pressure to the victim’s wounds and keep the victim from losing consciousness. CFD Ambulance No. 47 finally arrived on scene and transported the victim to the hospital. Emergency room staff attributed the officer’s actions with saving the victim’s life.

It is with great appreciation that Chicago John Dineen Lodge #7 presents these officers with the Lifesaving Award.

CHICAGO LODGE 7 AWARDS



Nominator: Sergeant Javed Ali #2340

On Feb. 1, 2023, at the location of 3410 S. Lakeshore Drive, officers responded to a one-car auto accident. The responding units, which included CFD, initially struggled to locate the overturned vehicle despite passing the area multiple times. Finally, the officers noticed a faint light emanating from the embankment and rushed down to the vehicle. The officers observed the motorist trapped inside and, after a feodal attempt to break the windshield, shattered the back window and climbed inside to assist the motorist. The officers knew they would need to act quickly because of the hypothermic temperatures



and the possibility of the vehicle igniting as the smell of fuel was all around them. The officers worked as a team to keep the motorist from getting any additional injuries. CFD utilized their backboard to immobilize the motorist and to carry him to safety. The officers’ quick action and ability to work as a team contributed to this motorist’s life being preserved.

It is with great appreciation that Chicago John Dineen Lodge #7 presents the Lifesaving Award to these dedicated officers. Thanks for a job well done.



BE GONE

How Lodge 7 led the way to Andrea Kersten's resignation as COPA chief administrator and what it means for the future of police accountability

Chief Admin

■ BY MITCHELL KRUGEL

At the February Lodge 7 General Members' Meeting, a celebration went off that might have been somewhat unexpected but resulted from the Chicago FOP's five years of relentless effort. One of the awards presented put the cherry on top of the seismic announcement that Andrea Kersten, chief administrator of the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA), had resigned.

Reaction certainly did not reach the decibels of Wrigleyville in 2016. Think more like the Ewoks on Endor celebrating the defeat of the Empire. Lodge 7 Second Vice President Dan Gorman, who has been on the front lines battling COPA and Kersten since he was elected with President John Catanzara in 2020, offered a more subdued but bull's-eye perspective about her departure and what the union has been fighting for.

"We just want fair, timely, objective investigations," Gorman confirmed. "You have to have fair and reasonable people."

Lodge 7 had not seen reasonable and fair from Kersten even before that appalling recommendation for disciplining Chicago Police Officer Ella French well after she was killed in the line of duty in August 2022. For a response that took place three and half years before Ella was lost. Nor has CPD Superintendent Larry Snelling, who publicly decried Kersten's response to the shooting in which Dexter Reed was killed and had already been ruled a justified use of force.

You-know-what hit the fan for Kersten when Lodge 7 filed a lawsuit calling for her resignation and an overhaul of COPA in August 2024. And more of it came down on her when two COPA investigators filed whistleblower lawsuits against Kersten for her actions in allegedly trying to manipulate the outcome of investigations.

The Ella French discipline recommendation even made then-Mayor Lori Lightfoot's recommendation to promote Kersten to chief administrator precarious. It wasn't exactly a unanimous vote to approve her in the City Council, which was poised to terminate Kersten had she not seen the handwriting on the wall and resigned.

Alderman Silvana Tabares, who represents the 23rd Ward was part of the dissenting vote to Kersten's nomination along with 13 others and noted that Kersten used COPA as a vehicle to impose outrageous disciplinary recommendations on officers. And though she said the fight is not over, when the resignation came down, Tabares put some fuel on the celebration.

"This is a victory for all of us who have been calling out Andrea Kersten for years," Tabares exclaimed. "Credit also goes to Lodge 7 President John Catanzara for the FOP lawsuit that got the ball rolling. Often the City of Chicago only cares once it's sued, and the FOP knows this."

Gone wrong

One of the most compelling investigations related to COPA might be whether this was a resignation, a termination or something else. When 16 of Kersten's subordinates signed a letter of no confidence in her, that only added intrigue.

"The first thing that immediately comes to mind is, 'I wonder really what was behind the resignation?'" Gorman raised.

Funny you should ask.

The Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability (CCPSA), which oversees COPA and the Police Board, among other agencies, had begun to take issue with some COPA practices. Before she got gone, Kersten reportedly got a letter from the City on Jan. 27 indicating the Commission's oversight panel also planned a vote of no confidence in her.

Kersten remains at the center of lawsuits filed by two fired COPA officials and Lodge 7 based on similar complaints. And

word was that the City Council Committee on Police and Fire was going to refer a termination to the full council.

"I don't quite understand how that worked, but my understanding was that a lot of the aldermen had lost faith in her," commented attorney Tim Grace, whose firm, Grace & Thompson, has represented many Lodge 7 members facing COPA-generated discipline. "I think that she made the civilian oversight into a prosecutorial entity as opposed to an investigatory entity. The problem with Ms. Kersten's approach to COPA was that they were not investigating, but rather they were looking for a crime, a general order violation or a crime."

Gorman credited the CCPSA for transcending the thought by some people that it is a political organization and delving into the issues and allegations surrounding Kersten. As a longtime detective, Gorman has been a relentless advocate of the letter of the law. In this case, he noted that addressing Kersten followed the Chicago Municipal Code, which details a procedure to remove the head of COPA.

According to section 278155 of the code, prior to serving a complete term, the chief administrator may be removed only for cause. The mayor shall give written notice to City Council and the CCPSA of his intent to remove the chief administrator and the reasons for proposed removal.

Within 10 days after receipt of a notice, the chief administrator may file with the chair of the CCPSA for a hearing on the cause for removal. If no request is made within 10 days, the chief administrator shall be deemed to have resigned. If such request is made, the hearing shall be convened within 10 days after receipt of the request for a hearing. After the hearing, the majority of the members of City Council can vote to terminate.

Did Kersten get called to a hearing? Did that force the resignation?

Tabares indicated that the alders would have learned about Kersten's bias from data the CCPSA and Lodge 7 provided with Gorman's distinguished analysis.

"Danny Gorman, he is the expert, and he had the data to make the case against Andrea Kersten," Tabares added. "A takeaway from Andrea Kersten's departure is the importance of data."

Gone south

Looking at that data, since May 2021, when Kersten was promoted to interim chief administrator, COPA has opened more than 2,400 investigations based on complaints of police misconduct. COPA called for the Department to suspend 1,074 officers and recommended termination of 188 officers.

Gorman's analysis of the numbers spotlights that in the third quarter of 2024, slightly more than 200 suspension grievances were filed. Usually, he said, there are 200 in a year. By the end of 2024, officers had filed 508 grievances, and more than 50 percent were over discipline.

Further accounting of COPA's cases reveals that in the past four and a half years, 585 grievances of suspensions went to binding summary to be adjudicated. Those grievances were over a total of 4,343 suspension days recommended by COPA, which were reduced by a total of 3,124 suspension days. And of the 585 cases, 158 cases were completely expunged by the arbitrators.

"It seems like no matter how serious the original allegations were on any given CR number when originally called into COPA, those end up being not sustained or unfounded," Gorman explained. "But COPA was still looking for any little thing that the officer may have done like, as an example, the officer didn't have a seatbelt on or didn't have shoes shined. So they look for any

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

little things just to sustain that CR number. And then they were able to go to their public portal and say, 'Look at how many cases we sustained.'"

Think of how much time the superintendent and command staff spent reviewing COPA recommendations. If they disagreed, the command staff member could write a nonconurrence.

"It goes back to COPA to say, 'Hey, as a 20-, 30-year experienced law enforcement officer, I disagree with you, COPA, and I disagree for these reasons,'" Gorman continued. "Time and time again, COPA rarely ever changed their position."

Whether that is attributable to Kersten, well, do the math.

But it all adds up to Lodge 7 filing its lawsuit contesting Kersten's undue influence on investigations and discipline recommendations. Shortly thereafter, outside investigations of Kersten's conduct began after she fired two staff members who had complained about her leadership. Matthew Haynam, COPA's deputy chief administrator, and Garrett Schaaf, a supervising investigator, were dismissed and filed the now-famed whistleblower lawsuits, charging retaliation.

The floodgates then opened.

According to reports, COPA staffers past and present alleged misconduct and mismanagement, including this bombshell:

"The agency's disciplinary recommendations had been issued without regard for fairness or consistency under Kersten, who actively obstructed COPA investigative staff's access to essential information, at times misled the public and manipulated investigations to align with her own policy agenda and to manage public perception."

Haynam and Schaaf's lawsuits apparently cited the Adam To-

ledo shooting. Even though the Cook County State's Attorney's Office publicly announced that Chicago Police Officer Eric Stillman reasonably believed Toledo was about to shoot at him with a loaded gun, Haynam disclosed that Kersten explicitly stated that the Toledo investigation must result in sustained allegations against Officer Stillman.

"That called into question every single ruling that COPA ever made [under Kersten]," Grace observed. "They're not making them on objective evidence. They're making them for political reasons."

Since she's been gone

The question about where COPA goes from here begs the answer of "nowhere" because the agency is now a rudderless ship. And some feel it calls into question the ability of that agency to continue on.

Gorman acknowledges that COPA can serve a purpose if it meets the standard Lodge 7 targeted when filing the lawsuit in August.

"Accountability is needed. We recognize that. COPA's role is to investigate allegations of police misconduct and provide fair, objective, timely, thorough investigations," he stated. "If they review the allegations fairly and objectively, and then they determine that there have been some rule violations, it can lead to issuing reasonable and fair penalties that can correct the behavior."

Grace keeps it real when articulating that COPA needs to be a group of neutral people where no one puts their fingers on the scales of justice. And where no one is skewing the facts or ignoring facts that are important.

"I think officers, when they realize that their conduct is going to be reviewed in a fair and unbiased manner, that the officers



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will feel more comfortable about doing their job," he said.

That, of course, can always tip on who is named the new chief administrator. The mayor does not have a record of being on the side of law enforcement, so whether he can get his minions in the City Council to approve his choice will be a debate to monitor.

Gorman goes back to the letter of the law with the ordinance detailing qualifications for the COPA chief administrator, including:

- An attorney with substantial experience in criminal civil rights and/or labor law or corporate or governmental investigations.
- An individual with substantial experience in law enforcement oversight or investigating employee or other wrongdoing.
- A commitment to the knowledge of the need for and responsibilities of law enforcement.
- Shall not be a current or former sworn employee of the police department, a nonsworn employee of the police department within the last five years, or an employee of the Cook County Attorney's Office within the last five years.

Tabares, for one, does not want to take a chance that another anti-law enforcement person takes the COPA reins. She has already put her support behind 41st Ward Alderman Anthony Napolitano's proposal to change the ordi-

nance governing COPA.

This new ordinance strips COPA of its power to discipline Chicago Police Officers and gives it to the superintendent. Napolitano has submitted his new ordinance to the City Council Rules Committee with the goal of getting to either the Committee on Public Safety or the Committee on Police and Fire to begin hearings.



Because Tabares has stated that COPA became the poster child of bureaucratic advocacy aimed at undermining the very important role of law enforcement in a City plagued with violence, she is calling on all Lodge 7 members to take action.

"We need our officers to be engaged with their aldermen and call their aldermen to support Alderman Napolitano's ordinance," Tabares prompted. "Call or email Chairman [Chris] Taliaferro (Committee on Police and Fire) or Chairman [Brian] Hopkins (Committee on Public Safety) and let them know how important it is to have a hearing on Alderman Napolitano's measure."

Act now, members, or risk what you should fear most.

"If we keep quiet, we risk another anti-police advocate as head of COPA," Tabares warned. "And our City cannot afford that right now."

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IT'S CRIMINAL

The mayor didn't come forth with much during his appearance before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. So now the future of Chicago's sanctuary city status comes down to the game of criminal detainees vs. civil detainees or what the Justice Department will do.

■ BY MITCHELL KRUGEL

Several minutes before Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson would experience the scrutiny and angst of appearing before the U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on March 5, he began feeling the stress. On his way into the hearing with other mayors from sanctuary cities, Johnson momentarily locked glances with Chicago Lodge 7 President John Catanzara, who had gone to Washington, D.C., to let the mayor know there someone in the room who knew his BS.

At this particular passing, they were close enough to fist-bump, as if that would ever happen. But it was hardly that kind of event, and the mayor's testimony was as predictably disappointing as his leadership of the City has been. From a front-row VIP seat in the hearing auditorium, Catanzara witnessed more of what has made the mayor an even bigger disappointment to Lodge 7 members.

"This kind of forum has never been held before. Our mayor is sitting here spinning answers and telling lies and untruths and half-truths," Catanzara related while still in D.C. on the 5th, with the events still burning in his memory. "So I wanted him and the congressmen in the room to know that if they have any questions about rebuttal, I could certainly afford them the responses to push back on his testimony and let him know that someone in the room, at least, knew he was full of crap."

Johnson joined Boston Mayor Michelle Wu, Denver Mayor Mike Johnston and New York Mayor Eric Adams in having to answer to committee chair James Comer and a host of Republican committee members charging that sanctuary cities violate the law. One committee member even put it on the record that she was recommending the four mayors be charged with criminal violation of the law.

The Lodge 7 president observed that the hearing should have been all about the difference between complying with a criminal detainee and a civil detainee. All four mayors said they didn't think that was true, responding that they cooperate with all criminal detainees, or criminal warrants. It's the civil detainees that they don't necessarily collaborate on.

"[The superiority clause of the Constitution] notes that even the lack of collaboration for civil detainees is a violation of the federal law," Catanzara

added. "But Brandon kind of sat there quietly for the most part. And that was the problem. But I think most importantly was the reminder to all four of them that they were all in violation of federal law. Period."

A few clowns short of a circus

From the *Tribune* and the *Sun-Times* to WTTW, WLS and the rest of local TV news, Chicago put a media blitz on the hearing. Catanzara was even called on for an interview by a couple of outlets.

But they all characterized Johnson's appearance in one way or another as a dog and pony show, with the mayor sticking to scripted responses. Perhaps a few clowns short of a circus, though that was one descriptor the Lodge 7 president did not get to regarding Johnson's appearance.

The most memorable comment from the mayor seemed to be submitting his take on Chicago.

"Aw, just to put it on the record, the best freaking city in America," he was heard to say.

Otherwise, the most information Johnson revealed to the committee during the six-hour hearing was that the City had spent 1 percent of its total budget on migrants. South Carolina Republican Rep. Nancy Mace tried to get a yes or no answer from Johnson on whether it's "acceptable for illegals who commit heinous crimes to be released back into the public." But she could not.

"There was a lot of filibustering on one side. There was grandstanding to some degree on both sides," Catanzara described. "But the overriding message got through."

The highlight for Catanzara came when Florida Republican Rep. Anna Paulina Luna held up paperwork that she said was a criminal referral to U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi for all four mayors being in violation of federal law. And he noted that Georgia Republican Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene "like only she can, took it one step further and called them treasonous, and they should be charged with treason."

Members of the committee presented that the superiority clause in the Constitution trumps local laws, like the Welcoming Act in Chicago and



CONTINUED ON PAGE 36

the Trust Act in Illinois, that do not require local law enforcement to comply with federal requests to arrest illegal immigrants. And to only assist with criminal immigrants if there is a warrant.

Catanzara believes that, going forward, Bondi and the Justice Department have a case of forcing sanctuary cities like Chicago to comply with federal law enforcement on the civil detainees rather than just the criminal detainees.

But whether Johnson has a clue about that, well, there was no clue.

"All of them were asked, toward the end, do you really have any regrets, was kind of the tone of the question," he revealed. "And to a mayor, not a single one of them, no second thoughts."

Making Americans less safe

The contentiousness the mayor experienced at the House might have been ignited by the letter he received from the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on Jan. 27 inviting him to appear. The letter led with declaring that sanctuary jurisdictions and their policies hinder the ability of federal law enforcement officers to effectuate safe arrests and remove dangerous criminals from American communities, making Americans less safe.

Here are some other excerpts from the letter that might catch the eyes of Lodge 7 members. If not the mayor:

- Chicago is a sanctuary jurisdiction that refuses to fully cooperate with federal immigration enforcement. To provide much-needed oversight of this matter, the committee requests documents and information related to the sanctuary policies of Chicago.
- These jurisdictions take it upon themselves to decide what laws they will and will not abide by all for the purpose of shielding removable aliens, especially criminals, from federal law enforcement.
- There are approximately 12 states and hundreds of cities and counties with sanctuary laws or policies across the country. Four cities, however, stand out in their abject failure to comply with federal law: Chicago, New York City, Denver, and Boston. Citizens of all four cities have suffered due to sanctuary policies.

- On the first day of his second term, President Donald Trump took decisive actions to restore the rule of law with respect to immigration enforcement. One action included a directive to the attorney general and the Secretary of Homeland Security "to . . . evaluate and undertake any lawful actions to ensure that so-called 'sanctuary' jurisdictions, which seek to interfere with the lawful exercise of federal law enforcement operations, do not receive access to Federal funds."

In the letter, the committee also asked the mayor to submit, in advance, all documents and communications among or between any official, employee, contractor or agent of the City of Chicago related to the City's sanctuary status, as well as all documents and communications among or between any official, employee, contractor or agent of the City of Chicago and any official, employee, contractor or agent of the state of Illinois related to the City's sanctuary status.

Taking action against sanctuary cities

Johnson being summoned to Washington, D.C., is less like being called to the principal's office and much closer to being called into the courtroom. In January, Comer and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform launched an investigation into the policies of sanctuary jurisdictions and their impact on public safety and federal immigration enforcement.

Chicago was one of the first four cities to be put under the microscope to examine its refusal to cooperate with federal immigration authorities. Comer has already been on record with his contention that state and local governments refusing to comply with federal immigration enforcement efforts should not receive a penny of federal funding.

"Criminal alien predators should not be free to roam our communities," a release from the committee quoted Comer as saying. "President Trump and his administration are rightfully taking action against sanctuary cities."

In February, the Justice Department filed a lawsuit against both the City of Chicago and the state of Illinois, alleging the state and City immigration policies and "Welcoming" City status, including the Welcoming Act and the Trust Act, impede federal regulations. Chicago's Welcoming City ordinance bans official cooperation between local law enforcement

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and federal deportation authorities while ensuring that immigrants living in the country without legal permission can use City services.

A city is considered a sanctuary city when it has policies that limit cooperation with federal immigration enforcement. Sanctuary cities are welcoming to immigrants and provide services to help them settle into their new communities. The mayor and city council of a city declare it a sanctuary city. In the U.S., there are approximately 600 sanctuary jurisdictions, which include cities, counties and states.

Let's get some adults in the room

If the mayor's appearance in front of the House committee fingered the downside of the sanctuary city issue, maybe it also can be the start of an effort to come out of the dark. Perhaps there are more people than the mayor thinks who would like to see Chicago get back to what made its welcoming great.

Alderman Gilbert Villegas, who represents the 36th Ward, relates hearing stories from his grandmother about immigrating to Chicago from Puerto Rico in the 1950s. As a young boy, he asked her on one vintage January day why they had left the warmth of the Caribbean to live in the cold.

"She goes, 'Mijo, this is where the jobs were,'" Villegas related. "You had O'Hare Airport, where she worked. You had the steel industry, the railroad industry, the meatpacking industry. I mean, you had so many industries that people wanted to come here for. My grandmother took advantage of it, and she was a contributing person to society."

Continuing with spot-on history lessons, Villegas pointed out that being a sanctuary city certainly was not what Mayor Harold Washington had in mind when he enacted the Welcoming Act in the 1980s. He also never would have envisioned Texas Governor Greg Abbott busing or flying migrants to Chicago without any type of resources.

And maybe Johnson will think about that now that he has had to endure the appearance in front of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

"He wants to try to defend his position, and quite frankly, the far left position around sanctuary cities and all the other things that progressives like to tout," Villegas added. "So let's put an end to this topic instead of continuing to divide the country. Let's get some adults in the room and

figure out what we're going to do here. And listen, I'm not advocating — I don't think anyone's advocating — for those migrants that are committing crimes."

Ideology gets in the way

So now that all has been said and done in D.C., there are those in Chicago who hope that what the mayor said during his time in front of the House committee cannot be used against him in the DOJ lawsuit. That is why a faction of his advisors and even members of City Council implored the mayor not to go to Washington.

Villegas submits that the visit to Congress could help illuminate what might be the biggest barrier to Chicago shedding its sanctuary city status.

"Man, the problem is that when we're talking about the far left is that ideology gets in the way," Villegas explained. "And so people think things should be a certain way, and if it doesn't work out that way, then there must be some evil power that's stopping it from happening, when in fact, you may need to look in the mirror and say, 'Yeah, you know what? Yeah, we can't do that.' Or 'Let's get incremental wins. Let's keep moving the ball down the field in order to get something accomplished.'"

Villegas went on to say that the reports of how badly the mayor is doing and his incredibly low approval rating might be able to stir a rebound with his return from Washington, D.C.

"We have to figure out how to understand that there's an opportunity to collaborate," he continued. "I mean, he is the collaborator in chief. We should be working forward to try to get things accomplished for the betterment of the City — not for ideology, not for special interests, but really for the 2.7 million people in the City of Chicago."

The overwhelming end result from the hearing that will best benefit the 2.7 million was this from the Lodge 7 president:

"Well, you know, I think anybody who watched a good portion of the hearing can now understand the importance of getting this mayor out of Chicago as quickly as possible," Catanzara accentuated. "And that's why we're going to really push to get that recall statute passed down in Springfield. So we can put it to the voters in the spring and get him out of here early. That's the goal."



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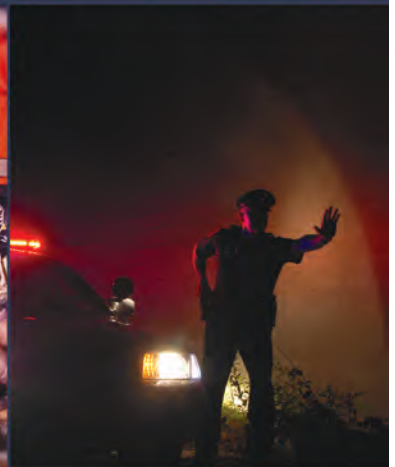
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