

Dear Mayor Mason,

In light of some of the opinions shared by a small collective of Racine Police Department RPA and SOA members within the morale study assembled by Stanard & Associates, we saw it appropriate to reinforce some statistics.

According to the most recent US Census data available; in the City of Racine, for every four citizens who identify as Americans of African descent, there are ten citizens who identify as white. Within the Racine Police Department, for every single officer who identifies as an American of African descent there are ten officers who identify as white. For every ten survey respondents identifying as white, not even half of one of those respondents identified as an American of African descent. 5 in 157

Thirty-two comments in the respondent pool mentioned that Chief Howell demonstrated bias in favor of Officers who are black. 32

This number provides a resonating abstract of the opinions of some officers in a majority white agency toward the minority, specifically those black officers who have advanced through the ranks. Enhancing this evidence are the personal attacks observed within some comments specifically naming grievances toward some members who are black.

Initially, RPA and SOA leadership presented this survey as a tool to determine what measures the department could take to retain officers. Instead of finding, highlighting, and presenting solutions to narrow defined areas within the RPA and SOA's sphere of influence in labor relations improvement, it is our opinion that this survey has worked to widen animus between the department's white members and members who are black.

Unfortunately, in the wake of this survey, black officers at the Racine Police Department exist in an environment where opinions that work to discredit their professional accomplishments were provided a platform. It is clear to us that leadership in RPA and SOA as well as Stanard & Associates were not concerned with screening the comments section nor placing into context the racially inflammatory remarks written prior to the survey's release to Racine Police Department members and stakeholders within city government.

As black officers in this city, we are not afforded the opportunity to handle this job in stereo contrast. Shades of gray fill our palette. A coworker's skepticism will cloud your decision to arrest or not arrest, cite or let walk. Your assignment to a specialty position or receipt of a promotion welcomes ominous questioning of your preparedness, work product, and overall qualification. These questions, once seeping thoughts of coworkers and superiors alike have now shed light on themselves, in this survey, times thirty-two.

Many of these comments suggest that race has been a factor in not reaching a decision on discipline in two cases. One of these cases is not under the control of the Chief or our agency at large. We should be reminded that the ranks of black officers have been reduced by two under this administration while also seeing similarly lengthy disciplinary proceedings for a former officer who was white.

Comments also suggest that race and gender demographics have been factors in the promotion of black officers and the department's first female Lieutenant. Let us speak clearly here; of the thirty-seven members in the rank of Sergeant and above, just three are black and just one is female. This includes our Chief. Similarly, there are two black Investigators. Promotions to Investigator are strictly based on a member's cumulative score on a test, nothing else. To obtain the rank of Sergeant, a member must pass a written exam, oral interview, and also have their work history assessed by the current body of supervisors. The rank of Lieutenant is similar in nature to the Sergeant's promotional process.

In total, five black members have been promoted under this administration, and while twenty white officers have been promoted to Sergeant, Lieutenant, and Deputy Chief alone.

We recognize the resounding number of decisions made by Chief Howell to have been made with principle and under fair standards. We also understand, in reflecting upon the survey's results, that there is room for growth in the effectiveness of our command staff and communication, among other areas.

In the case of this survey, comments made by few have tarnished the concerns of many. In consensus, our concerns and requests as the remaining members of African descent are: shifting department hiring practices to facilitate the recruitment of candidates based heavily on character and merit model; recruitment efforts which result in hiring officers who reflect Racine's social and economic demographics; enhanced efforts to train, retain, and facilitate the career advancement of black officers within the organization; and, upon determination, the immediate removal of applicants who harbor any social bias from our recruitment process.

We chose this city to protect the people who call it home, the great majority of whom do not look like us or identify with our culture. We chose this city because Community Oriented Policing allowed us to put our neighbors first and consider the effects of our causes. We have worked, earned, and continue to take pride in affecting change and lives.

Thank you for your consideration,

Inv. Tonya Scarvers #1601  
Sgt. Lennot Webb # 1227  
Lt. Jessie Metoyer #1992  
Inv. James Pettis #0099  
Sgt. Terry Jones #1619  
Ofc. Brunelle Nabors #2722  
Ofc. Felisha Frieri-Gaines #2737  
Ofc. Jermaine Pumphrey #1145  
Ofc. Jerome King #2188  
Ofc. Aaron White #7202