

Mayor Eddie DeLoach
Acting City Manager Monahan
City Aldermen and Alderwoman
Members of the press and public

This letter is written by and on behalf of the rank and file of your Savannah Police Department. Take this as a state of the department from those most affected by the current failures of our current upper command administration.

The citizens and politicians of the city are being led astray by a corruption of ethical practices and personal egos which has put the morale of the officers at all-time lows. This is leading to a mass exit by officers both young and old. It is also causing a lack of trust in the current command staff and their ability to lead officers that care about their futures in the city or have pride in this department's image.

Many of the officers employed in this department, along with us, saw an opportunity to have a career and positive impact on this community. But the hiring practices and promotions in the department has created an imbalance that never seems to be corrected. The hiring of professional career chiefs with personal agendas outside of this community only upset the balance more as their futures elsewhere dictate what they have officers do to make them look better. We experienced this with Chief Lumpkin. His goal was to protect himself and his future while using the cities finances to get him his next position elsewhere. A series of poor promotions and constant meaningless programs set the stage for the failures this department now deals with. He had no connection to this community, no long-term vision and only created power for those who served him in his circle.

We now are experiencing the same thing with Chief Minter, only on a much larger scale. In less than a year he has managed to divide this department more than any of us have seen in a decade. Trust in command staff for the ranks of officers to Lieutenants has been broken and those who are vested in time and rank are leaving in droves. Chief Minter has created animosity and confusion with constantly changing orders and moves which leave the police officers never knowing what direction to move forward. His speeches and sly demeanor are window dressing for the press and politicians, while officers see the truth. That

truth is that we are an expendable mass which he will use to build his relationship with the politicians until he finds his next employer to give his gangs, guns and drugs speech. His resume might look good, but police officers do better background checks than those hiring these chiefs. His career is one of jumping departments and aspiring for bigger and better positions. He has been at odds with the police union in Peoria and left that department with low confidence from its officers. He has already reached a large percentage here that would vote no confidence in his freshman year. He is not the leader of the people, the officer or the future.

This community needs a chief who understands the past of this city and is committed to its future. Not one who wants good statistics to build his self-image. He is well versed in selling himself to the public but is less than honest when sharing facts surrounding the department. His claims of manpower strength to the public are false. We are at dangerous shortage levels on the street, but he still creates new units to promote an image that we are proactive. Meanwhile, we have issues even keeping our beats covered. He promises that his special units will lower gun violence and domestic abuse, but they continue to rise. They will continue to rise as officers remain overworked, unappreciated and looking for employment outside the city.

Pride is lost in this department as officers watch the chief surround himself with groups not respected by the workers and make promotions that only serve his purpose now but doom the future of the department. Pride is lost as we see officers and supervisors commit the same crimes, we arrest citizens for and they are shuffled away like a dirty little secrets so they don't tarnish his image. Domestic abuse, theft of city funds, stalking, sexual abuse, sexual relations while on duty and the use of prostitutes while on duty. These are the seedy crimes happening under his command and Lumpkin's. But it has been a better practice to allow these officers to resign and possibly become an officer elsewhere than to make an example of them and be of a higher standard. This leads to mistrust in the ranks and destroys morale. Most of this department comes every day to serve and protect. To find out about these issues through word of mouth is troublesome and disgusting. These crimes have been committed on duty and off by Lieutenants, Sergeants and lower ranks. To the chief it is better to promote his own image over bringing these issues to light. But with him it is business as usual and people will continue to leave the department to find strong moral leadership.

For those politicians we sent this to, this is your chance for reflection. Ask the questions to the officers to see what is really going on before it is too late. His failures will become yours in the eyes of the public. He is not what he claims to be. We notice the change in some of the upper leaders as well. Morale is beat down on all sides outside the close supporters who hope to cash in on his power. If this continues you won't have enough qualified supervisors to lead this department or enough officers to protect it. There is a wealth of opportunities for officers willing to move to other departments. It is time to make it worth staying.

For the press I would say this, do your due diligence to serve the public in your way. Get the story behind the recent firings, resignations while under investigation and the continued exit of employees who have given this city years of dedicated service but can no longer stomach these issues.

This department is full of great men and women who want to serve and have served the citizens. Most of us want to stay and this is why we want this message out. There was hope when Mark Revenew took over as chief. He was part of the community and a trusted figure. There was a calm for that time in the department. He is a quick fix to get us back on track, but we need our chief to be a long-term leader who understand this city and aspires to make this department whole again over feeding his own career and ego. Every misstep or questionable practice from this point on will be filtered to the public. A lack of respect shown to the employees of the police department by its leaders will only affect the citizens in the end.

Respectfully,

Officers and Supervisors of the Savannah Police Department