

CITY OF VANCOUVER

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POLICE DEPARTMENT

CLIFFORD R. COOK
Chief of Police

April 10, 2009

**VIA E-MAIL AND
REGULAR MAIL**

Ryan Martin
President, Vancouver Police Officers Guild
P.O. Box 1201
Vancouver, WA 98666

Dear Officer Martin,

I have received your letter dated March 27, 2009 and have reviewed the statement of concerns described therein. I have spent considerable time reviewing the Guild's letter and gathering information, but the issues are too important and complex to address in a letter. I take these concerns seriously and therefore propose a meeting the week of April 20 for us to discuss these and other concerns.

While I take each of your considerations seriously, I have grave concerns regarding your general affront on the integrity and honesty of this department's command staff. I am compelled to state unequivocally that I believe the integrity and honesty of my assistant chiefs and command staff of this department to be beyond reproach. These attacks are untrue, unnecessary, and unproductive.

I remain convinced that in order for us to address each other's concerns in a productive and meaningful way, we must first address the single issue that is underlying every other: re-establishing and improving communication between us.

Throughout my tenure as Chief, I have consistently instituted measures to improve communication between the Guild's executive board and my office, and between my office and every sworn officer and civilian employee of this department.

Perhaps the single measure that bore the greatest potential for advancing the work of this department was the establishment of regular, monthly meetings between myself and the executive board members and VPOG president. For two years, former VPOG president Jeff Kipp and I met every month to talk about issues facing your membership and this department. We didn't always agree. We didn't always get what we wanted. But we respected one another and we were committed to working together to better serve the citizens of this community.

Together, we were able to reach agreements that have contributed to the betterment of the department, like The Neighborhood Police Officer Schedule and the Evergreen/Vancouver School Districts School Resource Officer memoranda, the formation of a PSU/IA review work group comprised of VPOG and Command Union representatives, and others.

I was saddened to learn in 2008 that as the incoming president, you declined my invitation to continue these monthly discussions. As I review your statement of complaints, it occurs to me that had we continued these monthly meetings, we would have had no less than four meetings to date to work through these and other critical issues at hand.

I remain committed to having an open dialogue with you and your executive board members to engage in the type of conversation desperately needed to move this department forward. I believe that we owe it to the citizens and the community we serve to talk to one another. It is therefore critical that we re-engage in these discussions.

With regard to the other claims of your letter, the Matrix Consulting Group is currently in the initial stages of the VPD cultural assessment and Internal Affairs process review. I am sure that as an involved member of both the Selection and Oversight Committees you are aware of the need to allow the review process to continue, unimpeded and without added controversy. I believe, and hope that you will agree, that many of the issues contained in the Guild's letter have been or will be brought to Matrix' attention during the interviews of members of your Guild. Many of the solutions we both seek will likely be revealed to us in the final recommendations of the study.

I propose a meeting between April 20 and April 24 in my office to begin to discuss these and other concerns. Please feel free to contact me directly to schedule a time for us to talk.

In Partnership,



Clifford Cook, Chief of Police
City of Vancouver