



**Rick Staly, Sheriff**  
**FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

*"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."*

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**Internal Investigation Report**

**Internal Inquiry Incident #2019-0126**

**Sworn Employee**

Corporal William Lowe

**Subject Employee:** Cpl. William Lowe

**Division:** Investigative Services Division (School Resource Deputy Supervisor)

**Date of Hire:** 09/17/2006

**Probation Status (if any):** NONE

**Date of Most Recent Promotion:** 01/31/18

**Previous Corrective Measures:** NONE CURRENT

**List of Witnesses:**

Commander P. Reynolds  
Sergeant C. Ragazzo  
Director N. Quintieri  
Deputy R. Towns  
Deputy R. Lilavois  
Deputy S. Cooper  
Deputy C. Petty  
Deputy C. Alecrim  
Deputy J. Landi  
Deputy Agata  
Deputy N. Melheiros

Date: June 19, 2019

**List of Exhibits:**

- **Exhibit 1:** Memorandum from Commander P. Reynolds to Chief M. Strobridge
- **Exhibit 2:** Interview Commander P. Reynolds
- **Exhibit 3:** Interview Director N. Quintieri
- **Exhibit 4:** Interview Sgt. C. Ragazzo
- **Exhibit 5:** Interview Dep. R. Towns
- **Exhibit 6:** Interview Dep. S. Cooper
- **Exhibit 7:** Interview Dep. R. Lilavois
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- **Exhibit 12:** Interview Dep. N. Melheiros
- **Exhibit 13:** Interview Dep. Towns (2)
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Distribution: Original to investigative file

Linked To: General Order #019

FCSO # IA-004 (08/18)

Date: June 19, 2019

**Incident and Complaint:**

On Wednesday, June 19, 2019 Commander P. Reynolds forwarded a memorandum to Chief M. Strobridge (via chain of command) reference an employee concern. Cmdr. Reynolds advised that he was informed of a potential Flagler County Sheriff's Office general orders violation regarding standards of conduct. Cmdr. Reynolds advised that the alleged violation occurred on Tuesday, June 18, 2019 during a Personal Empowerment Camp being conducted by the School Resource Deputies at Buddy Taylor Middle School.

Cmdr. Reynolds explained in the memorandum that during a conversation with P.A.L. Director N. Quintieri, she informed him that Cpl. W. Lowe may have said something inappropriate during this camp and she was concerned about it.

According to the memorandum Director Quintieri advised that she witnessed Deputy Towns and a small group of other deputies speaking about comments made by Cpl. Lowe while he was instructing defensive tactics. Cpl. Lowe is alleged to have use the phrase "White Power" while demonstrating a "hammer fist" strike. In addition Director Quintieri informed Cmdr. Reynolds that while addressing the camp students he advised them "they better behave or they would be removed because they do not pay his bills and he will not lose his job because of them."

Cmdr. Reynolds documents in his memorandum that Director Quintieri brought this to Sgt. Ragazzo's attention and that based on the information Ms. Quintieri provided he/Cmdr. Reynolds immediately contacted Deputy S. Cooper at which time, Deputy Cooper advised that he was in the room at the time and did not hear Cpl. Lowe use the phrase identified.



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Cmdr. Reynolds advised that he also spoke with Deputy R. Lilavois and he confirmed that he heard Cpl. Lowe use the identified phrase while demonstrating a "hammer fist" strike. Upon speaking with Deputy R. Towns, Cmdr. Reynolds advised that he also heard Cpl. Lowe use the phrase "White Power" while demonstrating a "hammer fist" strike. According to the memorandum Deputy Towns advised that the comment was said at a volume that could be heard by the entire class.

Cmdr. Reynolds then advised that he contacted Sgt. Ragazzo at which time, he was informed that Sgt. Ragazzo made contact with the identified parties involved however, no violations were brought to his attention.

On Wednesday, June 19, 2019, Chief Strobbridge Authorized Detective Randall Doyle of the Integrity Standards Unit to conduct an Internal Investigation. On Tuesday, July 9, 2019 at 1340 hours, Cpl. W. Lowe was provided an Employee Notice of Internal Investigation as well as a Confidentiality Acknowledgement Form.

#### **Interview: Commander P. Reynolds**

On Wednesday, July 10, 2019 at 1345 hours, Commander P. Reynolds was interviewed in the office of the Integrity Standards Unit located at 1769 E. Moody Boulevard. Cmdr. Reynolds was sworn in and was issued a confidentiality acknowledgement form which he signed and dated. It was at this time, Cmdr. Reynolds was asked to advise how he became involved in this matter and what actions he took.

Cmdr. Reynolds advised that he is currently the Commander of Youth Services, Investigation Service Division. Cmdr. Reynolds confirmed that he was in fact the author of the memorandum addressed and sent to Chief Strobbridge via the (chain of command).

Cmdr. Reynolds explained that during the month of June the Police Athletic League (PAL) and the School Resource Division (SRD) held to camps at Wadsworth Elementary and Buddy Taylor Middle School, one being personal empowerment and one being CSI. Cmdr. Reynolds identified that the incident in question occurred during the personal empowerment camp on June 18, 2019. Cmdr. Reynolds advised that Director Quintieri walked into the PAL office and informed him that there may have been an issue during the camp involving Cpl. W. Lowe. Cmdr. Reynolds stated that Director Quintieri brought two concerns to his attention. The first being comments made by Cpl. Lowe to students of the camp that if they did not behave they would be kicked out because they do not pay his bills and he was not going to lose his job over them. The second was an allegation that Cpl. Lowe was heard saying "White Power" while demonstrating a "hammer fist" strike to the students. The second incident according to Cmdr. Reynolds as told by Director Quintieri was being discussed by Deputies Lilavois, Petty, Cooper and Towns and she had overheard the conversation. Director Quintieri informed Cmdr. Reynolds that she notified Sgt. Ragazzo of the incident. Cmdr. Reynolds advised that upon receiving this information he contacted Dep. Towns, Dep. Lilavois and Dep. Cooper. Upon speaking with Dep. Towns he confirmed that during a hammer fist demonstration in defensive tactics, Cpl. Lowe did use the term "White Power." Cmdr. Reynolds advised that Dep. Lilavois also confirmed hearing Cpl. Lowe say "White Power" during the demonstration. Dep. Towns advised Cmdr. Reynolds that Dep. Cooper informed him that he did not hear the comment. Dep. Petty advised that he was in the bathroom at the time of the incident. Cmdr. Reynolds advised that he notified Chief Bovino of the incident and requested guidance on how to proceed. Cmdr. Reynolds generated a memorandum to submit via the chain of command.

Det. Doyle asked Cmdr. Reynolds, "how did Director Quintieri become aware of this incident?" Cmdr. Reynolds advised, "I believe she overheard a conversation and then informed Sgt. Ragazzo."



Cmdr. Reynolds advised that he then made contact with Sgt. Ragazzo and inquired if he had any details of the incident. Cmdr. Reynolds advised that Sgt. Ragazzo informed him that upon speaking to the SRO's they did not mention this incident at all. Cmdr. Reynolds advised that he inquired about specifics and asked Sgt. Ragazzo if he asked the individuals present if they specifically heard Cpl. Lowe say "White Power?" Cmdr. Reynolds surmised that Sgt. Ragazzo did not inquire about the direct comment. Det. Doyle asked, "Is it safe to say that Sgt. Ragazzo's inquiry was vague and not what you were expecting?" Cmdr. Reynolds answered "yes, it was." Det. Doyle asked, "Could Sgt. Ragazzo have misunderstood what he/Cmdr. Reynolds was expecting from him?" Cmdr. Reynolds answered, "It could have been and it could have been the time constraint and the time of day however, I had an inquiry and answers within minutes of receiving knowledge of the incident." Det. Doyle asked, "Did any of the named deputies bring this matter directly to their supervisor's attention or directly to him?" Cmdr. Reynolds advised that they did not and they did not bring the matter to Director Quintieri's attention. Cmdr. Reynold's was asked to give some details of his conversation with each of the deputies involved. Cmdr. Reynold's advised that Dep. Towns informed him that he heard Cpl. Lowe say "White Power" during a "hammer fist" demonstration. Cmdr. Reynold's advised that Dep. Town's informed him this occurred in the presence of students and that when he heard it he was shocked. Cmdr. Reynold's was asked he knew the dynamics of the incident and what Cpl. Lowe meant when using the phrase. Cmdr. Reynold's advised that he could not comment on the dynamics because he simply had no knowledge of them. Cmdr. Reynold's advised that none of the students being given instruction at the time brought this to any of the instructors attention nor, have there been any inquires or complaints from any of the students' parents. Cmdr. Lowe advised that based on the sensitivity of this matter, Chief Bovino and Cmdr. Reynold's determined that it would be best to remove Cpl. Lowe from the program pending the investigation. Cpl. Lowe was temporarily reassigned to Community Policing patrol duties.

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Cmdr. Reynold's advised that other than notifying Cpl. Lowe of his reassignment, Cmdr. Reynold's has not had any further communication with Cpl. Lowe. Cmdr. Reynold's was asked how long Cpl. Lowe has worked under his command. Cmdr. Reynolds advised "since January 3, of 2018 when he, Cmdr. Reynold's was promoted and put in charge of the youth services section. Cmdr. Reynold's was then asked about Cpl. Lowe's performance under his command to date. Cmdr. Reynold's advised, "Its ok, I have had to bring a couple of situations where, I have had to bring them to the Sgt.'s attention regarding tone, language and actions." Cmdr. Reynolds advised that the items he is referring to were addressed with Sgt. Ragazzo. Cmdr. Reynold's noted that Cpl. Lowe has yet to attend any supervisor training to date and referenced Line Supervision and Middle Management courses.

**Interview concluded at 1410 hours.**

**Interview: Director N. Quintieri**

On Thursday, July 11, 2019 at 1355 hours, Police Athletic League (PAL), Director N. Quintieri was interviewed in the office of the Integrity Standards Unit located at 1769 E. Moody Boulevard. Director Quintieri was sworn in and was issued a confidentiality acknowledgement form which she signed and dated. It was at this time, Director Quintieri was asked to advise how she became involved in this matter and what actions she took.

Dir. Quintieri advised that she was attending a summer camp hosted by Flagler County Sheriff's Office PAL and the School Resource Deputy Unit. Dir. Quintieri advised that this was her first such event as the PAL Director and she attended each day for the majority of the time the camp was being conducted. Ms. Quintieri explained that each day there were four to six school resource deputies in service and conducting the camp.



Dir. Quintieri stated that her daughter was also attending the camp and she made it a practice to remove herself from the room when defensive tactics exercises were being conducted so, she did not interfere with her or make her uncomfortable.

Dir. Quintieri advised that on this day she was in the classroom straightening things up for the students to return. It was at this time, Dir. Quintieri observed what she described as tension among a couple of the deputies. Dep. Quintieri described hearing some "verbal rumbling" between a few of them and making statements such as "I can't believe he just said that, I can't believe that just happened." Dir. Quintieri identified Deputies Lilavois and Towns as the deputies she heard making the noted statements. Dir. Quintieri then stated, "As the day went on, I heard that Cpl. Lowe made a statement to the effect of "White Power" during the defensive tactics portion of the camp." Det. Doyle asked, "Who did you hear that from?" Dir. Quintieri, "I wanna say I overheard that in conversation between deputies Lilivois and Towns." Dir. Quintieri then advised that at the time of dismissal she returned downstairs and during that time she asked Dep. Landi if he heard the comment alleged to have been made by Cpl. Lowe. Dir. Quintieri advised that Dep. Landi informed her that he had not but instructed her to address the allegation with the supervisor.

Dir. Quintieri advised that she took some time to contemplate the matter and returned to her office. It was at this point Cmdr. Reynold's asked how the day at camp was. Dir. Quintieri then stopped and advised she needed to back up. Dir. Quintieri then advised that when she went to leave camp she observed Sgt. Ragazzo in the parking lot. Dir. Quintieri then informed him of the allegation and was clear with him that she was not there and described the matter as "some kind of riff between your school resource deputies and Cpl. Lowe and that he may have made an inappropriate comment at the camp."

Sgt. Ragazzo responded by advising that he would take care of IT. Dir. Quintieri then discussed her conversation with Cmdr. Reynold's upon returning to her office. Dir. Quintieri advised that she explained to Cmdr. Reynold's that she did not know exactly what happened but at some point during the camp Cpl. Lowe made the statement "White Power" and a couple of the deputies appeared disturbed by the comment. According to Dir. Quintieri, Cmdr. Reynold's advised that he would take care of it and asked her if there was anything else that occurred. Dir. Quintieri informed Cmdr. Reynold's that during the introduction of the students at the beginning of the week, Cpl. Lowe was very rough with the kids and told them. She explained that it was the first day and they were very excited and active at which time, Cpl. Lowe informed them "That if they weren't gonna do what he asked them to do that they were going to be kicked out of the camp that they don't pay his bills and he's not going to lose his job over them. Dir. Quintieri advised that she found the comments to be a very odd introduction. Dir. Quintieri was asked if she actually heard Cpl. Lowe make the statement she provided and she confirmed that she did. Again, Cmdr. Reynold's advised that he would address both matters.

Dir. Quintieri was asked if she ever directly asked Deputies Lilavois and Town's about the comment made by Cpl. Lowe. Dir. Quintieri advised that she did not and stated, "It's a very weird position for me because technically, I'm in a director's position but as just a deputy" Dir. Quintieri advised that she is expected to go to supervisor before doing anything. Det. Doyle then explained that he was not questioning her in the sense what she did or didn't do but questioning if when she overheard the conversation, "You didn't go to them and say what did you just say so you knew exactly what they were talking about?" Dir. Quintieri stated, "I try not to get involved in conversations like that, I could just tell that their demeanors were very different.



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Dir. Quintieri was asked if she has had any further conversation about this incident with Cmdr. Reynold's or anyone else up to this date. Dir. Quintieri advised that she had not. Dir. Quintieri was asked how many and how old the children were that attended the camp. Dir. Quintieri advised that she did not but could provide exact ages and numbers should it become necessary.

Dir. Quintieri advised that additional deputies potentially aware of the incident are Deputies Alecrim, Petty and Cooper. Dir. Quintieri deferred to Sgt. Ragazzo for any additional deputies that may or may not have been present on the date in question.

**Interview was concluded at 1409 hours.**

**Interview: Dep. S. Cooper**

On Friday, July 12, 2019 at 1335 hours, Dep. S. Cooper was interviewed in the office of the Integrity Standards Unit located at 1769 E. Moody Boulevard. Dep. Cooper was sworn in and was issued a confidentiality acknowledgement form which he signed and dated. It was at this time, Dep. Cooper was asked to advise how he became involved in this matter and what actions he took.

Dep. Cooper advised that he and several other School Resource Deputies (SRO) were providing instruction in a Self-Empowerment Camp at Buddy Taylor Middle School. Dep. Cooper advised that he was sitting down a short distance away from the kids along with Dep. Towns. Dep. Cooper advised that it was at that time, "I heard something but you know how you kinda tune it out however, Robin (Dep. Towns) said "did you hear that?" I was like I heard it but didn't think anything of it." According to Dep. Cooper, Dep. Towns said he just yelled "White Power." Dep. Cooper advised that he informed Dep. Towns, "I heard that but I don't know who it came from."

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Dep. Cooper then asked Dep. Towns who it came from. Dep. Towns informed him that it came from Cpl. Lowe. Dep. Cooper advised that the discussion ended at that time. Dep. Cooper advised that he was not looking in the direction of Cpl. Lowe but Dep. Towns was. While explaining his location in the room Dep. Cooper advised that he did in fact hear the words "White Power" but did not know who said them until Dep. Towns informed him.

Dep. Cooper was asked if he heard anything else said by Cpl. Lowe during the course of the day was inappropriate. Dep. Cooper advised that he did not. Dep. Cooper was asked what his opinion is of Cpl. Lowe. Dep. Cooper responded by stating, "My impression is, I like Cpl. Lowe, he's a fun guy, he jokes around a lot and I have no bad feelings towards him." Dep. Cooper advised that he has known Cpl. Lowe approximately eleven years at which time, Dep. Cooper advised that he was Cpl. Lowe's Field Training Officer (FTO) when he first came to work with FCSO. Det. Doyle asked, "Do you know of Cpl. Lowe to be racist?" Dep. Cooper, "No." Det. Doyle, "Do you think he's racist?" Dep. Cooper, "No." Det. Doyle, "If Cpl. Lowe did make the statement what do you think the reason for him using it would be?" Dep. Cooper, "Joking, maybe not thinking at the moment." Det. Doyle, "Have you ever heard him say something in the past that was racist or inappropriate?" Dep. Cooper, "No, nothing that has ever offended me, no." Dep. Cooper was asked if the comment made by Cpl. Lowe would have prompted him to make a formal complaint to which he replied, "no."

Dep. Cooper was asked if he was present when Cpl. Lowe addressed the students at the beginning of the camp and make the statement regarding the students behaving and that if they didn't they would be kicked out of the camp because they don't pay his bills. Dep. Cooper advised that he was and did hear him address the students in that manner. Dep. Cooper was asked what he thought of the statement.



Dep. Cooper, "My honest opinion, there is a certain way you talk to kids, I just think his tone, his demeanor was inappropriate for the kids."

**Interview was concluded at 1348 hours.**

**Interview: Dep. R. Lilavois**

On Wednesday, July 17, 2019 at 1511 hours, Dep. Lilavois was interviewed in the office of the Integrity Standards Unit located at 1769 E. Moody Boulevard. Dep. Lilavois was sworn in and was issued a confidentiality acknowledgement form which he signed and dated. It was at this time, Dep. Lilavois was asked to advise how he became involved in this matter and what actions he took.

Dep. Lilavois advised that he was involved in the summertime Empowerment Camp provided by PAL and SRO Deputies. Dep. Lilavois advised that also takes photographs of the instruction for PAL publications and media. Dep. Lilavois advised that it was at this time, Cpl. Lowe was providing instruction on how to make a fist and strike without hurting themselves. Dep. Lilavois advised that during this time one of the students was asked to stand up and show the others his fist. Dep. Lilavois advised he then heard Cpl. Lowe make the statement "White Power." Dep. Lilavois advised that he was both hurt and shocked by the comment. Dep. Lilavois advised that Dep. Towns was also present and looked at him when the comment was made and had a surprised look on his face as well. Det. Doyle, "What do you think Cpl. Lowe's intent was upon making the statement?" Dep. Lilavois, "I don't think that he truly meant that but was more like making a joke." Dep. Lilavois advised that Cpl. Lowe is that type of person always joking and saying inappropriate and immature things. Dep. Lilavois advised that Cpl. Lowe even acknowledges that he acts in this manner from time to time. Dep. Lilavois was asked if he believed Cpl. Lowe to be racist.

Dep. Lilavois advised that he did not. Dep. Lilavois advised that he believed this to be a onetime thing and just a poor choice of words and not a true reflection of who Cpl. Lowe is.

Dep. Lilavois identified Dep. Cooper, Towns and Champion were present at the time of the incident. Dep. Lilavois was asked if this comment was something that would have prompted him to make a formal complaint. Dep. Lilavois advised that he did confirm with Dep. Towns that he also heard the comment but he would not have filed a complaint because he is not that type of person. Dep. Lilavois advised that he would not confront a supervisor about something of this nature however, he indicated he was uncomfortable and that he felt bad for all of the minority deputies that may have heard it.

Dep. Lilavois was then asked if he was present at the onset of the class instruction and if he heard Cpl. Lowe advise the students that they would be expelled from the class if they didn't behave and that they did not pay his bills. Dep. Lilavois confirmed that he was present and that he did hear the statement described. Dep. Lilavois advised that he believed this statement to be immature and said at the wrong place and wrong time. Dep. Lilavois advised that it's his belief that Cpl. Lowe should be setting a better example with the kids and those that he works with.

**The interview was concluded at 1531 hours.**

**Interview: Dep. R. Towns**

On Monday, July 22, 2019 at 1337 hours, Dep. Towns was interviewed in the office of the Integrity Standards Unit located at 1769 E. Moody Boulevard. Dep. Towns was sworn in and was issued a confidentiality acknowledgement form which he signed and dated.



It was at this time, Dep. Towns was asked to advise how he became involved in this matter and what actions he took.

Dep. Towns advised that he and other members of the SRD were assisting in a summer camp for students at Buddy Taylor Middle School and involved defensive tactics instruction. Dep. Towns explained that Cpl. Lowe was providing the instruction and asked the students if they recalled how to make a proper fist from previous instruction. This involved placing their thumb in the proper position to avoid injury. Cpl. Lowe was said to have asked everyone to show him their fist. Dep. Towns advised that Cpl. Lowe identified one of the students as a good example and asked him to stand up. Cpl. Lowe then advised the student to hold his hand up higher in the air so everyone could see at which time, according to Dep. Towns made the statement "White Power." At this point Dep. Towns looked to Dep. Cooper who was sitting just a few feet away and asked, "did he just say white power?" According to Dep. Towns, Dep. Cooper replied, "oh you heard it too, I wasn't quite sure." Dep. Towns advised that Dep. Lilavois was approximately twenty five feet away on the other side of Dep. Cooper. Dep. Towns advised that Dep. Lilavois walked over to himself and Dep. Cooper and asked if they just heard Cpl. Lowe say "White Power." Dep. Towns took this statement as validation to what he had just heard. Dep. Towns advised that the three just laughed the comment off considering the comment "kinda raw." Dep. Towns then stated, "are you gonna say things like that in front of kids, it's inappropriate and you should be better aware of your surroundings and your audience." Dep. Towns stated, "It didn't really bother me however, it was a shock that it would come out in their environment." Det. Doyle asked, "Tell me why it didn't bother you?" Dep. Towns, I know Cpl. Lowe more than just as a cop and a supervisor, I know him more on a spiritual base and I have talked to him about church and religious things. I have confided in him when frustrated on things and needed to vent. Cpl. Lowe is someone I look to talk to and offer me guidance.

In talking to Cpl. Lowe about God's plan and our plan and place in Law Enforcement, I have never had the vibe or feeling that he Cpl. Lowe is racist or prejudice in any way. I believe Cpl. Lowe is a really good guy with strong church ethics."

Dep. Towns was asked if what he heard was absolutely "White Power?" Dep. Towns advised that "White Power" is what he heard although he questioned it thus, the reason for asking Dep. Cooper and Lilavois for confirmation.

Dep. Towns also advised that he was in fact unsure at first until confirming with Dep. Cooper and Lilavois. Dep. Towns was asked approximately how far away from Cpl. Lowe was he at the time of the comment. Dep. Towns believes he was approximately three car lengths away or 40-45 feet. When asked what he, Dep. Towns believes Cpl. Lowe used the phrase "White Power" for, Dep. Towns responded that he believed it to be a poor choice of words and timing. Dep. Towns advised that he has been raised in several different cultures and parts of the world due to his father's military background and he feels he has a good understanding of what racism is. Dep. Towns being an African American advised he has never observed Cpl. Lowe to either act or speak in a racially motivated manner and in no way believes Cpl. Lowe to be racist. Dep. Towns stated, "I do not believe there was any malice behind the comment at all."

Dep. Towns was asked to identify any additional deputies or civilians that may have been present during the incident. Dep. Towns identified the previously named deputies and added Dep. N. Champion and described him to be holding the hitting bag and standing directly in front of Cpl. Lowe. Dep. Towns was asked if he has had any previous conversation with Dep. Champion regarding this matter.



Dep. Towns confirmed that he had and advised that Dep. Champion informed him that he did not hear the statement identified. Dep. Towns also advised that Dep. Landi was also with them on the date in question but is believed to have been out of the room at the time.

Dep. Towns was asked if any of the students came to any of the deputies with concerns or comments about what Cpl. Lowe is alleged to have said. Dep. Towns advised that they have not. Dep. Towns was asked if he specifically informed anyone of the incident. Dep. Towns advised that he had not while stating, "I wanted to actually pull Cpl. Lowe aside and ask him about the comment however, the opportunity never presented itself." Dep. Towns was asked if has since spoken to Cpl. Lowe about the incident and he advised he has not and he is sorry he didn't get to him first because, he believes this could have been resolved with a conversation between the parties involved. When asked if he ever spoke to Sgt. Ragazzo about the incident, Dep. Towns confirmed that he had. Dep. Towns confirmed that he informed Sgt. Ragazzo of the statement upon request.

Dep. Towns was asked if he was present when Cpl. Lowe addressed the students at the onset of class and warned them to behave or be kicked out. Dep. Towns advised that he was not and was not aware of the second allegation at all.

**Interview concluded at 1401 hours.**

**Interview: Dep. N. Champion**

On Wednesday, July 24, 2019 at 1038 hours, Dep. Champion was interviewed in the office of the Integrity Standards Unit located at 1769 E. Moody Boulevard. Dep. Champion was sworn in and was issued a confidentiality acknowledgement form which he signed and dated. Dep. Champion was represented by Mr. Les Cantrell of the International Brotherhood of Police Officers. It was at this time, Dep. Champion was asked to advise how he became involved in this matter and what actions he took.

Dep. Champion advised that he and Dep. Landi were sitting together at the checkout table waiting for parents to arrive and pick up their children. It was at this point Dir. Quintieri approached them and asked if this statement that was said today during "D. T." was going to come back and bite her. Dep. Champion advised that he and Dep. Landi advised her that they had no idea what she was referring to. According to Dep. Champion, Dir. Quintieri referred to Cpl. Lowe allegedly stating "White Power" during his demonstration and instruction of the class. Dep. Champion advised that he advised her that he did not hear the statement at which time, Dep. Landi informed Dir. Quintieri that Sgt. Ragazzo was in the parking lot and she should probably see him.

Dep. Champion advised that he later received a phone call from Sgt. Ragazzo and was asked about the incident. Dep. Champion informed Sgt. Ragazzo at that time that he/Dep. Champion was in the room at the time but that he did not hear the statement. Dep. Champion then went on to explain that he was standing next to Cpl. Lowe however, while explaining the techniques, Cpl. Lowe brought one of the students up and he/Dep. Champion was focused on the student and did not hear what was said.

Dep. Champion explained that his duties for the day were to assist with camp counsel and assisting with instruction of defensive tactics while holding the striking bags. Dep. Champion emphasized that his focus was on the students and although he was three to five feet away at the time, he/Dep. Champion did not hear what Cpl. Lowe said and is certain he did not hear the words "White Power."

Dep. Champion was asked how long he has worked for Cpl. Lowe and if he has ever heard Cpl. Lowe say or do anything that could be characterized as racial or racially motivated. Dep. Champion advised approximately one year and that he has not. Dep. Champion also advised that he truly enjoys working for and with Cpl. Lowe and in fact believes Cpl. Lowe to be honest and supportive of each deputy and the unit as a whole.



Dep. Champion was asked if he was present at the beginning of the class when Cpl. Lowe addressed the students and their behavior. Dep. Champion advised that he did not hear Cpl. Lowe address the students due to being tasked with setting up the room for the day.

Dep. Champion was asked to provide more detail about how he became aware of the alleged statement being made by Cpl. Lowe. Dep. Champion advised that at the end of the day there is a table set up for the students to be checked out by their parents and this requires a signature. Dep. Champion advised that he and Dep. Landi were sitting at the table when Dir. Quintieri made contact with them and asked them if they had heard the alleged statement made by Cpl. Lowe during the camp instruction. Dep. Champion advised her that he had not as did Dep. Landi.

Dep. Champion was asked if he can recall other deputies discussing this issue prior to it becoming a formal investigation. Dep. Champion advised that everyone was talking about it and there was nothing but confusion due to some individuals advising they heard a comment and others saying they did not. Dep. Champion advised it is his opinion that no one truly knows what happened or what was said. Deputy Champion was asked if he had anything else to add or information that he believed needs to be addressed or documented in this case. Dep. Champion advised that he did not.

**Interview was concluded at 1053 hours.**

**Interview: Dep. J. Landi**

On Thursday, July 25, 2019 at 1000 hours, Dep. Landi was interviewed in the office of the Integrity Standards Unit located at 1769 E. Moody Boulevard. Dep. Landi was sworn in and was issued a confidentiality acknowledgement form which he signed and dated. It was at this time, Dep. Landi was asked to advise how he became involved in this matter and what actions he took.

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Dep. Landi advised that on the date in question he and other SRO deputies were at Buddy Taylor Middle School conducting a personal empowerment camp for students. Dep. Landi explained that his wife was having some medical issues on this date and he was waiting for her to call with news. It was at the time of this alleged incident that he received the phone call and had stepped out of the room. Dep. Landi advised that he was in the hall way and on the phone for approximately twenty minutes. Dep. Landi advised that he returned to class and at approximately 3PM the class ended and he and Dep. Champion were signing students out when Dir. Quintieri approached them. Dep. Landi advised, "her exact words were, Am I gonna catch any shit for the comment that was made by Billy?" Dep. Landi then stated, "My exact words were what the fuck are you talking about?" Dir. Quintieri then advised Dep. Landi that Cpl. Lowe had made a comment while putting his fist up and said he stated "White Power." Dep. Landi advised that he informed Dir. Quintieri that he had no idea what she was referring to and asked when it was alleged to have occurred. Dir. Quintieri informed Dep. Landi that it was while they were demonstrating strikes. Dep. Landi advised that he informed Dir. Quintieri that he was on the phone with his wife so he did not hear anything like what she had described. Dep. Landi advised that he pointed towards the outside and informed Dir. Quintieri that Sgt. Ragazzo was in the parking lot completing time sheets. Dep. Landi encouraged Dir. Quintieri to notify him of these allegations as soon as possible. Dep. Landi advised that Dir. Quintieri did not contact Sgt. Ragazzo at that time.

Dep. Landi was then asked if he was present when Cpl. Lowe addressed the students and their behavior at the beginning of the class. Dep. Landi advised that he was and he did hear Cpl. Lowe address the students about behavior and horseplay however, he/Dep. Landi did not hear Cpl. Lowe refer to his job or the students paying his bills.

Dep. Landi advised that he has worked with Cpl. Lowe for several years and he has never heard Cpl. Lowe either say or act in any way that would indicate he was racist or was racially motivated. Dep. Landi was asked if he believed Cpl. Lowe to be either racist or racially prejudice in any way to which he responded, "absolutely not."

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Dep. Landi advised that he has known Cpl. Lowe since he was a juvenile and he believes Cpl. Lowe to be a respectful and conscientious Deputy with nothing but good intentions towards everyone.

**Interview was concluded at 1013 hours.**

**Interview: Dep. Alecrim**

On Wednesday, July 31, 2019 at 0907 hours, Dep. Alecrim was interviewed in the office of the Integrity Standards Unit located at 1769 E. Moody Boulevard. Dep. Alecrim was sworn in and was issued a confidentiality acknowledgement form which he signed and dated. It was at this time, Dep. Alecrim was asked to advise how he became involved in this matter and what actions he took.

Dep. Alecrim advised that on the date in question he was at Buddy Taylor Middle School assisting other SRO's with the personal empowerment camp being provided by PAL. Dep. Alecrim advised that one of his duties was to hold the one of the striking bags for the students to hit. It was at this time that the students were performing strikes, kicks and punches. Cpl. Lowe was demonstrating how to make a proper fist and demonstrating a hammer fist. Cpl. Lowe asked one of the students to stand up and show everyone his fist and demonstrate the technique. While demonstrating, Cpl. Lowe according to Dep. Alecrim stated, "I've got the power" and he believes, Cpl. Lowe was quoting the 80's TV cartoon "He-Man." Dep. Alecrim advised that he was less than six feet away from Cpl. Lowe at the time. Dep. Alecrim advised that he called Cpl. Lowe a "Dork" and laughed it off. Dep. Alecrim advised this was all taking place in the center of what he described as a 20 foot circle. Dep. Alecrim advised that there was a lot of activity taking place as well as noise due to the instruction and striking of the bags.

Dep. Alecrim advised that he has worked with and for Cpl. Lowe for several years. Dep. Alecrim advised that he has never heard Cpl. Lowe ever say anything racially motivated or to carry racial undertones. Dep. Alecrim was asked if he believed Cpl. Lowe to be racist or racially prejudice in any way. Dep. Alecrim advised that he does not. Dep. Alecrim advised that he believed Cpl. Lowe to be professional and trustworthy and believes Cpl. Lowe to be a good person and a good supervisor.

Dep. Alecrim was asked if he was present when Cpl. Lowe addressed the students at the beginning of the day and if he heard Cpl. Lowe say anything about them not paying his bills and not losing his job. Dep. Alecrim advised that he did not hear Cpl. Lowe use those terms however, he did hear Cpl. Lowe make similar comments. Dep. Alecrim advised that Cpl. Lowe did have to address the students due to their behavior and was stern but he never heard anything about his job or paying his bills. Dep. Alecrim described Cpl. Lowe as being rough around the edges and makes comments at the wrong time on occasion. Dep. Alecrim was clear that Cpl. Lowe does not have malicious intent.

**Interview was concluded at 0922 hours.**

**Interview: Dep. C. Petty**

On Wednesday, July 31, 2019 at 1333 hours, Dep. Petty was interviewed in the office of the Integrity Standards Unit located at 1769 E. Moody Boulevard. Dep. Petty was sworn in and was issued a confidentiality acknowledgement form which he signed and dated. It was at this time, Dep. Petty was asked to advise how he became involved in this matter and what actions he took.



Dep. Petty advised that he was assigned to Buddy Taylor Middle School and assisting other SRO's in conducting a personal empowerment camp for PAL. Dep. Petty advised they were conducting defensive tactics and strikes when he excused himself to utilize the rest room. Upon returning to the wrestling room he met with Dep. Lilavois and was informed that Cpl. Lowe used the term "White Power." Dep. Petty was asked if he had any independent knowledge of the comment or if he was present during the alleged comment. Dep. Petty, "I was not." Dep. Petty advised that he was told what was alleged to have been said and nothing more.

Det. Doyle then asked if he/Dep. Petty was present in at the onset of the class when Cpl. Lowe addressed the students and is alleged to have referred to expelling students from the class if they didn't behave "because they did not pay his pills and he was not going to lose his job over their behavior." Dep. Petty advised that he was present but in the rear of the class room and at which time, the students were being rowdy and misbehaving. Dep. Petty advised he does not remember the exact words used but did hear Cpl. Lowe say something in regards to not paying his bills.

Dep. Petty advised that he has worked with and for Cpl. Lowe for approximately one year and when asked if he has ever heard Cpl. Lowe use racially motivated or prejudicial comments during that time, Dep. Petty advised yes he has. When asked for specific phrases or comments Dep. Petty stated, "Nothing anyone has ever taken offense too and nothing he has ever felt he need to address with Cpl. Lowe." Dep. Petty advised that Cpl. Lowe likes to joke and sometimes goes a little too far. Dep. Petty advised that he does not believe Cpl. Lowe is racist or racially prejudice in any way.

**Interview concluded at 1342 hours.**

**Interview: Sgt. C. Ragazzo**

On Wednesday, July 31, 2019 at 1346 hours, Sgt. C. Ragazzo was interviewed in the office of the Integrity Standards Unit located at 1769 E. Moody Boulevard. Sgt. Ragazzo was sworn in and was issued a confidentiality acknowledgement form which he signed and dated. It was at this time, Sgt. Ragazzo was asked to advise how he became involved in this matter and what actions he took.

Sgt. C. Ragazzo advised that on the date in question he was at Buddy Taylor Middle School reviewing time cards with Cpl. Lowe when, Cpl. Lowe advised him of an incident that he believed Sgt. Ragazzo needed to be aware of. Cpl. Lowe informed him that due to weather a K-9 demonstration was moved indoors and due to one of the students being allergic to the dog they utilized a room other than the one being used for the personal empowerment camp. Cpl. Lowe advised that Dir. Quintieri was not happy with his/Cpl. Lowe's decision so he believed that he needed to be aware.

At approximately 1530 hours, Sgt. Ragazzo was contacted by Dir. Quintieri at which time, Dir. Quintieri informed him of the incident involving the K-9 demonstration and indicated that Cpl. Lowe was disrespectful towards her. Sgt. Ragazzo advised that he listened closely to Dir. Quintieri's concerns and upon conclusion informed her that he would address these concerns with Cpl. Lowe.

Dir. Quintieri then advised Sgt. Ragazzo there is something else. Dir. Quintieri then stated, "White Power." Sgt. Ragazzo asked what she meant, Dir. Quintieri advised that Cpl. Lowe used that statement during the empowerment camp today. Sgt. Ragazzo asked Dir. Quintieri to elaborate however, Dir. Quintieri advised she did not hear it but Cpl. Lowe said today during instruction with the kids.



Sgt. Ragazzo advised that he stated, "why would he say "White Power" in a camp? That doesn't make sense." Dir. Quintieri advised that she did not know but that's what she was told was said.

Sgt. Ragazzo advised that he had already scheduled a meeting for 1630 hours to review some items with his deputies and thought he would address it at that time. Sgt. Ragazzo advised that when the time came he was not sure how to address the matter or go about breaching the topic because he has never had a similar situation to recall. Sgt. Ragazzo advised that he carried on the meeting as normal and nothing was said or brought to his attention about the matter. Upon closing the meeting Sgt. Ragazzo advised that while everyone was getting ready to leave he made a blanket statement to everyone asking if everything was good hoping that would open the door for a discussion however, he received the opposite. Several advised that everything was good at which time, Sgt. Ragazzo advised he just wanted to be sure everyone was on the same track since this was only their second year doing these camps. Sgt. Ragazzo stated that these camps, contacts and rapport building were important and wanted to be sure they were all shedding a positive light on the program. Sgt. Ragazzo advised that he even asked if there had been anything said that he needed to be made aware of. Sgt. Ragazzo advised that the deputies all advised that everything was good. Sgt. Ragazzo advised that he was concerned so he started making individual phone calls. During this time, Cmdr. Reynold's called him and asked him what was going on with the camp making it obvious that he was aware of the alleged comment being made. Sgt. Ragazzo advised that he had just found out about this alleged comment but informed him he was concerned why Dir. Quintieri didn't say something about this earlier in the day but waited until 1530 hours to bring it to his attention. Cmdr. Reynold's then asked where he was as far as obtaining information and details. Sgt. Ragazzo advised him that he has asked several of the deputies but is being told everything is fine and no one is discussing the alleged incident. Sgt. Ragazzo then identified speaking with Deputies Champion and Landi however, could not get through to Deputies, Cooper, Towns and Lilavois. It was at this time, Cmdr. Reynolds informed Sgt. Ragazzo that he had already been in touch with those deputies.

Sgt. Ragazzo advised that he informed Cmdr. Reynolds that he was surprised that he was already aware since, he had just recently been advised himself. Cmdr. Reynolds then informed Sgt. Ragazzo that he and Chief Bovino had already received the statements that they needed and they would take care of it.

Sgt. Ragazzo was asked if he was ever asked to look into this allegation by Cmdr. Reynold's. Sgt. Ragazzo advised that he was not. Sgt. Ragazzo was then explaining his attempts to contact the deputies and recalled his conversation with Dep. Lilavois. Sgt. Ragazzo advised that Dep. Lilavois informed him that he did hear Cpl. Lowe say something but he wasn't certain what it was. Dep. Lilavois informed him/Sgt. Ragazzo that there was some discussion and scuttle about what was actually said. Sgt. Ragazzo advised that Dep. Lilavois informed him that he did not hear the exact wording. Sgt. Ragazzo continued to explain to Cmdr. Reynolds that this was not consistent with what he was being told. Sgt. Ragazzo advised that he informed Cmdr. Reynolds that him/Cmdr. Reynolds saying he had what he needed and that he and the Chief were going to handle it was confusing to him.

Sgt. Ragazzo advised that nothing was said about the incident for a day or two and then while at one of the springs for camp and he was approached by Dep. Cooper. Dep. Cooper then asked what was going on with this incident. Sgt. Ragazzo informed Dep. Cooper that he did not know anything other than the allegations and all I know is that know seems to be sure what was said if anything was said at all. Sgt. Ragazzo advised that he then advised Dep. Cooper that he has known Cpl. Lowe for a long time and believes that if he had said anything even remotely to what is being alleged, he would have come to him and given him heads up. Sgt. Ragazzo advised that Dep. Cooper then stated that this whole thing is messed up and I don't want to see this.



Sgt. Ragazzo advised that he then asked Dep. Cooper if he heard Cpl. Lowe make the alleged statement. Per Sgt. Ragazzo, Dep. Cooper advised that he did not hear those words but there was some talk about it. Sgt. Ragazzo advised it was at this time that he said the matter was now under investigation and they had to just let it go and see what happens.

Sgt. Ragazzo advised that later that same day he was approached by Dep. Towns and asked to speak with him. Dep. Towns then asked as well what was going on with this deal. Sgt. Ragazzo advised that he stated to Dep. Towns that he was confused because he thought that if there was a problem the he/Dep. Towns would have brought it to his attention. According to Sgt. Ragazzo, Dep. Towns advised that was exactly his problem stating that at no time did he make a complaint or bring the incident to anyone's attention. According Sgt. Ragazzo, Dep. Towns advised that if he had a complaint he would have come to Sgt. Ragazzo with it. Sgt. Ragazzo advised Dep. Towns that it has now been brought up the chain of command and it will require an investigation. Dep. Towns informed Sgt. Ragazzo that this is not what he wanted to see happen and according to Sgt. Ragazzo, Dep. Towns was visibly upset about the circumstances. Sgt. Ragazzo then informed Dep. Towns that he/Sgt. Ragazzo was no longer comfortable discussing the matter because he was aware it had been forwarded up the chain of command.

Sgt. Ragazzo was asked if he had any further discussion with Cmdr. Reynold's regarding this matter. Sgt. Ragazzo advised that they briefly discussed that some of the deputies made statements saying the statement was made and others advised that it had not. Sgt. Ragazzo advised that it was at this time, Cmdr. Reynold's informed him that it was his belief that Sgt. Ragazzo and Cpl. Lowe were too friendly with each other and that the deputies may not have been comfortable discussing this matter with him.

This was clarified to be Cmdr. Reynold's opinion and not that he was informed this by any of the deputies involved. It was at this time, Sgt. Ragazzo was provided confirmation that all of the deputies interviewed were clear that there was never an intention to bring this to anyone's attention and that it had nothing to do with the relationship between Sgt. Ragazzo and Cpl. Lowe.

Sgt. Ragazzo advised at this time that he had been contacted again by Dep. Towns a few days later at which time, Dep. Towns informed him that it was his intention to contact Cpl. Lowe and ask him what he said at the time in question leaving doubt that he was not sure what Cpl. Lowe did in fact say. Dep. Towns then advised that the opportunity was surpassed when, Cmdr. Reynold's called him and questioned him over the phone about the incident.

Sgt. Ragazzo was asked if Dir. Quintieri informed him how she became aware of this incident. Sgt. Ragazzo advised that she informed him that she heard it but he could not advise or remember how Dir. Quintieri actually became aware of the alleged comment.

Sgt. Ragazzo was asked if he was aware of Cpl. Lowe addressing the students in the morning about their behavior and his comments made regarding his job and them paying his bills. Sgt. Ragazzo advised that he was not present when the statement was made and confirmed that Dir. Quintieri nor anyone else ever brought it to his attention. Sgt. Ragazzo was asked if he has ever heard Cpl. Lowe say or do anything that he would consider to be racially motivated or prejudicial in any way during the course of his duties. Sgt. Ragazzo advised that he has not and he does not believe Cpl. Lowe to be racist or racially prejudice in any way. Sgt. Ragazzo advised that Cpl. Lowe is much harder on himself in every way than could ever be to anyone else. Sgt. Ragazzo confirmed that Cpl. Lowe can be a little rough around the edges at times and has somewhat of a limited oral filter but never has malicious intent.



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Sgt. Ragazzo concluded his interview by stating that he knows Cpl. Lowe both personally and professionally and feels certain that had Cpl. Lowe made the alleged comment or done anything that would represent the SRO unit or the Sheriff's Office as a hole in a negative light, he/Cpl. Lowe would have come to Sgt. Ragazzo immediately.

**Interview concluded at 1449 hours.**

**Interview Dep. D. Agata**

On Wednesday, July 31, 2019 at 1503 hours, Dep. Agata was interviewed in the office of the Integrity Standards Unit located at 1769 E. Moody Boulevard. Dep. Agata was sworn in and was issued a confidentiality acknowledgement form which he signed and dated. It was at this time, Dep. Agata was asked to advise how he became involved in this matter and what actions he took.

Dep. Agata advised that on the date in question he was assigned to Buddy Taylor Middle School to assist in the instruction of a personal empowerment camp for the students. Dep. Agata advised that he was unaware of the incident and allegation until approximately two days after it was to have occurred. Dep. Agata advised that he was made aware of an allegation made against Cpl. Lowe involving something that was said during the instruction of the camp. It was at this time the allegation was identified to have been the phrase "White Power" and used during the course of the instruction by Cpl. Lowe.

Dep. Agata advised that he has been in Law Enforcement since 1989 and for the majority of his career he has also been an instructor.

Dep. Agata advised it due his desire to provide this instruction that he was listening intently to Cpl. Lowe from a distance of approximately six to ten feet. Dep. Agata advised that he observed Cpl. Lowe demonstrating several different things and running the students through drills. The specific drill in question involved a hammer fist technique and to make a fist without hurting your thumb in the process. Dep. Agata identified that Dep. Alecrim and Dep. Champion were holding targets or striking pads as Cpl. Lowe brought each student through the drill. Dep. Agata then detailed the incident as follows.

Dep. Agata advised that one of the students was trying to hit the target at which time, Cpl. Lowe began explaining how each individual needed to use their body weight and force while allowing the students to work through it. During this process Cpl. Lowe was providing encouragement and referenced a past cartoon character "He-Man and the Masters of the Universe" and the phrase "I've got the power". Dep. Agata advised that this is what he heard and quickly identified what Cpl. Lowe had actually said during this demonstration. Dep. Agata recalled thinking to himself at the time that these students were too young to even know who "He-Man" was. Dep. Agata advised that when he heard that Cpl. Lowe had been relieved from his position he was overwhelmed and surprised especially since he knew exactly what Cpl. Lowe said during the instruction.

Dep. Agata added that at the time of the alleged incident, Dep. Alecrim, Dep. Champion and himself were the only deputies within less than 20 feet of Cpl. Lowe and focused on the instruction and activity at hand. Dep. Agata described the others to be at least three times the distance away having personal discussions, reading emails, texting or playing games on their phones at the time. Dep. Agata advised that the students were all having fun and there were three or four more drills to complete.



Dep. Agata was asked if he was present when Cpl. Lowe addressed the class at the beginning and is alleged to have made a statement regarding the students being kicked out class and not paying Cpl. Lowe's bills. Also that he/Cpl. Lowe was not going to lose his job of them not behaving. Dep. Agata advised he did not hear those words and stated that when they all first came in the students were being kids and acting unruly. Dep. Agata advised that he heard Cpl. Lowe being assertive and explaining that they were about do some things that can cause injury and he was basically not going to tolerate misbehavior. Dep. Agata advised that he could not remember Cpl. Lowe's exact words.

Dep. Agata advised that he has been working with and for Cpl. Lowe for just over a year. Dep. Agata was asked if during that time did he ever heard Cpl. Lowe use language or terms motivated by race or racial prejudice. Dep. Agata advised that he had not. Dep. Agata was asked if he believed Cpl. Lowe to be racist or racially prejudice in any way. Dep. Agata advised, "Absolutely not."

**Interviewed concluded at 1531 hours.**

**Interview Dep. R. Towns (2)**

On Wednesday, July 31, 2019 at 1543 hours, Dep. R. Towns was interviewed in the office of the Integrity Standards Unit located at 1769 E. Moody Boulevard. This was the second interview of Dep. Towns and he was reminded he was under oath as well as a confidentiality agreement.

Det. Doyle explained that he was being recalled for a second interview based on information that was obtained through interviews of other witnesses.

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It was explained that during interviews of Dep. Agata and Dep. Alecrim they advised that they heard and understood Cpl. Lowe to be saying "I've got the power" referring to the "He-Man" comic strip from years ago while demonstrating the hammer fist technique. Dep. Towns was then specifically asked if it was possible that Cpl. Lowe said "I've got the power" as opposed to "White Power?" Dep. Towns responded, "It is possible and that's why I said I heard "White Power" but I wasn't quite sure at the time that's why I leaned over asked Coop, did he just say "White Power?" "Dep. L. just came over from across the room and said, did you just hear him say White Power?" Dep. Towns stated, "That was confirmation for me, could he have said something different due to the distance we were at there is a possibility but I had to have confirmation." There were no further questions.

**Interview concluded at 1548 hours.**

**Interview Dep. Lilavois (2)**

On Thursday, August 1, 2019 at 1546 hours, Dep. Lilavois was interviewed in the office of the Integrity Standards Unit located at 1769 E. Moody Boulevard. This was the second interview of Dep. Lilavois and he was reminded he was under oath as well as a confidentiality agreement.

Det. Doyle explained that he was being recalled for a second interview based on information that was obtained through interviews of other witnesses. It was explained that during interviews of Dep. Agata and Dep. Alecrim they advised that they heard and understood Cpl. Lowe to be saying "I've got the power" referring to the "He-Man" comic strip from years ago while demonstrating the hammer fist technique.



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Dep. Lilavois was then specifically asked if it was possible that Cpl. Lowe said "I've got the power" as opposed to "White Power?" Dep. Lilavois responded, "I believe that I am one hundred percent certain that I heard that he said "White Power." "Like I said when I looked up and I saw the look on their faces that they heard the same thing." No further questions asked at that time.

### **Interview concluded at 1550**

### **Interview Dep. N. Melheiros**

On Tuesday, August 13, 2019 at 1538 hours, Dep. Melheiros was interviewed in the office of the Integrity Standards Unit located at 1769 E. Moody Boulevard. Dep. Melheiros was sworn in and was issued a confidentiality acknowledgement form which he signed and dated. It was at this time, Dep. Melheiros was asked to advise how she became involved in this matter and what actions she took.

Dep. Melheiros advised that she wasn't sure where the incident occurred because she had no knowledge of the incident until well after it had occurred. Dep. Melheiros then confirmed that she was in fact present at Belle Terre Middle School on the date in question but was not involved in the camp instruction at the time of the alleged incident.

Dep. Melheiros advised that she was involved with one of the students outside of the class where the instruction was taking place. Dep. Melheiros advised that she only became aware of the incident during a conversation she had later in the day with Dep. Lilavois. Dep. Lilavois explained to her that while making a fist Cpl. Lowe used the term "White Power" during the demonstration. Dep. Melheiros advised that Dir. N. Quintieri was nearby at the time of their conversation and although she was not part of the conversation she believes that Dir. Quintieri overheard what was said.

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Dep. Melheiros advised that no one else was present during the conversation and that is the extent of her involvement and/or knowledge of the incident.

Dep. Meheiros was asked if she was present in the morning when Cpl. Lowe addressed the class in the morning. Dep. Melheiros advised that she was present but denied hearing Cpl. Lowe say anything negative or out of place to the students at that time. Dep. Melheiros was asked if she has ever heard or observed Cpl. Lowe use racially motivated terms or act in a manner that could be construed as racially motivated. Dep. Melheiros, "No." Dep. Melheiros was asked if she has confidence in Cpl. Lowe as a supervisor. Dep. Melheiros, "Yes." Dep. Melheiros was asked if she considers Cpl. Lowe to be racist or racially prejudice in any way? Dep. Melheiros, "No."

**Interview was concluded at 1546 hours.**

#### **Interview Cpl. W. Lowe**

On Thursday, August 15, 2019 at 0957 hours, Cpl. Lowe was interviewed in a vacant office located in the office of the State Attorney's Office located at 1769 E. Moody Boulevard. Also present and representing Cpl. Lowe from the PBA was Attorney Greg Forhan. Cpl. Lowe was read his Garrity Warning for which he signed and Counselor Forhan signed as a witness.

Cpl. Lowe was asked advise how this incident came about, how he was involved and when he became aware that there concern about something he was alleged to have said during the camp. Cpl. Lowe started by advising that he was the lead instructor of the camp being offered by PAL to school students and had no knowledge of the incident until the end of the day. Cpl. Lowe advised that Cmdr. Reynold's called him and asked if Sgt. Ragazzo had been in contact with him. Cpl. Lowe informed Cmdr. Reynold's that he had just concluded a meeting with Sgt. Ragazzo. Cmdr. Reynold's asked Cpl. Lowe if Sgt. Ragazzo discussed a complaint against him.

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Cpl. Lowe informed Cmdr. Reynold's that he had not at which time, Cpl. Lowe asked Cmdr. Reynold's for details. Cmdr. Reynold's declined and instead informed him that he was being reassigned to patrol duties effective immediately. Cpl. Lowe asked again for an explanation however, Cmdr. Reynold's declined once again advising that he had initiated an investigation.

Cpl. Lowe was then asked to explain what he actually knows at this point in the investigation and what knowledge he currently has. Cpl. Lowe advised that he understands now that he is alleged to have raised his fist in the air while stating "White Power" in the presence of numerous juveniles and the majority of his SRD Unit.

At this point Det. Doyle explained that the investigation was initiated upon receiving a memorandum generated by Cmdr. Reynold's and forwarded via the chain of command to Chief Strobridge. At this point Det. Doyle read the memorandum as a basis for questioning going forward. It should be noted that Cpl. Lowe acknowledged reviewing the memorandum earlier and was fully aware of the allegation.

Based on the memorandum Cpl. Lowe was asked to address the allegation involving his manner and tone while addressing the students at the onset of the camp. Cpl. Lowe was asked if he could recall what he actually said at that time. Cpl. Lowe advised that he could not remember and quote it verbatim however, he did remember the necessity to gather the children into a group due to their behavior. Cpl. Lowe advised that he recalls advising the students that they are being taught tactics that can cause injury to themselves and to others and that he cannot afford to let anyone to get hurt. "I have a job to do, I need you guys to listen to me I need you to pay attention because this could be potentially dangerous. I said I can't take the risk of anyone leaving this room injured or using these tactics inappropriately and end up getting me fired because I do have mouths to feed and bills to pay." Cpl. Lowe was asked if he ever had a conversation with Dir. Quintieri about the comments he made and he advised that he had not.

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Cpl. Lowe was asked if he had a conversation with Cmdr. Reynold's or anyone else regarding those alleged comments. Cpl. Lowe advised he was unaware of the comments until he was informed by this office of the allegation.

At this point Cpl. Lowe was asked to provide a visual of what he was doing on the date in question and what his version of the incident is. Cpl. Lowe advised that he was the lead instructor for a self-empowerment camp which is basically a self-confidence camp geared to assist students defuse and bullying situation or prevent an abduction. Cpl. Lowe advised that while teaching the students how to make a fist when he realized that a few of the students were having trouble making a proper fist. Cpl. Lowe said he observed "a cute little kid right in front me making a perfect fist." Cpl. Lowe advised he recognized this to be a great opportunity to do a confidence building exercise in front of the group at which time, he asked the student to step up and show everyone his fist. Cpl. Lowe advised this young man was super excited and popped right up and threw his fist in the air and "legitimately my first thought was he looks like a little He-Man." Cpl. Lowe advised that as the student through his fist in the air, "I mimicked him, I did the same thing and I said (in a bold voice) I have the power doing the He-Man thing." There was some chuckling and everyone moved forward and on with the day. Cpl. Lowe was asked if he said it more than once to which he replied that it was only once. Cpl. Lowe was asked if he had been approached by anyone upon him being reassigned. Cpl. Lowe advised that he had not and that he had no knowledge anything was wrong until he was called by Cmdr. Reynold's at the end of the day.

At this point Cpl. Lowe was asked directly if he considers himself to be racist or prejudice in any way. Cpl. Lowe advised directly, "Not in the slightest or remotely in any way." Cpl. Lowe was asked if he has ever used a racially motivated term or made a racially motivated statement during the course of his duty. Cpl. Lowe, "Absolutely not." Cpl. Lowe was asked if he has ever been supervised, counseled or disciplined regarding anything racially motivated. Cpl. Lowe, "None whatsoever."

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Cpl. Lowe was asked if he had any questions or wanted to add anything to the record. Cpl. Lowe advised that he would like to state that he himself would feel horrible if anyone working with him were subjected to something like the allegation that was made. Cpl. Lowe also advised that he understands how someone could misinterpret something that was said if not in close proximity and engaged in other activities at the time. Cpl. Lowe advised that he is looking forward to the opportunity to apologize to his team and supervisors for the misunderstanding and the need for each of them to become involved in an investigation based on something he is responsible for. Cpl. Lowe did then explain his passion for his job as well as his love for the deputies he works with and advised he is looking forward to getting back to his assignment.

Attorney Forhan asked for Cpl. Lowe to explain the "He-Man" reference because he was not fully familiar with this character either. Cpl. Lowe did provide an explanation and details of the profile.

**The interview was concluded at 1016 hours.**

**Discussion:**

On Wednesday, June 19, 2019 Commander P. Reynolds forwarded a memorandum to Chief M. Strobridge (via chain of command) reference an employee concern. Cmdr. Reynolds advised that he was informed of a potential Flagler County Sheriff's Office general orders violation regarding standards of conduct. Cmdr. Reynolds advised that the alleged violation occurred on Tuesday June 18, 2019 during the Personal Empowerment Camp at Buddy Taylor Middle School.

According to the memorandum Director Quintieri advised that she witnessed Deputy Towns and a small group of other deputies speaking about comments made by Cpl. Lowe while he was instructing defensive tactics. Cpl. Lowe is alleged to have used the phrase "White Power" while demonstrating a hammer fist.

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In addition Director Quintieri informed Cmdr. Reynolds that while addressing the summer camp students he advised them "they better behave or they would be removed because they do not pay his bills and he will not lose his job because of them."

On Wednesday, June 19, 2019, Chief Strobbridge Authorized, Detective Randall Doyle of the Integrity Standards Unit to conduct an Internal Investigation. On Tuesday, July 9, 2019 at 1340 hours, Cpl. W. Lowe was provided an Employee Notice of Internal Investigation as well as a Confidentiality Acknowledgement Form.

Upon conducting interviews with all potential witnesses, Detective Doyle identified that one of the witnesses Dep. Lilavois is the only witness that remains certain that he heard Cpl. Lowe use the phrase "White Power" while demonstrating a "Hammer Fist" on the date in question. Witness R. Towns advised in his original interview that upon hearing the statement he looked to Dep. Cooper just a few feet away from him and asked if he heard what Cpl. Lowe said and questioned if he said "White Power." Dep. Cooper at that time said he was not certain but thought it sounded like "White Power" and required confirmation as to what he actually heard. Dep. Towns and Dep. Cooper both advised they were uncertain what Cpl. Lowe said and only when Dep. Lilavois contacted them a few minutes later to question "Did you hear Billy say White Power? Did they feel confident that they all heard the same thing." It should be noted that these three witnesses all advised that they were a minimum of 25 to 30 feet away from Cpl. Lowe at the time of the incident.

It was during interviews conducted with Deputies Alecrim and Agata that they advised they heard Cpl. Lowe reference the "He-Man" cartoon and with a raised fist in the air stated, "I have the power." This as explained is an identifiable phrase used by this cartoon character from the 1980's. It should be noted that both Deputies Alecrim and Agata advised they were less than 10 feet away from Cpl. Lowe at the time of the incident and directly focused on his instruction.



Upon re-interviewing both Deputies Towns and Lilavois they were advised that two other deputies have stated that what they heard Cpl. Lowe say during the instruction is "I have the power." Both were asked it was possible that this is also what they heard at that time. Dep. Towns advised that he recalled in his first interview that he required confirmation on what was said from both Dep. Cooper and Dep. Lilavois. Dep. Towns concluded by saying yes he may have heard "I have the power." Dep. Lilavois advised that he was certain he heard "White Power."

Upon Interviewing Cpl. Lowe, he advised that he recalled the exact moment of instruction based on his excitement for one of the students that was actually feeling the empowerment and excitement of the instruction. When this young and small student jumped up from the floor mat, raised his fist in the air he/Cpl. Lowe recalled the "He-Man" cartoon character and thought nothing of cheering the student on by shouting "I've got the power" the phrase often used by the character as he prepares for battle.

In reference to the incident at the beginning of class and the allegation that Cpl. Lowe addressed the students inappropriately and in an aggressive manner the following conclusion was rendered. Both Dir. Quintieri and Dep. Lilavois although they cannot provide in detail what was said they do recall hearing Cpl. Lowe tell the students that if they didn't behave they would be out of the class while sighting that "they don't pay his bills and he's not going to lose job because of them. Only Dep. Agata confirmed that he too heard something similar to the allegation but excluding that it was aggressive and/or inappropriate. Dep. Agata advised that the students at that time were being unruly and required some immediate direction. Cpl. Lowe confirmed that he did say something similar to the phrase given however, stating that he was not being mean or aggressive but stern and direct. Cpl. Lowe confirmed that he did comment about not losing his job and paying bills but did not feel that anything he said was inappropriate.

This investigation has identified that the allegation involving the statement "White Power" cannot be sustained due to conflicting accounts of what was actually said at the given time by Cpl. Lowe. The allegation involving statements regarding Cpl. Lowe losing his job and students not paying his bills is sustained based on witness statements and the statement provided by Cpl. Lowe during his interview. The severity, nature and exact content of the given statement will require further assessment.

**Findings:**

This investigation has been **Sustained** for the following violation.

**Flagler County Sheriff's Office General Order 020 Standards of Conduct**

**Category Two Violations: (9) (a) Behavior and Language:** In the performance of their duties, all personnel will maintain command of temper, patience, and discretion. Employees shall refrain from using improper, obscene, profane, or insolent language.

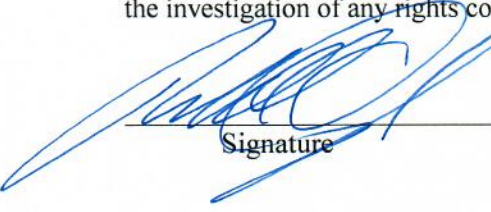
**Disciplinary Action:** Flagler County Sheriff's Office General Order 019 outlines punishment for Category 2 Violations as follows. Any non-disciplinary action and/or 12 hours up to 24 hours of suspension



Date: June 19, 2019

**To be Completed by the Investigating Supervisor or Official:**

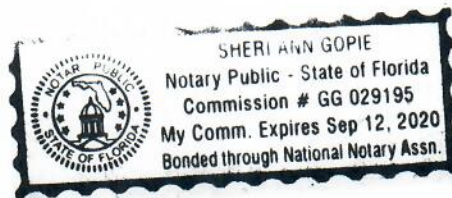
"I, the undersigned, do hereby swear, under penalty of perjury, that, to the best of my personal knowledge, information, and belief, I have not knowingly or willfully deprived, or allowed another to deprive, the subject of the investigation of any rights contained in ss. 112.532 and 112.533, Florida Statutes.

  
Signature

9/9/2019  
Date

Sworn to and subscribed before me, the undersigned, this 9 day, 9 month, 19 year.

Sheri Ann Goipe  
Notary



Mark D. Stokbridge  
Reviewing Supervisor Printed Name

09/09/19  
Date

Mark D. Stokbridge  
Signature of Reviewing Supervisor