

Julie Murphy

From: Odom, David [David.Odom@talgov.com]
Sent: Tuesday, November 01, 2016 9:24 PM
To: Craig Coffey
Cc: Joby Smith <jbsmith@baycountyfl.gov>; Brad Baker; Stephen R. Garten
Subject: Fwd: Flagler County Response
Attachments: Flagler County Response.docx

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Mr. Coffey,

Over the past several days, I have received several emails in reference to an employment action taken against Jennifer Stagg, Senior Planner, by Flagler County Emergency Management Office. While reading through these documents associated with the employment action, I observed my name referenced within a document pertaining to a conversation I had with EM Manager Steve Garten. Within this document, I was quoted as making a statement regarding my observation of Jennifer Stagg during the Flagler County's response to Hurricane Matthew. I feel this portion of my conversation with EM Manager Garten was taken out of context. While socializing over dinner with EM Manager Garten and other members of the Incident Management Team, I was asked for my observations regarding Flagler County Emergency Managements' response to Hurricane Matthew. In the context of providing constructive feedback and "lessons learned", I told EM Manager Garten it appeared the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was working in a "Cancerous Environment". This description was in reference to the observed lack of overall working knowledge and understanding of the Incident Command Structure by members assigned to the EOC. This included county employees, city departments, non-governmental agencies, and general staff working within the EOC. I also observed a lack of cohesion and teamwork throughout the EOC displayed by different agencies and personnel. Based on conversations with different county staff members during my deployment to Flagler County, it did not appear my observations were a surprise, and was common knowledge to EM Manager Garten and other Senior Flagler County staff. Throughout my deployment to Flagler County, county employees frequently expressed their frustration with the environment within the EOC and the coordination of different county departments during Hurricane Matthew with me. During these sporadic conversations, I believed a lot of the frustration was a direct result of the critical incident the county was facing and the overall fatigue being displayed by all the members working within the EOC. I've witnessed similar frustrations in other county EOCs while working other critical incidents. I want to emphasize while I was in Flagler County, I witnessed EOC members doing great things for their community while working under very taxing circumstances, i.e. lack of sleep, concern for the safety of their family members, uncertainty of the outcome of the event, and the overall extreme work load.

When requested to be deployed to Flagler County during Hurricane Matthew, as a member of the All-Hazard Incident Management Team, I was honored to assist with the county's immediate response and their recovery. I was not requested to respond to Flagler County to provide an analysis of the employee dynamics within the EOC or within the County Government. While working within Flagler County, my focus was to offer help and assistance to the EOC not to monitor their work performance for future potential employment action. I was concerned to learn that a small portion of my comment was taken out of context during a social setting at dinner and was now being used within an employment action against a Flagler County employee. Approximately a week ago, myself and other Incident Management Team members were requested to provide specific information to be used regarding possible employee actions within Flagler County. My response and the response from the other members on the team was to decline such a request. Based on the very limited information I have about the

working relationships within Flagler County, I do not think it is appropriate for me to provide my personal opinion about specific personnel issue, which would and/or could be used to take such drastic employment actions. During critical incidents, people respond differently to such events and react differently under extreme levels of stress. My off-the-cuff comment was provided as an initial response related to the broader question of how did Flagler County Emergency Operations respond to Hurricane Matthew and to provide actionable feed back on how to improve Emergency Operations within Flagler County.

My hope for Flagler County and the staff working within the EOC is for them to come together and develop a strong team to help their community. I will always have a strong relationship with Flagler County and the individuals I had the privilege of working with during Hurricane Matthew. If I can provide more clarity of my overall observations, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,

David Odom
850-251-5540

Julie Murphy

From: Joby Smith [jbsmith@baycountyfl.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, November 02, 2016 1:25 AM
To: Craig Coffey
Cc: Stephen R. Garten; 'Jennifer Stagg'; Brad Baker; 'Odom, David'; 'jonathan.kanzigg@midwayfire.com'; Mark Bowen; Brad Monroe
Subject: Clarification to "Memorandum of Record"
Attachments: Statement about ahimt.pdf

Mr. Coffey,

I would like to respectfully address the attached "Memorandum of Record" authored by Public Safety Emergency Manager Stephen Garten that is dated October 11, 2016 - this document was forwarded to me most recently by Ms. Jennifer Stagg. I would specifically like to address the portion of the document that provides a direct "quotation" from me stating that "I have heard the same comments and recommended that you remove Jennifer as soon as possible in order to try and save the remaining employees moral". The inclusion of my name and supposed statement in a disciplinary document came as a complete surprise to me. At no time did I provide any recommendation that one of your employees be removed from duty nor do I feel it was any of our IMT members business to get involved in this type of issue. When we were all first approached via email by Mr. Garten to provide statements regarding issues while we were working in Flagler our Team Lead Brad Baker made it clear that it was not our place to do so and that he had provided information directly to administration about issues we had observed. Although I cannot speak for the other team members who were quoted in this memo I can absolutely say that the quotation attributed to me is not accurate and if there were any discussions at all about the performance of members of your staff I would have never recommended that someone be removed or disciplined as this is simply not my business.

The experience I had in Flagler was a wonderful one and I truly believe you have many very dedicated employees who were working in your EOC during this event. It is unfortunate that you are having to deal with issues such as this but I would like to ask that if you or any of your staff would like to discuss this further that you please call me directly on my cell phone at 850/348-0539.

Thank you,

Joby

Joby Smith

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