From: onathan Wa nscott <jonwa nscott gma .com>
Sent: 0/3 /20 9 9:4 :35 PM
To: Deb a Campbell
Cc:
Subject: Conce ns ega d ng the AFD

Dear Ms. Campbell,
Thanks again for today's meeting. The reasons for my gratitude are simply too many to list.

I'd like to provide you with better information regarding my concern about the integrity of the Fire Department. I know I spilled a lot of dots on your desk so I'll sort out what I have to date.

Prior to the arson that occurred on the New Belgium property April 5, 2013 several arson events had happened in the River Arts District. A murder had also been committed in a building known as the Ice Storage Building in October 2012. That building was privately owned and had been placed on the Unsafe Structures list by the AFD. That came with a standing order for law enforcement not to enter the building. It became a attraction for graffiti artists and homeless "train kids". After a man was bludgeoned to death the City bought the property and razed the building. As I mentioned, the AFD conducted training exercises in the winter of 2013 which left several buildings on the New Belgium site with huge holes punched through cinder block and sheet metal walls. The place looked like it had been bombed. I had been taking video around the site showing how insecure the site was. I had been taking pictures earlier in the day on April 5 (the same day as the 3 fires set later that night).

I was interviewed on WLOS the following day along with part-time reporter and photo journalist Bill Rhodes. He was a friend of my (ex) wife and mine. He was an expert of sorts on how first responders operate and he was the one that explained to me that there was a reason the death of the volunteer firefighter the day after the New Belgium fire wasn't being reported. He told me that SBI had taken over the case and thus it would never be solved. Indeed, that arson remains unsolved.

I remember being surprised that no one from the APD or AFD ever questioned me about the fire. If they truly had no idea who did this they would have. I was the town's most vocal critic of the New Belgium development which is right behind my house. My beef was the unprecedented scale of operations on that side of the French Broad River and the truck traffic that would be handled by Haywood Road. That traffic problem is what flooded the RAD with tens of millions of dollars of traffic improvement funding (RADTIP). I mention this just to give you a sense of the powers I was disrupting and that was why I was surprised I wasn't hassled about the arson.

A month or so after the New Belgium arson I was talking with a volunteer fireman that was a friend of a good friend of mine. I broached the subject of the dead volunteer fireman and he was pretty tight lipped about the situation. I can't remember exactly what he said but he insinuated that it was a taboo subject in the firehouse.

Fast-forward 2 years to 2015. My wife had taken off with my kids and was 250 miles away. She took out a Domestic Violence Protective Order on me from Raleigh and I foolishly represented myself which left me without my kids. I housed a couple of Veterans through Homeward Bound and they destroyed my life. They had me arrested 3 times on false charges. I spent a combined 34 days in jail and at one point was held on a $150,000 bond. After all the charges were dismissed and the vets forced to leave my house, those knuckleheads apparently contacted the AFD with claims of proof that I was responsible for the New Belgium arson. I recently found out that AFD questioned one of my neighbors that was also helping the veterans with their claims that I was a stark raving lunatic. In the fall of 2015 [redacted] traveled to Raleigh and interrogated my (ex) wife about me and said I was a suspect [illegible] This was during our epic divorce and Colleen had spared no ammunition in that war but there was no there there when it came to any arson involving me.

When Colleen told me about that interview/interrogation I did the standard google search for [redacted]. He had retired recently and that was the arson investigation deficiency I mentioned in my emails to you and the mayor earlier this [redacted]

[redacted] were also on the SWAT team. I don't know if they were close friends but firemen have a tight fellowship in general. Adding to [illegible] these two were both on the SWAT team, it's reasonable to wonder if they were close.

When I first found out that [redacted] was responsible for my car fire, it was expressed to me that he was telling his girlfriend he was an LEO and

that he was untouchable. He bragged about getting away with lots of other things and he'd get away with this as well. Now, he could just be thoroughly delusional and full of himself, but I think he felt "protected" by more than his own abilities. I also find it hard to believe that he didn't brag about other things I suspect he has done.

During the 10 weeks between my car fire and the arrest of [redacted] I was turning over every stone I could. I reached out to the volunteer fireman I spoke to years ago regarding the New Belgium fire. I didn't talk to him directly but it was relayed to me that other firemen weren't surprised that [redacted] did this. I had a phone conversation with a recently retired Asheville Firefighter. He didn't give me too much info then, but his friend that put us in touch told me he told her that the Fire Department had initially tried to cover up for [redacted]. I know that's a lot of hearsay but I trust the source.

I also found a theft report filed by [redacted] in December of 2017 for theft of his personal belongings from the Skyland Fire Department. A $1000 television and $400 microwave oven were taken from that building, but the address on the theft report is not the address of the Skyland Fire Department. The police officer signing off on the report was [redacted].

When [redacted] was finally charged, [redacted] told me this likely opened up a "big Pandora's box" when I suggested his investigation was probably bigger than just my car. [redacted] and I spoke again after [redacted] was officially fired from the AFD. I was shocked to find out, through the reports by WLOS and the Citizen Times that [redacted] had looked up my address and "how to make a Molotov Cocktail" before setting my car on fire. That detail was described in [redacted] Letter of Termination that somehow was leaked to the press. That letter was not dated. I don't know who leaked that from [redacted] personnel file. I could have been [redacted] himself but that doesn't make sense.

I'm not sure how you should proceed with looking into all this. The Police Department is in transition and as you know, the changes are not coming with a great deal of enthusiasm from the APD. don't want you to become a common "enemy" to those departments. Asking [redacted] about all this may not be the best course of action. I'm not sure what would be, but if my fear is correct, and erring on the side of caution, I can't trust the Fire Chief is on the up and up. Perhaps you should consult with the City Attorney. Maybe the issue of the termination letter could be discussed with [redacted] just so you can observe his reaction.

I know that's a lot and you have your hands full to say the least. Thanks for giving this some attention when you have the time.
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