



BRISTOL TOWNSHIP

Office of the Township Manager

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dismissals/Suspensions of Six Police Officers Upheld

In June 2020, the Bristol Township Police Department brought disciplinary action against six (6) Police Officers, dismissing two and suspending four (4) others without pay. Two of the Officers accepted their suspensions, while the other four appealed to an Arbitrator with the American Arbitration Association (“AAA”) under the Grievance procedure agreed to by the Police Union (“PBA”) and the Township.

The matter was also investigated by the Bucks County District Attorney’s Office which led to an internal administrative investigation by the Bristol Township Police Department. Full hearings were held before the Arbitrator, who was selected by the parties, over five (5) days with eleven (11) witnesses testifying. On September 2, 2021, AAA Arbitrator Walt De Treux, Esq. issued an Arbitration Award and a twenty (20) page decision upholding the discipline.

This unfortunate incident was set in motion when a Bristol Township Police Officer received a series of harassing and threatening cell phone calls and text messages from an unknown male caller while he was sleeping with his family in the early morning hours of February 20, 2020. Somehow the caller had the Officer’s personal cell phone number and his address. The Officer had his life threatened in one of the calls.

He reported the harassment and threat to his supervisor. Chief of Police Robert Coulton ordered an immediate investigation. A short time later Detectives learned that six (6) Bristol Township Police Officers were involved and incredibly actually instigated it as some sort of twisted prank. Only they never advised the Officer it was a “prank” and they hid their involvement until discovered a week later.

Chief Coulton commented, “Individuals who subject co-workers to ridicule and harassment, giving out the private cell phone number and home address of a fellow officer to an angry, drunken stranger have no place in our Police Department. These actions run contrary to our law enforcement mission and negatively impact the entire Police Department.”

Bristol Township Council President, Craig Bowen, said, “We are pleased that the Arbitrator saw how egregious the Officers’ behavior was both that evening and during the investigations. We cannot tolerate Officers who show a complete disregard for the rights of others including another Officer.”

The Bristol Township Council would like to thank Chief Coulton, his Command Staff, as well as Neil A. Morris and Gabriel V. Celli, with Offit Kurman, the Township Labor Attorneys, who meticulousity represented the Township in achieving this favorable decision.

The Arbitration Award is available for review on Bristol Township’s website, www.bristoltownship.org. If there are any questions concerning the Arbitration Award, please contact Neil A. Morris, Township Labor Counsel at 267-338-1383.

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