

Madam Mayor,

In my position as President of the CFFA, I am privy to a great deal of information that is important to our members, the City and the community we serve. I am concerned that Manager Jones has failed to keep you and our City Council updated on current litigation and among other things is allowing the manipulation of employee investigations to cover up abusive, unethical, and possibly illegal activities. Prior to addressing these issues with our members, City Council, and publicly through the media, I wanted to make sure that you had the opportunity to act.

At a recent promotional pinning ceremony, the only African American female battalion chief requested that Fire Chief Reginald Johnson place her badge in her hand because she did not feel comfortable with the way Chief Johnson pressed his hand on the chests of those promoted in front of her after he placed their pins on them. Chief Johnson coordinated an investigation at the CFD Training Academy in which multiple female and male firefighters were directed to meet alone with two white male "investigators" who identified themselves as Adam Robert Trantum and Ron Mann. A simple internet search shows that Mr. Trantum is currently out on felony bond following an arrest by CMPD detectives on October 13, 2021 (arrest #1844488). The other investigator, Mr. Mann, unsuccessfully sued the Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office and personally named several Mecklenburg County deputy sheriffs following a 2018 weapons arrest (Mann lost his appeal in court in 2019). Despite their sordid backgrounds, these two men were chosen to conduct a sensitive employee investigation involving public safety personnel.

To my knowledge neither of these individuals have any experience in Human Resources and both have arrest records. Despite this, both have had access to sensitive CFD employee records, and they were allowed to interrogate employees of the CFD without any known oversight. They were chosen to investigate the only African American female chief officer in the Charlotte Fire Department who has an ongoing federal lawsuit against the City that goes to trial in March. In the past, Chief Johnson has used CMPD Internal Affairs to conduct CFD investigations. Why was that not done here? Who decided that these two individuals possess greater investigative skills than CMPD Internal Affairs. When is the City going to acknowledge that there are no more excuses for Chief Johnson's history of clearly vindictive behavior and personally motivated decisions. Why is he not being held accountable for failing to put the interests of the employees and the citizens above his own?

I am confident that Chief Jennings and Sheriff McFadden would not use these individuals to conduct sensitive investigations within CMPD or MCSO. Why then, are they allowed to conduct investigations at the Charlotte Fire Department?

Mayor Lyles, under your term, and Manager Jones tenure, investigations into employee filed complaints or grievances are handled in one of the following manners:

- Employees are just ignored and the issues that they raise are not thoroughly investigated or addressed in a timely manner. This is by far the most customary practice under your term as Mayor and it includes ignored claims of retaliation, harassment, discrimination, and abuse of power.
- Investigations are carried out by CFD or City HR often with predetermined outcomes. Witnesses who support the chosen narrative are chosen, others with relevant facts are ignored. Facts are excluded or manipulated and CFD Administration and the City is always exonerated.
- The City essentially purchases an outcome that it wants from a "so called" third party vendor. Many times, these vendors are former city employees or friends of department heads

or others with ties to Legal or HR who are hired to find in the City's favor. These reports are then presented to CLTCC as "Independent" investigations, with no mention of the inherent bias of the investigators (using the former city attorney, using the former HR manager at CMPD, and so forth).

The purchasing of investigations who will find in the City's favor should be of great concern to each of you. ***Attached you can read for yourself the latest motions filed in the "Summers vs. City of Charlotte."*** This legal motion details what I believe to be the very type of investigation that I am describing.

Mayor Lyles, if you Chief Jennings, and Sheriff McFadden agree that these two individuals were best suited to conduct sensitive public safety investigations, then I will let that decision play out in the court of public opinion. However, if you are just learning of the hiring of these two individuals by your department heads and you agree that their hiring is not morally and ethically acceptable, then the question is what are you going to do about it now that you are aware? Who will be held accountable for their hiring? Before taking this to our members and the media, we would like to let them know that as the city leader you are addressing this and take it very seriously.

Professionally,

Tom Brewer

Charlotte Firefighters Association, President



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