City of Seattle

Seattle Police Department

February 20, 2014

Honorable Ed Murray, Mayor; and Members of the Seattle City Council
600 4th Ave
Seattle WA 98104

Dear Mayor Murray and Councilmembers,

As per our accountability measures, I am writing to make you aware of my decision to substitute a training referral for a suspension, following a "sustained" finding of misconduct for one of my officers.

As you are probably aware, following an interaction between this officer and a writer for the Stranger newspaper, a complaint against the officer was initiated by the writer and investigated by the Seattle Police Department's Office of Professional Accountability (OPA) (OPA case number 13-0266). The OPA Director recommended a disposition of "sustained" and a one-day suspension without pay.

While I concur with the disposition, I disagree with the recommendation that the officer receive merely a one day suspension without pay. In this case it is my belief that it would be far more productive for this officer to learn from his mistake and correct his behavior in the future. It is for that reason that I substituted a training referral for the suspension. Additionally, the involved officer was assigned to research and create a presentation about best practices in working with the public. Instead of this incident being isolated he will be speaking at precinct roll calls, so that other officers may learn and benefit from his experience, and we can have a continued dialogue on change and reform in the department.

I also wanted to let you know that I personally called the complainant in this case when I was made aware of a Seattle Times Blog post on this issue to offer my personal apology. No complainant should ever learn about the disposition of their case via the media – that not is appropriate, nor is it our policy and procedure.

Please do contact me if you have additional questions or concerns regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Harry Bailey
Interim Chief of Police