



PHOENIX LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSOCIATION

The Professional Association of Phoenix Police Officers Since 1975

March 18, 2009

Frank Fairbanks, City Manager
City of Phoenix
200 W. Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Frank:

The board of the Phoenix Law Enforcement Association (PLEA) is concerned with a pattern of conduct they believe has developed in relation to officers of color in the Phoenix Police Department. Issues that demonstrate this concern and pattern of conduct are attached to this letter.

I have been directed by the PLEA board of trustees to hand-carry this summary of concerns which highlights a systemic problem that has a significant history within the Phoenix Police Department and in essence defines a culture which is inconsistent with the rules and philosophies promulgated by the Manager's Office, the City Council, and certainly fundamental constitutional rights of every American citizen. We believe the Phoenix Police Department's upper level management has created an environment where employees with a predisposition to violate the tenants of the Federal Civil Rights Act, Title 7, and other provisions of the law designed to ensure equal treatment of protected classes, may do so without consequence or deterrence. We feel that this is evident from "milk-toast" enforcement policies, failure to document and investigate complaints not categorized as "official", and a unilateral disinterest in creating a safe and comfortable work environment for employees of protected classes.

Without intervention and change the message is clear: this behavior is somehow condoned by one department head of the City of Phoenix work force, the Public Safety Manager. The fact that this conduct is contrary to law seems to have escaped the attention of those police managers who are charged with the day-to-day obligation of enforcing the law.

We are hopeful that this communication will cause someone in City management to call for a realistic and serious investigation into these untenable circumstances herein described. I must say that the PLEA board of trustees is doubtful, considering the longstanding track record of upper level police management to appropriately investigate misconduct perpetrated by police managers or to simply ask the right questions. In keeping with our agreement and reliance upon our partnerships, we are taking our concerns to you first.

Sincerely,

MARK SPENCER
PLEA President

c: Andrew Thomas, Maricopa County Attorney