Interim Chief David H. DeKay Convenes Chain of Command and Shooting Review Boards

As a point of information, Chain of Command Boards and Shooting Review Boards are held whenever the Department's Internal Affairs Division concludes the investigation of an allegation of misconduct or a shooting incident.

One Shooting Review Board involved Officer Brian Fernandez, 31, sworn officer since June 2013.

On 12/23/2013, Officer Fernandez was on foot in the area of 2011 11th Street South attempting to locate a stolen vehicle. While there, a stolen 2012 Ford F-150 being driven by Quade L. Everett, drove at Officer Fernandez who responded by firing several rounds from his duty weapon. Everett was wounded in the head and the truck he was driving crashed into a car parked on the street. Everett survived, but suffered significant injury.

Chief DeKay determined that Officer Fernandez's use of deadly force was not justified and his employment with the St. Petersburg Police Department was terminated.

The other Shooting Review Board involved Officer Neil Rambaran, 33, sworn officer since March 2008.

On January 8th, Officer Rambaran and other officers assigned to the Street Crimes Unit were attempting to apprehend the driver of a stolen 2006 Mazda outside the Quick Stop convenience store at 1440 49th Street South. In effort to escape, the unknown suspect used the stolen vehicle to ram three unmarked police vehicles and then drove at Officer Rambaran. Officer Rambaran discharged his firearm at the driver who was not struck and fled the area in the stolen car.

Chief DeKay determined that Officer Rambaran's use of deadly force was justified.
The Chain of Command Board involved Detective Bartholomew Varracchi, 45, sworn officer since March 2009 and Officer David Watson, 30, sworn officer since June 2008.

Detective Varracchi was accused of unnecessary force, conduct unbecoming an employee, falsification, violation of the pursuit policy and conviction or guilt of a crime stemming from an incident on June 3rd, 2013 in which he was observed to strike a handcuffed prisoner after a pursuit. Officer Watson was accused of having violated pursuit policy during the same incident.

Chief DeKay determined the allegations against Detective Varracchi were sustained and his employment with the St. Petersburg Police Department was terminated. Allegations against Officer Watson were sustained and he was given a Memorandum of Counseling.

Copies of Chief DeKay’s memorandums summarizing each incident and the various boards’ findings are attached.

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