

**VALLEY CITY**

**POLICE**

Chief Fred J. Thompson

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Incident: Internal Investigation**  
**Case Number: C2016-001**  
**Date: 06-24-16**  
**Author: Chief Fred J. Thompson**

On 05-05-16 the Valley City Police Department received a copy of a "Request For Information" from a citizen, part of which was an allegation that Lt. David Swenson of VCPD was "drawing hourly wages from three separate revenue streams for the same hours. Which is a class B felony." The citizen was contacted by phone and requested to come into VCPD and meet with the Chief for the purpose of getting additional information and to start an Internal Investigation into this allegation. The citizen stated that he would assist with the request.

An Internal Administrative Investigation was initiated by the Chief of Police. Payroll records, timesheets, work schedules and other documentation were obtained to help confirm or deny the allegation. A total of eight witnesses, not including the complainant or the accused, were interviewed who may have had some knowledge or information about these allegations. Lt. Swenson also submitted to an interview reference this complaint.

The original reporting citizen, who at first stated he would voluntarily be interviewed about his allegation became uncooperative. This citizen on two occasions, 05-12-16 and 06-06-16, disconnected phone conversations with the Chief of Police, during this investigation stating on one occasion, that he would continue this, "in the court of public opinion." Additional attempts were made to request the citizen to cooperate with this investigation via third parties, which also met with negative results.

That being said, the Internal Administrative Investigation was conducted even though the complainant did not cooperate. After assembling all of the data, putting it into an understandable format, then analyzing that data, and conducting all of the interviews, the result of the investigation was that Lt. Swenson did not commit a crime, nor did he engage in any impropriety in his work. He did work a lot of hours during 2015 and that pointed to a needed change in policy and procedure, which is in progress, but Lt. Swenson did no wrong here.

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While this investigation was taking place, the citizen complainant also filed a complaint on Lt. Swenson with the Barnes County Sheriff's Office on 06-01-16. That complaint was forwarded to the Barnes County State's Attorney's Office for consideration.

Recently, on June 10, 2016, Barnes County State's Attorney Carl Martineck was interviewed by the media at which time he stated that, "even though the amount of hours was excessive nothing irregular was uncovered during the investigation."

The public is advised that a Police Department is only as good as the integrity that it presents to the public it serves. The Valley City Police Department is determined to ensure that the public can have trust and faith in what we do. As the Chief of Police I will promise you that we will, and have, investigated any legitimate complaint that is forwarded to me.

Please let me say this, trying to get satisfaction in the "court of public opinion" may make you feel good but it does nothing to get to the truth of the matter. All it does is to confuse the situation and possibly air incomplete facts and knowledge of an event and possibly cast unwarranted accusations against an individual who does not deserve it.

That is not how VCPD operates and this case is an example of that. However, if you have a complaint, and expect your complaint to be fully investigated, it is much easier to get a complete and thorough investigation to answer your accusations if you cooperate in the investigation itself where we can work together to come to both a finding of fact and a solution.