

**DRAFT**

Good morning Commission members,

Up until a couple of months ago, I would not have expected to be discussing this type of issue with the Commission. However, it appears I still have some things to learn... and I have learned a lot in that time.

Throughout my career I have been required to make ethical decisions each and every day. I felt I had a really good grasp of what was and is acceptable when it came to making public safety decisions. In this case, I felt the need to protect our community by providing day to day leadership to our detectives was necessary... and imperative. I still feel this responsibility. I didn't believe it to be unethical or outside of the principles of conduct expected of someone in my position, rather it was my duty to see that our newer detectives were supervised and trained to handle major criminal investigations; to allow them to provide the best service possible to victims of these crimes.

In light of pouring over the Administrative Rules following the complaint, I can say that I read these guidelines with an entirely new perspective. I was aware of them, and knew they existed, but reading them for the first time after an actual complaint forced me to see them differently as I tried to understand how others viewed my action.

As it pertains to a Conflict of Interest, I recall HR communicating that if Sergeant Kaber were to fill the role of supervising detectives again, he would be eligible for a 4% clothing allowance. It was never presented to me as an ethics violation; I would have heard those words. But what I did hear was it would be viewed as violating a policy exception. Well, I wasn't looking to violate a policy exception either, but I really felt it was simply solved by not participating in any decision regarding compensation. I felt it appropriate to leave the 4% decision up to HR and therefore neither benefit Sergeant Kaber, nor harm him. In reading the staff opinion it appears either way, according to the interpretation of the rule, both ways may have violated a difficult to understand and ambiguous rule in my situation. My objective was to provide leadership for a work group of detectives - pay was never even in my thoughts.

Because this situation was not a decision made during a public meeting, but rather a decision fulfilling the operational needs of my office, there were no readily available forums appropriate to publicize what I was considering. Because it is my practice to communicate with the Board of Commissioners, I did speak with the Sheriff's Office liaison and advise him of the issues as I saw them. At no time did I attempt to conceal my decision to improve the effectiveness of the office in performing the duties I am responsible to provide to the public.

As stated previously and in the documents before you, my motivation was to provide for an operational need I believed to be critical. Due to my knowledge of the capabilities of our supervisory staff and the other responsibilities they shoulder, the best solution in the immediate

seemed to be to return to Sergeant Kaber some of the duties he previously had in addition to the duties he would retain. In essence, I was asking him to take back his previous responsibility, with no additional pay, for the needs of the office; something he was willing to do. This was simply making official what was happening anyway, the detectives were calling him in his Patrol Sergeant position to ask for guidance because of their prior and successful working relationship with him as their supervisor in the recent past.

What I failed to realize at the time was that others would not readily embrace my understanding of the need and believe the worst, that I was actually advancing a relative, not just as a potential violation of a policy, but as a violation of government ethics. I was first made aware of this during a conversation with the Commissioner that filed the complaint. It was at that moment that I realized a decision, regardless of my best intentions, was being viewed in a negative light and rose to the level of an ethics complaint as far as some were concerned.

In an effort to immediately rectify my questioned decision I informed him I would retract my decision and allow the Patrol Captain to make the determination regarding who would supervise detectives. That responsibility was given to the Captain within the hour.

I now understand far better how these rules apply to me in my position and I agree to follow these rules in the future. When I learned of how my decision was viewed, I took immediate steps to rectify the situation. I will incorporate any and all feedback I receive into not only my future actions, but in guiding others into a fuller understanding of their responsibilities as well.

I am hopeful that you have a perspective of why I made the decision I made, but also an understanding of my personal growth and comprehension of how my actions can be perceived in light of the Rules you administer.

I respectfully ask that you decline to move forward with further investigation into this matter and look forward to your input.

Thank you,

Chris Kaber