INTER-DEPARTMENT

City of Detroit

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

COLEMAN A. YOUNG
Mayor

March 28, 1980

TO:

William Hart, Chief of Police

Joseph Areeda, Deputy Chief of Western Operations

Odson Tetreault, Chief Investigator, Board of Police Commissioners

FROM:

Coleman A. Young

Enclosed you will find a copy of a report of the incident with the 12th Precinct involving Finance Director, Paul Thompson.

As you can see, this incident occurred on December 20, 1979. Mr. Thompson had verbally informed me of this incident and in the course of the holidays, I had failed to take any action whatsoever. After being informed of another incident involving members of my family with the same precinct, I requested Paul Thompson give me a full written report, a copy of which you will find enclosed.

The reaction of the 12th Precinct with Paul Thompson might indicate the existence of conditions and attitudes in the precinct which are deep-seated and wide-spread with appropriate corrective action.

I would appreciate your assessment.

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Finance Department 1110 City-County Building Detroit, Michigan 48226 Coleman A. Young, Mayor City of Detroit

February 26, 1980

TO:

Mayor Coleman A. Young

FROM: Paul R. Thompson, Jr., Finance Director

This report is submitted to you pursuant to your request regarding an incident I had on December 20, 1979, at the Twelfth Precinct.

Shortly before 10:00 p.m. on December 20, my wife and I were driving home from an affair in two separate vehicles. We were going north on Pontchartrain Drive and were approximately between Merrill Plaisance and Seven Mile Road. The pavement condition was slightly damp and slippery. I witnessed a head-on collision between a white Mustang and a red two-seater sports model Fiat approximately 300 yards in a curve in front of me. When I arrived at the accident, I told my wife, who was immediately behind me, to go to No. 12 and report the incident so that they could dispatch an ambulance and scout car. Having sent for the appropriate help, I then made a quick survey of the two vehicles. The driver and passenger, both young black females, in the Fiat were both conscious. I then immediately went to the Mustang which was approximately 10 to 20 yards up on the lawn. The Mustang was driven by a young white female who was slumped over the steering wheel. I opened the door and took her pulse as she started regaining consciousness. The time indicated on my watch was 9:59 p.m. and other persons had also stopped to help.

I then went to provide assistance to the two young ladies who were in the small sports car. The car had sustained significant damage and neither door could be opened. This type of vehicle has a

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Mayor Young February 26, 1980 Page Two

removable top and with the aid of another person we were able to take it off. The driver appeared to be in fair condition and spoke of only having pains in her chest. The passenger, however, appeared to be in great distress. Her head had ruptured the front windshield and her face was covered entirely with blood. She complained of being unable to see and had difficulty in breathing. She also stated that she could not move either of her legs. For over 15 minutes I stood by the driver's side of the car holding the driver's hand in an attempt to provide whatever aid and comfort I could while awaiting assistance.

During the interim, my wife returned from No. 12 at approximately 10:06 p.m. I asked her to go back to No. 12 to explain to the officer-in-charge that the situation was serious and that additional consideration should be given to increasing the priority for dispatch.

At 10:17 p.m., approximately some 20 minutes after the accident occurred, I felt compelled to take some additional action. I got into my car and went to No. 12. When I entered the precinct, I identified myself as a City official, and asked to speak to the officer-in-charge. I was referred to Sgt. George Powell, Badge #1307. I observed that there were at least six uniformed officers present in the desk area along with several other persons in civilian clothes. The uniformed officers were in addition to the officers who were managing the desk. I informed the Sergeant that the situation on Pontchartrain Drive was serious and that there was a traffic congestion problem. I asked that he dispatch a car from the station to relieve the traffic congestion problem and provide some City presence at the scene. Sgt. Powell informed me that he had already dispatched the necessary vehicles via the 911 Emergency System and that there was nothing he could do. He also informed me that there was little the Police Department could do anyway, since they did not transport injured persons. I informed Sgt. Powell that I was aware that the Police Department did not transport injured persons. However, due to the passage of time since the occurrence of the accident, I felt that the City of Detroit should do something to relieve the congestion at the scene. I further asked Sgt. Powell to exercise his discretionary authority by dispatching a car from the station or to call 911 and increase the priority of the run. It is my understanding that the officer-in-charge of a precinct has the discretionary authority to dispatch a vehicle or increase the run priority.

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As I was discussing this matter with Sgt. Powell, I was walking toward him. He was located at the south end of the counter. When I had reached the Sergeant, I took Chief Hart's card from my wallet and asked if I could make a call to report this situation and was informed that that was not appropriate. I saw a telephone on the desk which was not in use and pointed to this phone as possibly one I could use. At this point I was grabbed by Sgt. Powell who was on my right, and another officer on my left. My right arm was placed behind my back in an arm lock and I was told that I was being placed under arrest for disturbing the peace. I was then forcibly led with my right arm held behind my back into the cell area, searched, and then informed that I could use the pay telephone to make my phone call. From the pay phone in the cellblock area, I made three telephone calls in an attempt to report the problem. One was to Chief Hart's home. However, I was unable to reach him because his number had been changed. I then called the Police Central Communications and asked the officer-on-duty to have Chief Hart paged and return my call at No. 12. The last call which was placed, was to my home.

My wife had arrived by that time, and I asked her to try to reach Mr. Alex Luvall and report this situation to him. Mr. Luvall immediately returned my call. Meanwhile, the lockup officer was asking a number of questions while in the process of filling out some forms. He also requested my drivers license where he transcribed certain information. He then left the cellblock area and locked the door. Sometime later, Sgt. Powell came to the door and asked me through the bars, "are you calmed down enough for me to let you go." I assured the Sergeant that I was calm, however, I had no intention of leaving until I had an opportunity to speak with Chief Hart or Commander Fierimonti. I further informed him that it was inconceivable that a City official could, in the performance of his civic responsibilities, come into a precinct seeking help for a citizen, and wind up locked in jail.

Several minutes later, Sgt. Powell came and released me from the cellblock area and escorted me to an office so that I could speak with Commander Fierimonti. After discussing the details with the Commander, I agreed to leave and return on Friday, December 21, to discuss the matter in detail.

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Chief Hart called me approximately 20 minutes later at my home. He had arrived at the Twelfth Precinct in response to my call, however, I had been released shortly before his arrival. I spoke by phone to Chief Hart regarding the discretionary authority of a duty-officer. He assured me that an officer-on-duty has broad authority and it was well within his power to either dispatch a vehicle from the station or to request a more urgent priority via 911.

On Friday, December 21, I returned at approximately 3:30 p.m. to review the previous night's experience with Commander Fierimonti. I was informed by the day Sergeant that he had gone for the day. I gave the Sergeant my business card and asked that he let the Commander know that I had stopped by and he could call me at his convenience at home. While discussing this matter with the Sergeant, I observed a slender black man in plain clothes who was in the station the previous night standing by the telephone switchboard. I stated to him, "you were here last night," whereupon he responded, "yes, I witnessed the incident." Based upon this verbal exchange, it is my conclusion that this gentleman was a police officer, bringing the count to at least seven police officers, plus the persons manning the desk who were present the previous night.

I left the station and went directly home. Shortly after I arrived, I received a call from Commander Fierimonti. He said that he had expected to see me that morning. I informed him that I had an early meeting and other duties to attend to at the City-County Building. He then said, "well I am on vacation and will not be in until the 27th. I have all of the paperwork locked in my desk, and if you don't mind, I will see you then." I replied that I would be on vacation until January 7, 1980. The Commander and I never got together.

For your information, I am attaching a report from Superintendent Dan Bojalad and the EMS run sheets. You can see from his report the times which I have indicated and the official EMS log are within two minutes. It is not part of EMS procedure to record the time the police arrive, however, the EMS technician stated that scout car 12-4 arrived when the patients were being loaded - 10:42 p.m.

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In closing, I would like to say Mayor that I am not the type of individual who provokes police officers. What I was asking the police to do was well within the rights of an ordinary citizen. The lack of responsiveness as demonstrated on December 20, 1979, by officers of the Twelfth Precinct was an atrocity. That precinct is located in, and serves the largest professional and para-professional black community in the City of Detroit, and you would think their method of operation would be more reflective for the community in which they serve.

You know, the most ironical thing surrounding this whole scene was that Sgt. Powell had asked my wife for her name and address so that he might recommend her for a good citizen merit award. This offer of commendation was made on her first trip to No. 12 at at 10:02 p.m.

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City of Detroit

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

Paul Thompson, Finance Director

DATE February 18, 1980

Daniel P. Bojalad

SUBJECT:

INJURY ACCIDENT OF DECEMBER 20, 1979

Superintendent Emergency Medical Service Div.

Dear Mr. Thompson:

This communication is being forwarded to provide you with information regarding the December 20, 1979 automobile accident at Merrill Plaisance and Ponchartrain. The official recorded E.M.S. times are as follows:

10:04 p.m. - received from 9-1-1 injury accident call to Merrill Plaisance and Ponchartrain.

10:08 p.m. - dispatched E.M.S. unit 16 to location.

10:17 p.m. - E.M.S. 16 arrived on scene and began extrication and treatment.

10:42 p.m. - E.M.S. 16 transported three casualties to Mt. Carmel Hospital.

11:22 p.m. - E.M.S. completed call and became available for further calls.

Normally this call would have been handled by E.M.S. 18. However, E.M.S. 18 has been closed for budgetary reasons. The next unit used would have been E.M.S. 3, however, E.M.S. 3 was committed to a call at 14682 Cloverdale. Because of this E.M.S. 16, located at Ryan and Hillsdale, was dispatched to the incident.

Upon arrival of E.M.S. 16 at the scene, it was discovered that three women experienced injuries. The E.M.S. crew removed the women from the wreckage, provided treatment, and transported the casualties to Mt. Carmel Hospital.

In my conversation with E.M.S. Technician Thomas Hirsch I was informed that D.P.D. scout car 12-4 arrived on the scene, as the patients were being loaded into the E.M.S. vehicle.

I have attached copies of Medic 16's run reports for your perusal.

Please contact me if you require further information.

Daniel P. Bojalad

Superintendent

Emergency Medical Service Div.

Detroit Fire Department

DPB/vbk Attachments

INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Date

December 20, 1979

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RREST OF PAUL THOMPSON, DIE SCTOR OF FIN. ICE, LITT OF DETROIT

On Decembe 20, 1979 at approximately 10.00PM, a black ismale entered the Twelfth Presinct and informed Office. Anne Kleinsmith that there was an injury accident on Fonchastrain Drive and Merrill Plaisance. Officer Kleinsmith immediatly not fied the 911 operator about the recident. Shortly thereafter, the female again entered the precinct and stated that her hust and was at the scene of the accident and he wanted a sc ut car at the scene. I informed the female that the 911 Operator had been no ified and that a car would be dis-

patc ed.

'At a prox nately 10:15PM, a black male entered the s ation and demanded to see the Lieutenant in charge. I informed him that I was in charge and that there was not a lieutenant or duty at the present time. At this time, the male leman ed t at I send a scout car to the accident scene, He was shouting nd cursir . I attempted to expl in th to a car would be disputched, but he in errupted and demanded to se a . eute ant. Once again I tolihim that a li uten it was no on duty. "he male bec me inate and stated, "I want a fucking car ever there right now.' I a kee hi to salm leven and he stated, "That if I don't, come o let's cance around the station. He continued to curse and demand that I send a cart) the accident letten a moved a card f om his vallet and demanded that I call the mu per vaic was on the ard. I ther asked his his name, but he is more my re seat and court nue to curse and derend that I call he number of the pard, she was curs ng e walke i behind me and a tempted to go bel no the lesk. was stalling at the out? end f tie desk therefore, I grabe i hi: arm a linform i hi th thi we unde arrest fc di orde ly conduct.

The above ale was ater id ntified as Mr. Paul Thom sor Di ctor of Finance, C ty o De roit. Mr Thimpson will released not right area at 11: DOPM.

Vitne ses: Patricia Har ell of 168 5 Sisse . Phone num er 8:7-814

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