



OFFICE OF POLICE OVERSIGHT

NOTICE OF COMPLAINT

August 26, 2022

ICMS #: 2022-0705

On August 23, 2022, the OPO received an online complaint.

The complainant alleges: To the Office of the Police Monitor, The following is based on first hand knowledge of the inner workings of the Austin Police Department [REDACTED]. For the past [REDACTED] Years or more Sgt [REDACTED] has been grossly misusing the cities resources and money, She has funneled city money to her friends by bypassing the contract bidding process, She bypassed the process when she hired her friend as the [REDACTED], The [REDACTED], does not live in the City of Austin and stays at [REDACTED] house when she comes into town to do [REDACTED] work for Austin Police Department. [REDACTED] did not allow the bidding process to happen when looking for a new city [REDACTED] instead she hired her friend on the sly. Not allowing local [REDACTED] the opportunity to profit from the city. [REDACTED] altered the bidding process when the Austin Police Department put a bid out to purchase new saddles. The officers assigned to the unit at the time had been testing saddles from different manufacturers due to the fact that the current brand of saddles ([REDACTED]) were falling apart due to poor construction and materials. [REDACTED] at the time was not yet the Sergeant over the [REDACTED], and she intervened when she saw that a new saddle manufacturer was being considered. She is personal friends with [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED] stayed at [REDACTED] house during the bidding process, [REDACTED] is also privately employed with her personal business and accredited through [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] canceled the first saddle contract after [REDACTED] were not chosen and rewrote the contract stating that the winning bidder had to purchase the old broken saddles for Austin Police Department as part of the contract. No saddle manufacturer was going to purchase broken saddles as part of a buyback program unless they were the original manufacturer. So [REDACTED] won the new bid on the promise that the old saddles would be "bought". However, the owner, and personal friend of [REDACTED], built this "Buyback" into the saddle price. The saddles were not ever picked up by the manufacturer, instead they were donated or sold to a group that was at the time paying [REDACTED] for her horsemanship training program that she runs on the side and gets paid for. [REDACTED] also uses the City resources to Promote her own business, [REDACTED] also sells [REDACTED]



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Saddles on her website. [REDACTED] stopped buying certain items from the vet hospital and instead purchased vet supplies through her friend the [REDACTED] thus further bolstering her profits from APD. This took money away from a contracted vet and reallocating it to a personal friend. [REDACTED] has only allowed the purchase of [REDACTED] products when available, depriving other manufactures/merchants a fair chance of earning the City's business. [REDACTED] has in the past changed Officer's schedules, without notice, to support her friend [REDACTED] the [REDACTED] due to [REDACTED] being unable to make it to Austin in a timely manner to trim horses feet citing the fact that [REDACTED] business is losing money. [REDACTED] lives in [REDACTED] area. She told officers to stay late without overtime pay and to flex the time when [REDACTED] was not available. This is in a city Email to the [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] sent on [REDACTED] titled [REDACTED]. Mismanagement: [REDACTED] came to the [REDACTED] and told the current members that she was going to bring on a Senior Officer to [REDACTED] on special assignment to train horses, This was in acknowledgement to a failure in horse training by the trainer in that position, [REDACTED], who had not produced a trained horse for more than a year. Also, [REDACTED] had participated in pushing a seemingly dangerous horse onto the streets, to be ridden by a Junior [REDACTED] Officer, despite that horses training and performance short comings. [REDACTED] acknowlged this issues with [REDACTED] and expressed that once accepted as the Sergeant, that she would handle these clear problems. Operational Officers were told that the Senior Officer [REDACTED] did not want to be on the [REDACTED] Unit on a permanent basis and that it would not take away an operational position. [REDACTED] expressed to the unit, that she did not believe that she would be able to separate her friendship from work relationship with [REDACTED] thus she was only being placed temporarily on Special Assignment, to catch back up on horse training. When [REDACTED] joined the unit as the Sergeant, she never made good on the expressed intention of revamping the training program to become more transparant, effective, and safe, thus sowing more distrust in the unit. [REDACTED] remained in the full time trainer position, without evaluation of fitness for the position. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are best friends and when a permanent position opened up [REDACTED] brought on [REDACTED] as permanent second trainer, costing the unit an operational position. This placed a strain on officers that are operational. [REDACTED] gives [REDACTED] preferential treatment allowing her to make her own schedule and harass other officers without repercussion. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] treat other Officers with constant disrespect even yelling at Officers in the presence of [REDACTED] and yet she is not reprimanded due to their close personal relationship. [REDACTED] is trying to get [REDACTED] enrolled in an out of state horse training school paid by Austin Police Department even though [REDACTED] has mentioned that she is retiring in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] has expressed intent to retire around this time as well, and desire to hire [REDACTED] for her personal business. This



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school could be attended instead by an experienced officer not intending on leaving anytime soon. The previous trainer [REDACTED] was able to train a horse every six months. The current trainer, still [REDACTED], has trained a single horse in the past [REDACTED] years and [REDACTED] has trained one horse in about [REDACTED] years. Officers make around \$80,000 per year. The Austin Police Department has spent around \$560,000 paying [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to train two horses. Instead of managing these poorly performing trainers [REDACTED] continues to let them come to work not training horses, creating their own schedule, working from home writing lesson plans that aren't used, and not participating on an operational level. They also get to enjoy the privilege of pseudo supervisor positions fabricated by the Sergeant. This all places operational strain on the officers that Patrol [REDACTED]. This has created an exodus from the historically coveted position of Patrol. [REDACTED] has pushed many decorated and even ranking Officers off of Patrol to make room to bring on officers with no experience. In the past [REDACTED] had decades of combined experience, however [REDACTED] pushed these Officers away creating a unit with little experience. Given the situation of newer trained horses, inexperienced officers can create a dangerous combination. [REDACTED] has mismanaged the [REDACTED] into a position where they desperately need trained horses to replace the current aging horses. If unchecked, [REDACTED] conflicts of interest, which have stepped into her decision making at every level will continue, casting the Department, which portrays itself to not condone ethics violations, in a bad light. Investigation of [REDACTED], and her funneling of City Funds into her friend's, and her own businesses, could help prevent the demise of the [REDACTED]. Previous attempts to have these issues investigated within the department have failed due to [REDACTED] vast network of allies within the ranks. Please forward these allegations to IA and the chief of police.

This notice of complaint is a request for Internal Affairs to initiate an investigation to determine if the employee conduct is within compliance of APD policy, Civil Service Rules, and Municipal Civil Service Rules.