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John V. Scippa
Director

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Released by Director John V. Scippa, NH Police Standards and Training

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONCORD, NH – The New Hampshire Police Standards and Training Council (PSTC) announces that a public presentation was given at the council meeting on April 23 by Director John V. Scippa to provide clarification regarding the recent media reports about a 2006 incident involving a former NH police officer.

Jonathan Stone was a full-time certified police officer for the city of Claremont in 2006. The Claremont Police Department, under the leadership of Chief Alexander Scott, conducted internal investigations into two allegations of police misconduct against Stone on or about that time. Stone was subsequently terminated by the Claremont Police Department based on those findings, and an Employee Status Notification Form B (“Form B”) was filed by Chief Scott with PSTC on April 17, 2006, reflecting Stone’s “discharge” effective March 27, 2006.

In response to the Form B, then-NH PST Director Keith Lohman issued a letter on April 20, 2006, to Chief Scott inquiring as to whether the termination was related to a violation of PSTC administrative rule (“Pol”) 402.02 “Ownership and Revocation of Certificates: Revocation or Suspension”. If applicable, Chief Scott was requested to forward a copy of the case files for evaluation for possible council action.

According to PSTC records, Director Lohman sent a follow-up letter to Chief Scott on August 24, 2006, confirming their telephone conversation in which Chief Scott had advised that Stone had appealed his termination, and Director Lohman requested an update as to the status of the appeal. PSTC received a letter from Chief Scott dated September 5, 2006, advising that an arbitration was scheduled for December 8, 2006, and that Chief Scott would provide any further updates prior to that date.

Chief Scott filed a second Form B with PSTC on May 25, 2007, which was backdated to reflect that the status change was to be retroactively applied to March 27, 2006. This second Form B indicated that Stone’s separation from employment had been changed to a “negotiated resignation.” On June 5, 2007, the new PST Director Donald Vittum sent a letter to Chief Scott advising that because the separation was changed to a negotiated resignation the council now lacked authority to take action under Pol 402.02(a)(5). Further, the letter provided notice that the investigation may contain relevant information for the council to consider if Stone attempted to apply for a position in NH law enforcement in the future.

At the time of these events in 2006 and 2007, the PSTC administrative rules did not provide authority for the council to take action on Stone’s certification. With respect to the first Form B, the council could not act because the officer’s termination was not yet final due to his pending appeal. In terms of the second Form B, the council lacked jurisdiction to take action upon a negotiated resignation. An exhaustive search of council minutes has confirmed that no hearing was conducted.



Important changes to governing statute RSA 106-L (effective January 1, 2023) and the administrative rules ensure a case like this would be handled differently if it occurred today. All allegations of misconduct, as defined in RSA 106-L:2, must be reported to the Conduct Review Committee (CRC) within fifteen (15) days of the receipt of the complaint. If the misconduct is sustained, the CRC refers the matter to the council for a public hearing. Furthermore, the CRC and the council can act in a regulatory capacity independent of any separation agreement between a law enforcement agency and employee. These changes have resulted from the collective effort of NH law enforcement executives working with the CRC and the council to provide a greater degree of procedural clarity and due process, and a greater degree of authority to address sustained findings of misconduct.

The full presentation is available on the PSTC website at <https://www.pstc.nh.gov/publications/>.