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DON EDWARDS
President

Patrol Officer
TAMI RUSSELL
Vice-President

Detective
LINDZEE CARPENTER
Secretary

Patrol Officer
RYAN BINKLEY
Treasurer

Detective
KENNETH YOUNG
Sergeant-at-Arms

**SPRINGFIELD POLICE BENEVOLENT
AND PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION UNIT NO. 5**
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Trustees:

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GINO MALDONADO

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SEAN WHITE

Legal Counsel
RON STONE

March 6, 2021

Via e-mail

Honorable James Langfelder
800 E. Monroe Street
Springfield, Illinois 62701

Mayor Langfelder,

I write this letter today with deep concern. The rank-and-file Membership of the Springfield Police Department, who are all members of the Police Benevolent and Protective Association Unit #5, are bewildered and frankly, upset about the shocking behavior of Alderman Shawn Gregory. As you are aware, Alderman Gregory instigated a physical fight with another male which was caught on video and published by news outlets and social media.

Our Members are dumbfounded that no adverse actions have taken place against Alderman Gregory by the City, the other Aldermen, or by you personally. Rather, you and Alderman Gregory defended his actions by attempting to turn his egregious lapse in judgement into a positive by saying he was teaching the people in his community that they should fight with fists rather than using guns. While this is obviously a good try to diminish the responsibility Alderman Gregory should be taking for his actions, it honestly insults every one of our Members who know for an absolute fact that the citizens expect much better from its elected officials as well as all of the City's employees.

Within the last year alone, PBPA 5 has had Members scrutinized and held highly accountable for similar or lesser offenses. While this is something that should be done, there cannot be a double standard with elected officials and other City employees. The double standard in Alderman Gregory's case is very apparent. Since this happened, my Members have questioned why he is not being held accountable by you and the City Council at large.

With new legislation being passed regarding "police reform" already creating another high level of stress among our Members and police across the State, the message sent by you during the press conference only served to further reduce the faith our Members have that you support them. They feel as though the City doesn't care about its police officers and the difficult job they do every day. Rather, they feel vilified when they make mistakes, and when an elected official exercises poor judgement, nothing at all happens. Accountability is mandatory at all levels of government. Elected officials should be held as accountable as any other person would be in similar circumstances.

We are asking that you hold Alderman Gregory accountable, and that you explain your press conference remarks more completely. Our Officers are regularly called to fights in progress exactly like this one, and at times make arrests for such behavior. Encouraging this behavior rather than denouncing it to the public through the media sends a message to our Members and the public at large that it is acceptable behavior in the City of Springfield. What took place was Aggravated Battery because it occurred on a public way. This is a felony in Illinois, and there is no way one of our officers would not be held accountable if this had in fact happened to them.

Respectfully,



Don Edwards
PBPA 5 President

Cc: PBPA bulletin board
Email to Membership
State Journal Register