

August 27th, 2020

To: Mayor Pete Muldoon, Town Council, Town Manager, Acting Chief Michelle Weber

Re: Acting Chief Michelle Weber's Statement & Sexual Harassment Allegations

Following an initial inadequate apology from the Jackson Police Department over the inappropriate police blotter post, we issued the following demands as initial steps to addressing the harm.

Acting Chief Weber has since put out a statement acknowledging the "impact was both far reaching and hurtful to vulnerable members of our community", along with the following actions:

- Suspension of the Facebook Police Blotter
- Renewed Cooperation with Community Safety Network
- Implicit Bias Training with Bret Hood (25 year FBI veteran)
- Crisis Intervention Training (Police-based intervention training)

We welcome the first two as necessary, bare minimum steps forward to reduce harm to victims and increase overall community safety.

The last two items fall into a category of reform that we have critiqued in our [first public report](#) as often futile (implicit bias trainings have shown [no demonstrable impact](#) on culture, especially when required) while continuing to empower law enforcement through increased funding and the illusion that after the training they are qualified to handle our most vulnerable community members. Crisis Intervention Training can serve to add a veneer of progress to current policing, but is still police-based. We are trying to reduce the amount of unnecessary public interactions between armed officers and the public, especially those experiencing crisis. [Alternative models](#) of response exist without officers interactions, and are shown to reduce dangerous incidents at a fraction of the cost of standard policing.

Yesterday, we were saddened, but not surprised, to read the sexual harassment allegations against JPD that were reported in this week's Jackson Hole News & Guide (Ex-cop points to misogyny at the PD, 8/26/20). We stand by our previous statement that this culture of misogyny will not be fixed with the departure of one officer, and that this is not the case of a "few bad apples."

In Lt. Schultz's open letter after his resignation, he attributed his offensive Blotter post to being short on time and lacking an editor. Neither he nor the Department acknowledged that what he wrote was born of a deeply rooted and insidious culture of sexism and bias.

What we are experiencing is nothing new: a harmful incident sheds light on a police department's culture, more victims step forward with their experiences, a new leader (often female and/or POC) is appointed, promises of training/reform are made, and the status quo is largely held intact.

We stand by our request that the vacant role is left unfilled, and those resources reallocated to survivor-centered-support, outside of JPD. At this moment, we have an opportunity to strengthen our life-affirming institutions and reinvest in our community. It would be a shame to maintain the status quo with the same rhetoric of "culture change."

- Act Now JH