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INSPECTOR GENERAL'S REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

2020-OIG-4

On March 19, 2020, I received an anonymous email regarding concerns that the Springfield Fire Department Rookie Class was doing their morning exercises at a gym facility owned by a firefighter. The anonymous email was concerned that the firefighter's gym business was receiving money from the Springfield Fire Department for these exercise classes and that a firefighter who owned the gym was being paid as a rookie class instructor. The anonymous writer claimed that there could be favoritism and that other "places" are not able to make special arrangements like this. The writer complained about the abuse of position or authority for personal gain, abusive hiring, promotion or compensation procedures, bribery, kickbacks, and gratuities and conflicts of interest or ethics violations. The anonymous writer asked not to be contacted.

I forwarded the anonymous email to Springfield Fire Chief Allen Reyne for his review. I received a prompt response from Chief Reyne who indicated that Rookie School normally runs 16-20 weeks and that SFD has used many gyms and facilities across the City in the past such as Lincoln Land, SHG, and the Fit Club. He stated that all SFD personnel are members of the Fit Club and that Lincoln Land and SHG did not charge a fee for use of their facilities.

SFD uses "Peer Fitness Instructors" who are all firefighters and are paid approximately \$30 per hour for 2 hours for morning workout assistance. The option to become a Peer Fitness Instructor is an equal opportunity to any firefighter who is interested and willing to train the Rookie class. These Peer Fitness Instructors are paid despite the location where the training occurs.

The current Rookie class is training at a gym facility which is privately owned by one of the current Peer Fitness Instructors, however, and most importantly, the owner of the gym in question is charging no fee to the Springfield Fire Department for use of the gym and all of its equipment. In short, the firefighter/Peer Fitness Instructor is not being compensated for wear and tear on the equipment at the firefighter's gym.

Inasmuch as the opportunity to become a Peer Fitness Instructor is open to any interested firefighter, and the fact that the firefighter owned facility is being provided at no cost to Springfield Fire Department, I find that there is no indication of favoritism, kickbacks, bribery, abuse of position for personal gain, conflict of interest, or ethical violation. Therefore, my investigation is closed without any further action or recommendations.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Roger W. Holmes
Inspector General