

## Trelena Collins

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**From:** Ron Dooley  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 24, 2019 11:37 AM  
**To:** Trelena Collins  
**Subject:** Hostile Work Environment Concern

Trelena,

I wanted to take a moment and give you the details of my complaint to City Manager Bless on **Friday November, 22nd**. My concerns surround the behavior of Chief Riggs and how I am being treated, since he was hired a few weeks back. Please keep in mind that before Chief Riggs was hired, Lt. Ferguson and myself were called into Mr. Bless' office and were told that with Foerster leaving, the department had a clean slate, and that employees were no longer going to come to work afraid. It was reiterated that Lt. Ferguson and I would be transitioning the department into a place that was much easier to work in and to help change the culture for the betterment of the department.

On Chief Riggs very first day (I believe it was **November 6**) he called the command staff into the training room and asked each person about themselves, to include their family life and hobbies. The room held Sgt. Lopez, Sgt. Limerick, Sgt. Keele and Chief Riggs. When it became my turn to speak about myself, Chief Riggs said *"Dooley, I know about you...you are the one that worked with Foerster for the last 25 years"*. This made me feel very uncomfortable and set the tone for the next few weeks. His statement made it clear that I was an outcast and would be associated with the past negativity with the firing of Foerster, and somehow insinuated that I was a problem employee as well. During this meeting, I offered to take the Chief to the firing range (as we do with all employees on their first day), but was met with hostility by him sarcastically saying that his previous firearms qualification would be used and even said *"that will work for TCOLE purposes, won't it LIEUTENANT!"*. This hostility was noticed by Sgt. Limerick and he even mentioned it after the meeting.

On Chief Riggs 2nd day, Lt Ferguson and I told him about a concern that we had over Officer Braneff. The list of previous episodes were described to him, including the incident at the gun range, which is the only incident that I have personally witnessed. Officer Braneff's issues are currently being addressed and there were no concerns until Chief Riggs asked me to email to him on November 20th, my documentation of the range incident on Braneff. Later in the day on **November 20th**, Chief Riggs told me to sit at his table, and to close the door. He very visibly upset and asked me why I did not take any action on Officer Braneff and why I did not forward the information to Chief Bitz. I told Chief Riggs all that I had done, to include advising Chief Bitz, who was already at the range when this occurred and knew about the situation, had contacted her supervisor (Lt. Ferguson), had sent her home, had advised her to not go to work that day, and had documented the entire event in an email to Chief Bitz, and Lt. Ferguson requesting that they get HR involved to find the root of the issue with Braneff. Chief Riggs then asked why I did not send the documentation to Chief Bitz, and I said that I had and to check the email that I sent him again. He immediately pulled up the email and said *"oh I see it now that you did copy Chief Bitz"*, but he was still visibly angry. Chief Riggs then stood up, went across the room, and picked up a Binder with the JVPD Policy manual and said *"do you realize that it is a policy violation to not take action"* in a very spirited voice. I calmly said that I did take action, and that I had been the only person to take such action against Officer Braneff, and that it was because of my actions that Officer Braneff is being helped and currently evaluated. Chief Riggs then pressed his finger repeatedly into the Rockwall Police Policy Manual saying *"and in this policy manual it is a policy violation to not take action as well!"*. I again tried to let Chief Riggs know that I had taken all of the required action on the range event, but it was very obvious that Chief Riggs was accusing me of violating both the Jersey Village Police policy and the Rockwall Police Department Policy manual. When I asked what further action I could have taken, Chief Riggs could not give me any suggestions. Chief Riggs then in a hostile voice told me that *"moving forward I expect you to take action on any employee...regardless if they fall under your supervision or not"*. Chief Riggs shamed me and treated me like a child for no reason whatsoever



in this meeting. I left his office feeling shaken, confused and with the feeling that he was purposely targeting me because I knew the previous Chief of Police. Please note that when I spoke to Mr. Bless on November 22, I asked if there were any known issues with the investigation of Officer Braneff, or lack of action taken by me, and he said that there were no issues whatsoever, so I can only believe that Chief Riggs is singling me out for some reason, especially considering all that I have done to document the incident and that she was not even under my chain of command.

On November 21st, Lt Ferguson pulled me aside and told me that for some reason, Chief Riggs had phoned him asking him about the CID schedule, to include the times that they report to work. Our division reports to work at 0900 hours each day, but Chief Riggs has never asked me about our schedule, but rather decided to foster an untrusting environment by asking other people about the scheduling of the division that I am supervising. With Lt. Ferguson and Sonya Smith in the same room, I called Chief Riggs and asked him if he had any questions or concerns about the schedule of the CID employees. Chief Riggs said *"yes I am an 8 to 5 guy...Rockwall Detectives work 8 to 5 with an unpaid lunch"*. I told Chief Riggs that our Detectives use the lunch hour to eat, but also use this time to contact witnesses, interview suspects, download surveillance video from crime scenes and many other duties, and that we are routinely called by phone or have to respond to a scene while at lunch. I also mentioned that Patrol Officers also have a paid lunch for the same reasons. Chief Riggs again said that he was *"an 8 to 5 person and that he would address this when he got back"*. I did mention to Chief Riggs that if he would be changing our schedules to match Rockwall PD, then I would need to have some time, as I have to \_\_\_\_\_ each day at 8:15 a.m. I must say that to have patrol officers with a paid lunch, and to make Detectives take an unpaid lunch seems to be targeting myself and the other two Detectives unfairly.

These and other issues were described to Mr. Bless last Friday. I could hardly keep my composure as I tried to describe the almost Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde behavior of Chief Riggs toward myself. I pleaded with Mr. Bless to make this targeted hostility stop. One response from Mr. Bless that stands out is *"what has Riggs found out about you that would make him act this way?"*. My response was that *"I have done nothing in the last 51 years of my life to deserve this type of working environment"*. I felt that in this comment, Mr. Bless was trying to justify the behavior of Chief Riggs, despite his commitment to have a change of culture and a better working environment. Mr. Bless showed no emotion or concern for my complaint but said that he would speak to Chief Riggs about this. As I was leaving, I told Mr. Bless that I felt that Chief Riggs was trying to make my life so miserable, that I would quit the department. I informed Mr. Bless that I had no intention of quitting.

Thank you for helping me with this concern. I really love my job and enjoy serving the citizens of Jersey Village, but the intentional hostility directed toward me must stop.

Thank you,

Ron Dooley