

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI
EASTERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)
)
 Plaintiff,)
)
 v.)
)
) No. 4:16-CV-00180 CDP
)
 CITY OF FERGUSON, MISSOURI,)
)
 Defendant.)

STATUS HEARING

BEFORE THE HONORABLE CATHERINE D. PERRY
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

FEBRUARY 4, 2025

APPEARANCES:

Independent Monitor: Natasha Tidwell, Esq.

For Plaintiff: Jorge Castillo, Esq.
Amy Senier, Esq.
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

For Defendant: Aarnarian (Apollo) D. Carey, Esq.
Ryan Prisock, Esq.
LEWIS RICE LLC

Also Present: Patricia Washington

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PRODUCED BY COURT REPORTER COMPUTER-AIDED TRANSCRIPTION

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1 (PROCEEDINGS BEGAN AT 10:15 AM.)

2 THE COURT: We are here for the quarterly status
3 conference in the United States v. City of Ferguson,
4 4:16-CV-180.

5 I see many people here, and I'm glad to see you. I'm
6 going to turn this over to the clerk to give the speech she
7 needs to give at the beginning of each session.

8 (ALL PARTICIPANTS ARE REMINDED OF THE PROHIBITIONS REGARDING
9 PHOTOGRAPHING, RECORDING, AND BROADCASTING OF COURT
10 PROCEEDINGS IN ACCORDANCE WITH LOCAL RULE 13.02. PARTICIPANTS
11 WHO VIOLATE THE RULE MAY FACE SANCTIONS UP TO AND INCLUDING
12 DENIAL OF ENTRY TO FUTURE HEARINGS, OR ANY OTHER SANCTIONS
13 DEEMED NECESSARY BY THE JUDICIAL OFFICER.)

14 THE COURT: And so I will just add to that, that is a
15 rule that is the court rule, and we do expect it to be
16 followed. I'm glad that there are people listening to this
17 remotely, but this covers them as well. And it's important.
18 And there could be sanctions, including contempt of court
19 proceedings, for anyone who chose to violate that rule.

20 So after saying that, now we'll say I'm glad to see
21 you all here today. And, I guess, let me have the lawyers
22 introduce themselves, before we have the public speak, and say
23 who is sitting at your tables.

24 So from the Department?

25 MS. SENIER: Good morning, Your Honor. Amy Senier

1 for the United States.

2 MR. CASTILLO: And Jorge Castillo for the United
3 States.

4 MR. CAREY: Apollo Carey, City of Ferguson.

5 MR. PRISCOCK: Ryan Priscock, City of Ferguson.

6 THE COURT: And then for the Monitor?

7 MS. TIDWELL: Good morning. Natasha Tidwell on
8 behalf of the Monitoring Team.

9 THE COURT: Great. And, I guess, Mr. Carey, you
10 usually introduce all the people from the City who are here.
11 Do you want to wait until we've already heard from the public
12 first?

13 MR. CAREY: Yes, ma'am. I'd like to do that.

14 THE COURT: So today is the day for public comment,
15 and so I'd like to begin with that. And I see that there were
16 people who signed up, and I appreciate that. And so I will
17 ask you all to do what we've done before. And most of you
18 have been here before.

19 So when you come up, I'll have you speak from the
20 lectern and state your name. And then it's a five-minute
21 rule. And so the yellow light will come on when you have a
22 minute left, and the red light will come on when your five
23 minutes is up. And so I appreciate that.

24 And just, Ms. Clines, I think you're first. So why
25 don't you come on up. You can just stand right there and

1 speak into the mic. That's great.

2 MS. CLINES: Good morning --

3 THE COURT: Morning.

4 MS. CLINES: -- Judge Perry. First, I want to say
5 thank you so much for this opportunity to allow the community
6 to speak today. I know that's a -- I really appreciate that
7 because you didn't have to do that. I've spoken before.

8 THE COURT: And you're Mildred Clines; correct?

9 MS. CLINES: Yes, Mildred Clines.

10 THE COURT: If you say that at the beginning, then
11 that's in the record so that everybody --

12 MS. CLINES: So, you know, this is a little bit
13 intimidating.

14 THE COURT: Yeah.

15 MS. CLINES: I'm kind of nervous. But my name is
16 Mildred Clines. I'm a 37-year resident in Ferguson. And I
17 did take a little notes, but I -- mostly I'd just like to
18 speak from my heart and off the cuff.

19 But what I want to talk about today is where we are
20 as a city, in my opinion, in the City of Ferguson. And from
21 the beginning of the Consent Decree, I have been involved and
22 following and doing my part as a resident to help to try to
23 heal the city and to move the city forward from where I've
24 known the city has been in the past.

25 And I've already said I'm so thankful that the DOJ

1 came into the city because we needed help and we didn't know
2 what to do and how to get all the issues that we had going on
3 in our city. We didn't know what to do as a community.

4 So when the DOJ came in and actually saw the things
5 that we had been living with for all these years, you know,
6 and we entered into this Consent Decree, you know, many of us
7 were so happy.

8 So since we've had this Consent Decree, we've had so
9 many police chiefs, so many city managers. And in my opinion,
10 the reason we've had so many changes is because there is a
11 group in Ferguson that is just bent on keeping the status quo.
12 They did not see anything wrong with what the City was doing,
13 we didn't have any problems, and that group is still fighting,
14 and that's why I feel like we're still here today.

15 Now, has progress been made? Yes, you know, but
16 there is still so much more to do. And in my opinion, all the
17 police chiefs that we've had since the Consent Decree -- they
18 have all been great, but they've been undermined by our City
19 Council, you know. To me, that's what the issues are and
20 still continue to be. Even with our city manager, it's the
21 same thing as well.

22 We just recently had a City Council meeting where
23 some of the members on the Council was talking about suing the
24 DOJ to try to get out of this Consent Decree, you know? So
25 that's why -- and then just recently our City Council voted

1 against the advice of our city attorney. I feel like we still
2 in trouble.

3 And I know before we brought issues like this before
4 you, and you were like, okay, so when the people are not happy
5 with their elected officials, you all know what to do.

6 So that's the work that we as a community are doing
7 and trying to do -- is to get the right people on our Council
8 to do what's best for our city and to move our city forward.

9 I've been a member of the NPSC since its inception as
10 well, and we have worked, oh, my God, so tirelessly because
11 the police department has allowed us to give our input and
12 work on the different policies that concern the city, the
13 residents, and the police department. They allowed us to kind
14 of give our input.

15 And we have work tirelessly on those. But it seem
16 like every time the person in that position changes, like the
17 Consent Decree Coordinator, whomever, then all the work that
18 we've done as a committee, the NPSC, is like either lost or
19 discarded, you know? So that is frustrating.

20 Let me see what else I want to make sure I touch on.
21 I basically just want to say I'm just grateful for all the
22 work that those that are really concerned and really are
23 meaning to help our city get past what has happened in the
24 past, and I'm so grateful for all the work. And I see the
25 work. We see the work. We recognize it. But it is still a

1 lot to do.

2 And let me tell you another thing that's really
3 important -- is when you have people that's either on staff or
4 on City Council that's been there since 2014 or prior to 2014
5 and they have that mindset that, you know, they're just
6 picking on us, the government's just picking on us, the DOJ is
7 just picking on the City of Ferguson, and then when you bring
8 new people in, we bringing new people in, but then you got
9 that person with that kind of mentality, spewing that type of,
10 you know, messaging over to new people, it's like a rotten
11 apple. You put a rotten apple with some good apples, and it
12 kind of, you know, makes that good apple tainted as well.

13 So I know we got a lot of work to do. I just wanted
14 to speak here and to say thank you so much. We hardly ever
15 get this opportunity. So thank you for listening.

16 THE COURT: Thank you for speaking. Yeah. And your
17 good apple/bad apple -- I mean, that happens in workplaces,
18 and I understand what you're saying. And in cities and
19 communities. So I hope that things can -- that people can
20 have more positive attitudes.

21 MS. CLINES: Yes, ma'am. Thank you.

22 THE COURT: All right. Adrian Shropshire?

23 MR. SHROPSHIRE: My name is Adrian Shropshire. Good
24 morning, Judge.

25 THE COURT: Good morning.

1 MR. SHROPSHIRE: Good morning, citizens, and good
2 morning, court.

3 First of all, I want to let you know what I do in
4 Ferguson. I'm with the Ferguson Youth Initiative. I am with
5 the NPSC, the Neighborhood Police Steering. I'm with the
6 Citizens Interview Panel for the police officers. I'm on the
7 citizens training on the Training Committee that works with
8 the training credentials that the police officers go through.
9 And I'm a 38-year citizen of Ferguson.

10 I've been there through the good and -- well, let's
11 put it like this. I've been there through the bad and the
12 good.

13 First of all, I want to give thanks to let you
14 know -- I want to give thanks to Lisa Stephens, Ms. Stephens,
15 and for working with us on the training specialist.

16 And I want to give a thanks to Ms. Pat Washington.
17 She is our PIO officer and standing in for the Consent Decree
18 Coordinator. She is doing a great job. Both of these people
19 are doing a great job for our city.

20 Starting out, I would like to let you know about our
21 police Explorer post. We've opened up a -- we're recruiting
22 for Explorers. I think the ages are 14 to 18, and we are a
23 certified Boy Scout troop. It's 9231, I think. And we
24 started that, just a matter of fact, last month, we rolled
25 that out.

1 The Ferguson Police Department -- they are asking for
2 feedback from the citizens on policies as far as community
3 safety. We will be starting a Community Safety Coalition
4 program. The chief has started that, and we do have a
5 committee that has been sitting in. We've had meetings on
6 that, and we hope to get that going this month.

7 Chief Doyle was recognized by the YMCA for the MLK
8 Strong community award. Chief Doyle is doing a great job as
9 far as bringing good people into our police force. I've
10 interviewed -- I've been on the interview panel now for the
11 last six years, and this is one of the best recruiting
12 sessions that we've had.

13 THE COURT: That's very good to hear.

14 MR. SHROPSHIRE: We're bringing in younger, smarter,
15 more intelligent, and community-based employees.

16 One thing we are getting is a lot of -- we're getting
17 police officers that have been to the academy that are coming
18 in with a degree. And that is very important, I feel, when
19 you come, when you have a double skill, and when you're doing
20 something both sides to help the community out.

21 The Training Committee. We are going through a
22 training procedures, and we have Martin Bartness. He's out
23 of -- he's the SME out of Minnesota -- I think it's
24 Minneapolis -- from their police force.

25 And we on the Training Committee -- we did need a bit

1 of training. And it never hurts to get training and to keep
2 us focused in on the big picture. We do a lot of work, and we
3 have a lot of papers coming through and a lot of training
4 coming through our group that's moved on to the DOJ and as far
5 as being implemented into our police force.

6 One more thing I wanted to talk about is staffing. I
7 feel we are -- right now I think we're, like, at 85 percent.
8 I've been doing interviews, through the month of January did
9 interviews. Now we're going to be doing interviews, citizen
10 interviews, on internal promotions, and that is starting next
11 week. So I think that's going to be a great thing for
12 sergeants and lieutenants, I think.

13 One more thing about inside promotions. Well, my
14 time is up.

15 THE COURT: Go ahead and finish.

16 MR. SHROPSHIRE: Yeah. I think internal promotions
17 are great because they have been with us and they know our
18 community, and that's a very important part of community
19 engagement and community outreach. I have something here I
20 would like to leave with you.

21 THE COURT: Okay.

22 MR. SHROPSHIRE: I'll give it to the bailiff.

23 THE COURT: You can give it to the clerk right here.
24 The clerk right here will take it.

25 MR. SHROPSHIRE: This is part of our report that was

1 given by the chief.

2 THE COURT: Okay. Thank you.

3 MR. SHROPSHIRE: Thank you for giving the time for me
4 to speak, and you have a good day.

5 THE COURT: Thank you.

6 All right. Ms. Butler, Cassandra Butler. Good
7 morning.

8 MS. BUTLER: Good morning, Your Honor. I appreciate
9 your continuance in presiding over the Ferguson Consent
10 Decree, particularly during times like this when the entire
11 United States Constitution is being assailed.

12 I take some comfort in your leadership in this case,
13 which is simply about assuring that our local government is
14 made consciously aware that there are -- that they are
15 expected to consider and respect the civil rights of all of
16 its citizens and peoples who come within its borders.

17 In times like this, I feel like I am Princess Leia
18 when she sent a message to Obi-Wan Kenobi in Star Wars. Judge
19 Perry, you are our only hope. Thank you for your efforts to
20 not let us down.

21 I especially thank you for deciding you wanted to
22 provide an opportunity for public speaking every other quarter
23 for the public to speak to you directly.

24 As you likely recall, in the last couple of years I
25 have focused on the internal operations of the Council and

1 administration that has hampered real and steady progress in
2 this agreement. The behavior reminds me of a teenager
3 promising to do better but, because they resent being forced
4 to do better, they are not sincere in their actions and are
5 only waiting for the day when they can undo the progress made
6 and revert back to their natural state of behaving.

7 We have members in the majority of the Council freely
8 disparaging the Consent Decree publicly in Council meetings.
9 One of the topics I have brought up with the Council numerous
10 times is their penchant to look at the technical aspects of
11 our City laws and ordinances and their satisfaction with
12 finding loopholes to suit their preferences.

13 The majority on the Council is quite pleased to
14 follow the letter of the law, which is where they operate with
15 enough loopholes rather than looking at and honoring the
16 spirit of the laws.

17 They honor exerting their power through micromanaging
18 the administration as much as they can, individually as well
19 as the collective majority.

20 Your Honor, this significantly accounts for the
21 higher turnover we have had in the critical positions of
22 police chief, city manager, and Consent Decree Coordinator.

23 I state this because this attitude is why, if they
24 seem to indicate that they will behave as expected, without
25 supervision of the Court, I very well have my doubts.

1 Your Honor, as we have observed changes in personnel
2 at the police department to carry out the work of implementing
3 the Consent Decree, I have observed changes in the
4 administrative division that give me concerns about what will
5 happen if the police department -- what will happen in the
6 police department once the Consent Decree is ended.

7 As the police department has steadily become more
8 diverse, better reflecting the community it serves, the
9 administration is becoming less diverse.

10 As a member of the recently reactivated Personnel
11 Board, I am concerned about some key positions which were not
12 posted or announced before they were filled. Similar to what
13 is happening at the federal level, it seems that comfort level
14 with the appointed person is the more valued virtue over
15 experience.

16 Concurrently, it seems as if resident input is
17 shunned. For instance, when the Personnel Board discovered
18 that the human resource director position was vacant again, we
19 asked to have one member participate in the interview process
20 for the next human resource director. Not only was this
21 request denied, we were specifically told, quote, "I do not
22 know" -- "I did not know that I need to inform you," referring
23 to the vacancy, and "I do not see anywhere where I need to
24 have you on the Hiring Committee," end of quote.

25 The point of sharing this communication is to show

1 the attitude of not necessarily considering if something is
2 right or appropriate but instead depending on the
3 understanding of whether they need to or they have to. This
4 attitude is prevalent toward other City committees and
5 commissions such as the Human Rights Commission and the
6 Planning and Zoning Commission.

7 This example is an indication to me that the City,
8 including the majority of the Council, is in a "make me do it"
9 mode, poised to revert back to its preferred ways once the
10 Consent Decree has ended.

11 As I described earlier, the resentful teenager is
12 only biding his time. Council members have expressed their
13 intent to reach out to our U.S. Senators and Representatives
14 to ask for their assistance in ending the Consent Decree.

15 Many with the power are not sincere in their actions
16 and do not appreciate how the Consent Decree makes us a better
17 municipality.

18 Judge Perry, I express again thank you for being our
19 hope.

20 THE COURT: Thank you, Ms. Butler.

21 Next we have Erica Brooks.

22 MS. BROOKS: Good morning, Judge Perry. My name is
23 Erica M. Brooks. I'm a resident, 12-year resident of
24 Ferguson, Missouri, also a two-time candidate for City Council
25 Ferguson Ward 2.

1 My son and I also were the grass roots organizers to
2 retain our bus service in Ferguson, No. 79, which was going to
3 be eliminated by the City of Ferguson, as well as Metro, in
4 '19, and we retained that bus services. That's why it still
5 runs through our neighborhood as well as the business
6 district.

7 I'm saying all that to say about the struggles that
8 we are still experiencing in Ferguson, racial struggles that
9 are in Ferguson, discriminatory practices that are being
10 experienced in Ferguson.

11 I wanted to start off by saying this quote by Randa
12 Abdel-Fattah. It says, "If you want to understand a problem,
13 you look at its cause. You don't look at the manifestation."
14 And that's what a lot of things -- a lot of times people in
15 Ferguson try to do -- is make us look at the manifestation of
16 the situation, not the people and the root of the cause of the
17 things that are happening to disenfranchise us legislatively
18 in Ferguson.

19 A lot of things that Ms. Clines mentioned about the
20 policies and procedures that are being done, and one thing
21 that I really want to talk about is how our attorneys -- the
22 city attorney was voted down when it came to a bill to
23 understand just legal parameters for our City to not be sued
24 or not exclude somebody in future situations.

25 And for the City Council members to say, okay, we're

1 going to give this to our legal attorney that's representing
2 the City, and then the councilpersons say, well, we're not
3 going to look at what he's talking about, we're going to find
4 somebody else from the state, or whoever else, to get some
5 legal assistance, that's ridiculous.

6 And I'm saying that also to say, when it comes to the
7 mannerism of our City Council members, there's four
8 particular: Linda Lipka, Michael Palmer, Nick Kasoff, and
9 David Williams. When it comes to listening to us as a people,
10 their voices are never represented on their own terms.

11 When it comes to us being able to voice our opinion
12 about Bill No. 7282 -- which they came back. It was like Jim
13 Crow by another name being brought back as Bill No. 7303. I
14 was physically ran up on by Councilwoman Linda Lipka after a
15 meeting when I was trying to address something with Councilman
16 David Williams.

17 He ran -- she ran up on me in my face to where I had
18 to ask the security to get away -- get her out of my face.
19 And as a citizen, I know that it would be inappropriate for me
20 to address her in that same manner.

21 When it comes to David Williams, he told me that I
22 was not talking about shit. As a City Council person, it's
23 like I vividly said over and over again about the Bill 7282,
24 when it comes to us as a community being able to have rights
25 as far as housing is concerned -- I know this is about the

1 police department -- but it all boils down to the leadership
2 that we have in our community that, yeah, you say that we as a
3 community voted. I didn't vote for them, the ones that I
4 mentioned, the four that I mentioned, because they're not
5 representing us as a community.

6 But when it comes to the structure, from the head
7 down to us, as far as citizens that need to be heard, we're
8 not being heard. So when it comes to people talking about
9 let's get rid of the Consent Decree, we won't have a voice.
10 We won't have legal justice. We won't have anything that all
11 this stands for.

12 That all boils down to our -- the leader in charge,
13 the chief in charge of our country, which is that Donald Trump
14 that's wanting to get rid of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

15 And so those same practices that he's preaching from
16 the top all the way down to Ferguson are the same thing that
17 we're experiencing in our legislative representation from the
18 people that sit there on that dais.

19 As far as disrespect between the races that's on
20 that -- even though David Williams is Black, he represents the
21 people that voted him in, and they're not Black. And a lot of
22 them, they might be Black, but a lot of them are White. And
23 so he sits there and constantly justify the disrespect that's
24 in the community.

25 And like I said, it started with him disrespecting me

1 and told me that I wasn't talking about shit.

2 And like I said, I appreciate you all listening, but
3 if you don't -- first of all, like I said about this quote, if
4 you want to understand the problem, look at the cause. You
5 don't look at the manifestation.

6 So if you can please look at the structure of the
7 people that say they're our leaders to understand the mindset
8 of how things are going with this Consent Decree, like
9 Ms. Clines said, if you got a bad apple, that one bad apple is
10 going to continue that same flow of mentality of what they
11 call Ferguson with this rebranding called turning a new leaf
12 thing, it's the same leaf that's been turned over.

13 So I'll appreciate it if you can, like I say, look
14 into all of the whole thing, not just the police department.
15 And I appreciate you all's time.

16 THE COURT: Thank you, Ms. Brooks.

17 All right. Yes, sir, Mr. Mueller.

18 MR. MUELLER: Good morning, Your Honor. It's
19 Alan Mueller.

20 As always, my wife and I very much appreciate the
21 opportunity to share our thoughts to the Court. We are now in
22 the longest period of administrative stability since the
23 Consent Decree went into effect. Both our city manager and
24 police chief have been with us for several years.

25 We also are celebrating the one-year anniversary for

1 Ms. Patricia Washington and Lisa Stephens and really
2 appreciate all that they have done.

3 We appreciate the improvements in communication
4 provided by the Department of Justice and the Monitor. The
5 Monitor's November Status Report was very helpful, and we'd
6 like to thank Ms. Tidwell and her team.

7 To reinforce the value of these town halls, PROUD --
8 to enforce the value that we've seen, PROUD continues to
9 receive requests for the YouTube link to the DOJ's town hall
10 from last July.

11 The City's communications need to improve. Despite
12 many requests from the public, there still has been no
13 progress on a public dashboard that would allow the public to
14 assess progress on the Consent Decree compliance. The limited
15 information on the City's website mostly dates from the
16 first years of the Consent Decree.

17 Moving on to the Neighborhood Police Steering
18 Committee, we are very concerned about reports that the City
19 Council is considering changing the composition and abilities
20 of the NPSC. With Ms. Washington's help revising the
21 Community Policing and Engagement Plan, the NPSC was able to
22 classify its role in fulfilling the duties outlined in the
23 Consent Decree.

24 Our discussions made it abundantly apparent that the
25 NPSC must remain independent of the City government so as to

1 build trust with the Ferguson community. Only this way can
2 the NPSC provide the independent platform for community input
3 required by the Consent Decree.

4 Continuing with the NPSC, we thank Ms. Washington for
5 setting up a town hall to discuss the new policy on aerial
6 surveillance technologies. The City Council recently approved
7 funding for drones and other unspecified technologies. It is
8 essential that the community understands what technologies are
9 being put into use and that there are policies in place to
10 ensure they are being used in compliance with the Consent
11 Decree and protecting our civil rights.

12 Like the NPSC, we believe the Training Committee must
13 maintain the composition and duties similar to those it
14 currently has. The Training Committee could benefit from the
15 inclusion of police officers; but, otherwise, its independence
16 from the City Council and government is essential.

17 The Committee's role in the annual assessments of the
18 Training Plan for paragraph 55 of the Consent Decree clearly
19 shows the need for the strong community input and the
20 independence that volunteers bring.

21 Similarly, the Training Committee's role in
22 evaluating the Police Training Officer program and the
23 effectiveness of the PTOs, as required by paragraph 62,
24 reinforces the need for input untethered from the police
25 department and the City Council.

1 Honest assessments are essential. To maintain trust
2 in our police department, the entire Ferguson community must
3 be certain that the high-level goals of community policing and
4 problem-solving policing have been fully embraced by all of
5 our officers.

6 We want to thank Ms. Stephens for bringing
7 high-quality training to the Ferguson Police Department. The
8 curriculums on the use of TASERs and the courses provided by
9 Lieutenant Rice appear to be excellent and thoroughly embrace
10 the Consent Decree and community policing.

11 We really appreciate the help Martin Bartness is
12 providing to the Training Committee. As I suggested in my
13 written comments for October's hearing, the Training Committee
14 can become much more effective with the input from subject
15 matter experts and other trainings as provided for in
16 paragraph 49.

17 Our greatest concern at this time is the scheduling
18 of training. Ms. Stephens brought great urgency to move the
19 training program along; yet over the past six months, the
20 training program has slowed markedly. Evidently, the City
21 Council failed to provide funding for training in their
22 budget, and Ms. Stephens is obligated to get Council approval
23 individually for each class. Fully funding the training
24 program is currently the crucial step in achieving compliance
25 with the Consent Decree.

1 One last concern -- item considering the Training
2 Committee. As of this point in time, the Training Committee
3 has no understanding of the status of our department's Police
4 Training Officer program. We spent nearly two years
5 developing a curriculum to train the PTO supervisors; yet late
6 last summer we were informed that the PTOs were already
7 trained and are using a 16-week recruit training format.

8 For Consent Decree requirements, the Training
9 Committee needs to assess the current PTO program to ensure
10 that all the trainers fully embrace thing -- that philosophies
11 of the Consent Decree, community policing, adult learning
12 techniques, and problem-solving policing.

13 Thank you.

14 THE COURT: Thank you.

15 All right. Mr. Noll?

16 MR. NOLL: Good morning, Judge. My name is Gerry
17 Noll. I'm a long-term resident of Ferguson, maybe 27 years or
18 so, and currently on the Civilian Review Board. I'm currently
19 the chair of the Civilian Review Board, and I'd like to
20 publicly thank and acknowledge the training that the Monitor,
21 Ms. Tidwell, and her team has done with the CRB. They've held
22 two different sessions -- one two years ago, one just last
23 night -- on how to analyze and the constitutional basis and
24 definitions for use of force. And it's been very helpful to
25 our CRB.

1 We've taken a lot of knowledge out of the
2 use-of-force audits that the Monitoring Team has done as part
3 of their monitoring of the Consent Decree, the rubric or the
4 checklist that they have for analyzing use of force, and
5 that's been very helpful to us.

6 We are looking forward to the results of the Monitor
7 Team's accountability audit that they're in the process of
8 right now. I think there'll probably be a rubric or a
9 checklist coming out of that that would be helpful for the CRB
10 and would just increase our knowledge of, like, the right ways
11 to do our job. We're not professionals. We're volunteers.

12 Ms. Tidwell and her team, Darryl Owens, a retired
13 Boston police officer in the use of force -- they're
14 professionals, and they help to give us an insight on how we
15 can do our job more professionally even though we're not
16 professionals. And we really appreciate that.

17 Also, I wanted to thank Chief Doyle. Since he's come
18 on staff as head of the Ferguson Police Department, the
19 communication between him and the police department and the
20 CRB has dramatically improved.

21 We have regular quarterly meetings with him, with a
22 few of our members just with him just to discuss things.
23 That's something we never had in place before with the
24 previous police chiefs.

25 Some of them were not very communicative, from our

1 point of view, towards us and kind of held us at arm's length.
2 Chief Doyle more embraces us and sees the value that we
3 supply, and we really appreciate that.

4 And I want to thank you for giving the opportunity
5 for public comment. It's valuable for you to hear from the
6 citizens. Thank you.

7 THE COURT: Thank you all. These are very good
8 comments and specific, and I appreciate them because they will
9 help me in going forward in talking to the lawyers and looking
10 at what's going on. So I appreciate the comments, including
11 their specificity.

12 So at this time, we will hear from the parties. And
13 as is traditionally, we'll start with the City. Mr. Carey?

14 MR. CAREY: Thank you, Judge. Appreciate the
15 opportunity to be here in front of you. Of course you know I
16 normally start by introducing the folks who are in the room,
17 as you mentioned before, so I'll turn around and do that.

18 So we have -- starting in the back, we have
19 Councilwoman Naquittia Noah, who is with us. Then we also
20 have Chief Doyle. You see Captain Dilworth there. You see
21 Lisa Stephens, who is also with us. Our mayor, Ella Jones, is
22 with us. Our City Manager, John Hampton, is here. Michelle
23 Richmond is here as well. You see our municipal judges, and
24 our prosecutor is also here with us today.

25 Are we streaming at all today?

1 THE COURT: Yeah, we are. It should be on YouTube --
2 the audio.

3 MR. CAREY: Okay. So normally I'd get, you know,
4 text messages or emails from Council members who are not
5 present, "Make sure, you know, you tell the judge I'm here."
6 I have not gotten any of those, but we can still -- you know,
7 potential to have --

8 THE COURT: There could be other --

9 MR. CAREY: Yeah. Other Council members or people
10 who are interested also present as well.

11 So, again, you know, we like to do that, Your Honor,
12 on the record just so that, you know, that the City, as a
13 whole, our leadership -- obviously, you heard from all of our
14 citizens -- still very interested in the Consent Decree and
15 our progress thereunder and making sure that we're moving
16 forward with implementation.

17 A couple things. One, as you know and you heard, I
18 think you heard one of the citizens mention Mr. Crabel, Chris
19 Crabel, who had been serving as our Consent Decree Coordinator
20 for the last maybe year or year and a half, two years or so,
21 is no longer in that role. He's still with the City but no
22 longer in the role of Consent Decree Coordinator.

23 And we have Ms. Pat Washington, who was hired as our
24 PIO officer, but I do understand that now she may be the
25 full-time Consent Decree Coordinator moving forward.

1 You know, she's part of the team that Chief Doyle
2 brought in. Chief Doyle -- I think Chief Doyle's hiring was
3 the single most impactful factor recently as it relates to
4 Consent Decree progress. He's shown dedication and
5 understanding of it and a willingness to roll up his sleeves
6 and really allocate the resources necessary to help the City
7 move forward with compliance, and that includes the hiring of
8 Lisa Stephens and Ms. Washington, who have just been all
9 invaluable to the City's efforts.

10 You know, I think where we are now, you know, you've
11 heard a lot of the citizens talk, and you, of course, hear me
12 talk once a month, you know, or somebody from the City talk
13 once a month about where we are with compliance and what our
14 efforts are.

15 It's really, I think, refreshing because I remember
16 eight, nine years ago, when we were in this very courtroom and
17 we had citizens talking to you about what was going on in the
18 community, you were hearing still a lot of disparaging things
19 about FPD, some of the actions of its officers, some of the
20 incidents that may have occurred or, you know, that citizens
21 had -- you know, some interactions with citizens and the
22 police officers.

23 But by and large what you're hearing from our
24 community now, I think, is that there has been culture change
25 with both FPD as well as our municipal courts. And in

1 particular, you've heard that with the municipal courts not
2 only from the community, but you've heard that from the
3 Department of Justice, you've heard that from myself, and
4 you've heard that from the Monitor. You've even heard it from
5 the judges themselves.

6 And so it's really refreshing, I think, from the
7 City's perspective, to be in a posture where what you are
8 hearing from the citizens is more, well, we need to be
9 communicated about what's happening versus, you know, this
10 pattern or practice is happening in our community and we need
11 to address that.

12 So I think what you're seeing is the impact of the
13 Consent Decree and the impact of the Consent Decree as it
14 relates to policing and the ability to sort of change the
15 culture that existed that necessitated the pattern and
16 practice investigation that the Department of Justice did, you
17 know, about ten years ago or so and just the general change in
18 culture.

19 Where we sort of struggle now as a City is just it's
20 -- I don't think it's the issue of the existence of the
21 patterns or practices, but it is to be able to sort of show
22 the community, right, and to be able to then implement the
23 structure necessary to make that change in culture sustainable
24 and then to be able to show the community that this is
25 happening. And so that's where we kind of are now in terms of

1 where the work is.

2 There is still a lot of work to be done under the
3 Consent Decree, but we have done a whole lot of work, and I
4 think it's showing as you can sort of see from the impact
5 you're hearing from the community members. And not only
6 what's being said, but what's not being said when people stand
7 up in front of you. Because, as you know, we have a very
8 active -- a very active protest -- I don't want to say
9 protest -- activist community, and they would not hesitate to
10 come here and talk to you and tell you, you know, about
11 whatever it is they are experiencing.

12 So I just wanted to lay that groundwork for allowing
13 our Consent Decree Coordinator, Ms. Washington, to sort of
14 come up and give you a little bit more detail about where we
15 are and some of the compliance efforts that the City has
16 engaged in in the last -- since the last time we met.

17 So, Ms. Washington?

18 MS. WASHINGTON: Good morning.

19 THE COURT: Good morning, Ms. Washington.

20 MS. WASHINGTON: Thank you, Mr. Carey. I appreciate
21 you. I appreciate your comments.

22 And good morning again, Your Honor. To Mayor Jones,
23 to Chief Hampton, to all my colleagues at the City of
24 Ferguson, good morning. Good morning to our friends and our
25 colleagues at the DOJ and with the Monitoring Team. Just

1 wanted to make sure that I acknowledge them and acknowledge
2 that relationship because it has been very productive in the
3 time that I have assumed some of the additional duties and
4 responsibilities as the Consent Decree Coordinator.

5 And I do have some prepared remarks here that I want
6 to be able to provide to the Court today that will outline
7 many of the initiatives and activities under the Consent
8 Decree. But before I do that --

9 THE COURT: Can you pull the microphone a little
10 closer to you. There you go. Thank you.

11 MS. WASHINGTON: Before I do that, I really want the
12 Court to have an understanding of my perspective and how I
13 approach this work.

14 I raised my son in Ferguson. I moved to Ferguson in
15 2000. My son is a product of the Ferguson-Florissant School
16 Districts. I moved out of Ferguson late 2014.

17 Many of the young people who were involved in the
18 protest activity in 2014 were young people that I engaged on a
19 daily basis. I coached boys basketball, and many of the young
20 men that our police department would encounter played
21 basketball for me. And I heard their stories every day of how
22 they were treated and how this community saw them.

23 I'm telling you this, Your Honor, because this is not
24 just a job for me. This is not me just assuming some duties
25 and responsibilities. In 2014 I was out on the streets in

1 Ferguson. I worked as the communications director for
2 St. Louis County Executive's Office. And by day I would sit
3 in meetings and I would listen to strategies and I would
4 listen to outcomes about what was happening in Ferguson, and
5 at night I would go out to see for myself what people were
6 experiencing.

7 The tear gas -- it still burns my eyes when I think
8 about it. The rocks -- we toured Ferguson with the County
9 Executive, Charlie Dooley, at the time, and people were
10 spitting on us in the day. And I would go out at night so
11 that I could bear witness and make sure that people's rights
12 were being protected.

13 I intentionally moved back to Ferguson recently, and
14 I intentionally said yes to Mayor Jones and Chief Doyle when
15 we had the conversation about coming to work for the
16 Ferguson Police Department as the Public Information Officer.
17 It cost me some friendships. It strained relationships in my
18 own family, including with my own Black son who couldn't
19 understand why I would go to Ferguson and work for the police
20 department.

21 And so I approached this work, Your Honor and
22 everyone here, full of determination and full of commitment
23 not just for myself, but for the people of Ferguson, because
24 they're counting on us. And so I just wanted you to have that
25 context.

1 I can go through this report, and I'm going to give
2 you the details and the updates, and I'm very thrilled, and
3 I'm pleased to be part of the team and to have a hand at the
4 lifting that's been done by the many hands that came before
5 me.

6 THE COURT: Thank you. I've talked to you on the
7 phone. I mean, you've been on these phone calls we have
8 every month with the lawyers, and I've heard your reports, but
9 I didn't know your background. So I appreciate your telling
10 me that.

11 MS. WASHINGTON: You're very welcome.

12 So I'm grateful for the assistance and the feedback
13 and the grace that I've received from everybody as I've
14 assumed these new duties at the Consent Decree Coordinator in
15 addition to my duties as the Public Information Officer for
16 the Ferguson Police Department.

17 And I do see a lot of overlap in those roles; so I'm
18 very pleased to be able to have that kind of impact and to be
19 able to participate in much of the work that we need to do
20 together. I'm proud of the progress that we've made over the
21 last month or so.

22 And so with that, I'd like to just go ahead and dive
23 right into some of the work that we've been doing, starting
24 with the Ferguson municipal courts. I want to take just a
25 moment to acknowledge Michelle Richmond. I know she was here.

1 Did I see her?

2 THE COURT: There she is.

3 MS. WASHINGTON: Michelle. To Judges Smith and
4 Goldstein and to the court staff, we have all said it before,
5 you've heard it before, and you've seen it for yourself, they
6 have done a phenomenal job in moving our courts toward
7 compliance in what we need to do to make sure that the people
8 in our region, not just the citizens of Ferguson, have faith
9 and confidence that the courts truly are representative.

10 And they are walking the talk, and they're living up
11 to their motto of "Firm, fair, for everyone." And I know,
12 Judge Smith, we owe you a huge royalty fee for that one, and I
13 know that's coming.

14 The Ferguson Municipal Courts has achieved all of the
15 major milestones on the critical items, including the
16 Comprehensive Amnesty Program, integrating our court system
17 with St. Louis County courts. They have met all of the major
18 milestones.

19 And so we are now in the self-assessment phase, and
20 we are talking about how do we make sure that we can
21 adequately express and represent all the work that has been
22 done so that we can be in compliance and begin to make sure
23 that the monitoring can occur and that, again, the people can
24 have confidence not just that it's done, not just because we
25 said it's done, but because there is evidence of the doing.

1 And so I look forward to having those conversations
2 with all our of departments and coming to an agreement about
3 how we can do that self-assessment and get that done,
4 completed as efficiently and effectively as possible.

5 So I want to move on to the Ferguson
6 Police Department, if I may, starting with a few of the items
7 that since our last hearing before the Court and some of our
8 Court calls where we had some outstanding items that were long
9 overdue to the Court, to the DOJ, to the Monitoring Team. I
10 want to thank Mr. Crabel to his work prior to these items, but
11 one of the things that I wanted to assure, when I did assume
12 those responsibilities, was that we met our obligation into
13 turning in those items that really are foundational to some of
14 the work that we need to continue to do.

15 So with that said, I wanted you to know that the City
16 has now provided the updated Smartsheet, or compliance
17 tracker, that we needed to -- that needed to get done. And I
18 think the Court had been waiting for that. And our Monitoring
19 Team and the DOJ had been waiting for that since December, or
20 something, of last year, if not longer.

21 So we completed that, sent that to the DOJ, to the
22 Monitoring Team, and to the Court on January 17. We have had
23 a subsequent call about refining some of the information in
24 that. Very minor tweaks. I want to have those finished by
25 the end of this week and have that returned to the Monitor.

1 We also submitted the updated Crime Prevention Plan.
2 That was another major foundational plan that was long
3 overdue. We completed that, submitted that to the DOJ on
4 January 17, I believe, and that is still with the Monitoring
5 Team and DOJ for feedback, if my notes are correct.

6 We also had to -- we had a salary study that had been
7 started that we needed to complete, and we've completed that,
8 and we submitted that to all the parties on January 16, 2025.

9 So we have had some feedback and some updated. We've
10 resubmitted the document on January 18, and I think there's
11 maybe a minor issue that we need to clarify regarding the
12 salary study, but we were able to work through the formulas
13 and come to agreement on how -- what to use in the salary
14 study. So a great deal of progress on there, and I'm
15 appreciative of all the support and assistance I received in
16 getting that over the finish line.

17 We also have the staffing plan that we turned in,
18 submitted. This information was shared with the DOJ. We do
19 have one small piece that we need to try to button up a little
20 bit. We are waiting for some information from a third-party
21 vendor, but essentially that is complete. We've come to
22 agreement on most of the major items in the staffing plan.

23 And so again I want to thank everyone for those items
24 I know had been kind of languishing a little bit; so I'm happy
25 to note that we do have them either submitted and have

1 received some feedback on the majority of those items.

2 So if I can, I'd like to go ahead and move to the
3 staffing update for the Ferguson Police Department. And I'm
4 really pleased to report that the department is now
5 approximately 88 percent staffed in terms of sworn officers,
6 which is making a big difference in how we assign officers,
7 their visibility out on patrols, at neighborhood meetings.

8 And so I want to acknowledge Chief Doyle's very
9 intentional and, I say, relentless efforts to recruit and hire
10 quality officers. Not just people who are breathing and not
11 just anybody who walks through the door, but we are looking
12 for quality people to join our team.

13 Many of the people who have been hired or who are in
14 the interview process right now have indicated during their
15 process that they applied because of Chief Doyle and because
16 of what he is bringing to the department in terms of community
17 policing and professionalism. That is not something that we
18 can speculate about. That is something that we have solid
19 proof of.

20 Among our newest officers are a recruit from the
21 St. Louis Metropolitan Police Academy, and then we also have
22 two veteran officers who are joining from neighboring
23 departments. So that's a good balance for us.

24 We currently have one other person who recently
25 started at the academy and I think at least two others who are

1 in the background process at this moment.

2 As a side note, I do want to call out the fact that
3 residents are noting that we have more officers on the street.
4 They are calling us. They send me emails, and they let me
5 know that they feel a difference in terms of visibility,
6 participation at neighborhood meetings, and just in overall
7 response time. The responsiveness is there.

8 So Chief Doyle has initiated also the department's
9 promotion process for sergeants. So we have several
10 outstanding candidates in the process there. And additional
11 units like the traffic bureau, we hear it when our citizens
12 tell us they're concerned about traffic. So he's devised a
13 plan for that, and that includes hiring officers who will
14 focus directly on a traffic detail. And we're also hiring
15 some additional staffing in the detective bureau.

16 So all told, the department really is moving ahead
17 very aggressively with the recruiting and the hiring plan, and
18 we're happy to see that the residents are noticing that and
19 taking that into account.

20 The next segment I'd like to go to is policy
21 development. We have a lot to get through with the policies
22 and some of the training coming up next. So right now we have
23 four policies that are out for public comment. Our TASER X
24 revised general order is out for public comment. Our Limited
25 English Proficiency policy is out for public comment. That

1 is -- our citations audit, pardon me, is out for public
2 comment and our -- what we informally call drone policy, those
3 are all out for public comment.

4 These policies are currently posted to the FPD's
5 Facebook page with a link to the complete policy itself and
6 the feedback form. Responses are shared internally with the
7 Consent Decree management team and the appropriate department
8 heads as we get that information.

9 These policies are also going to be posted on the
10 City's website. We've talked at length about some of the
11 challenges there. And so one of the things that I wanted to
12 do was make sure that we had a work-around and then we had
13 other alternatives to the website, because people are not just
14 going to come to the website.

15 What I have found in my role as Public Information
16 Officer is that the majority of the people get their
17 information about police, police practicing, and what we are
18 doing through our social media.

19 So we've done a work-around to post those sites and
20 their complete links onto our social media and then in sharing
21 those pages with other neighborhood community groups. We also
22 are working with the municipal library to make sure that there
23 is information about the policies and how people can access
24 them there. And we have several different email databases
25 that we're using to also distribute that information.

1 The information about the policies that are available
2 for review are also being shared at our neighborhood
3 association meetings. So we're trying to find multiple
4 avenues to get the information out and allow the public to
5 have that public comment period for at least the next 30 to
6 40 days.

7 We also have several policies that are nearing
8 completion. Our GPS Fleet Tracking policy was approved by the
9 DOJ on January 24, 2025. That's been sent to the Monitoring
10 Team for review, and we are waiting feedback on that.

11 The Flock Camera policy was revised on 1/24/25, and
12 we have also had an additional meeting to further discuss some
13 of the refinements that we're going to need to make with our
14 Flock camera and the LPR policy, and most of those are related
15 to the disparate impact and how to audit for that.

16 And I'll just sidebar. I was listening to the chief
17 having a very spirited discussion about that when we were with
18 several folks the other day; so I'm looking forward to us
19 being able to address some of those issues and move that
20 policy forward.

21 Our Wanted Persons of Interest policy was submitted
22 to the Monitoring Team on 1/7/25 for final review. We've had
23 a great discussion around that, and as late as even yesterday.
24 We'll make some additional modifications on that, and we'll
25 return that to the Monitoring Team for a final review. We

1 anticipate doing that on or before February 7.

2 The PTO policy is being revised by the
3 Ferguson Police Department based on the Monitoring Team's
4 feedback and some additional feedback we received from our
5 partners at the DOJ, and it related to the selection criteria
6 for the PTO program.

7 So the Consent Decree paragraph 59 has some very
8 specific guidelines for the selection process, and so we want
9 to make sure that we are addressing those. The deadline for
10 us to get that back to the Monitoring Team also is February 7,
11 2025.

12 These two pieces I'll take together, and it involves
13 our CIT policy, the Crisis Intervention policy. That is
14 currently being developed, and we are outlining the
15 expectations for the department, the officers, and our
16 dispatchers.

17 The Department of Justice colleagues have told us
18 that the policy review can be conducted in a roll call, and so
19 we have set a deadline for February 7. That's a busy day,
20 February 7, 2025, to actually conduct that roll call training.

21 And I will end this section on a very positive note
22 with the Crisis Intervention training, and that is the fact
23 that we have selected four officers, after a rigorous
24 candidate selection process, who will form our new Crisis
25 Intervention Team.

1 So we are now moving to the Training Plan and the
2 Training Committee to review that and have that in place so
3 that once we get the policies and everything approved and the
4 proper feedback, that we will begin to do some additional
5 training with all four of those officers. This is not initial
6 training. All of them have had some initial training. This
7 is additional training on and above what they have.

8 So the next section I want to visit is training.
9 We've been very, very busy. As far as roll call training,
10 we've done the strip body cavity searches and the correctable
11 violations roll call training. So we conducted that training
12 with patrol officers in December of 2024.

13 We also have firearms training. We received approval
14 from the DOJ and the Monitoring Team on our firearms training
15 plan, and we are updating some of the corresponding general
16 orders sections in use of force and in our firearms policies
17 so that they can be in alignment with the training that we are
18 planning to deliver. And the deadline for completing those
19 updates is February 14. I'm not sure how we're going to be
20 talking about firearms training on Valentine's Day, but we'll
21 make it work.

22 TASER X training. The Training Committee's final
23 feedback has been received and the Monitor has approved the
24 training. The next step is for the Training Coordinator to
25 build the dates into the training calendar, and she is

1 currently working on that. And by "she," I mean Ms. Stephens.

2 The First Amendment training. The FPD and the DOJ
3 had a technical assistance call on January 28 to talk about
4 some of the -- just some of the minor tweaks that we need to
5 do to the First Amendment training, and we'll follow up with
6 the agreed-upon motions by February 14.

7 We also have a use of training that is use-of-force
8 investigations by our supervisors. We had a call, again
9 another technical assistance call and discussion, where we
10 work-shopped some of the requirements of this investigation
11 for supervisors training.

12 We needed to revisit that curriculum and address some
13 of the audit findings that were pointed out by the DOJ, and so
14 we got we plan to address those findings and have a complete
15 revision by February 21, 2025.

16 Our use-of-force training in general, we have engaged
17 our subject matter expert. We met with Mr. Williams on 1/28,
18 and we began reviewing and addressing the feedback from the
19 Department of Justice on the use-of-force outline. We had a
20 very rigorous discussion, and we have an additional meeting
21 scheduled that's coming up on 2/4 or 2/5 -- I can't read my
22 handwriting -- with Mr. Williams, myself, and Lisa Stephens so
23 that we can finalize that use-of-force training.

24 I don't have a deadline date attached to this item,
25 but we should know something very soon about how soon we can

1 begin to deliver that training.

2 On the PTO training, we do want to make sure that we
3 have our relevant feedback, the training materials, and
4 everything that needs to be reviewed for the modifications by
5 February 10, 2025, because the PTO training program is
6 essential, especially as we're bringing on new officers and
7 ensuring that they are receiving quality training from their
8 training leader.

9 So I just want to take a minute to commend
10 Ms. Stephens, Captain Dilworth, Detective Sammy Numan, the
11 entire Training Committee. They have been doing the work, and
12 it is showing in the amount of product and the amount of
13 compliance that we have been able to make. So I salute them.
14 They have been very, very busy.

15 If I could now, I want to turn your attention to
16 Community Policing and Engagement. We now have an approved
17 Neighborhood Policing and a Community Engagement Plan. We are
18 now in the process of the implementation phase, and we are
19 mapping out the necessary training required to execute that
20 plan, and that is for both officers and supervisors. And we
21 are developing the elements of that plan, and it also includes
22 the safe streets initiative as part of that plan.

23 And that is critical because it requires some
24 training for our residents and our citizens to be able to
25 analyze data from our Crime Prevention Plan, which we'll talk

1 about in a minute, to help with us our community policing
2 initiatives.

3 Another item that we completed and received approval
4 from the Monitoring Team and DOJ since our last report here
5 was the Neighborhood Policing plan -- I'm sorry -- the
6 Neighborhood Steering Committee, NPSC recommendations policy.
7 So we were able to bring that one over the finish line. And
8 that outlines how the FPD will receive and respond to
9 recommendations from this important committee.

10 So I want to thank them, the NPSC members, for their
11 feedback, their work, their collaboration on getting this one
12 across the finish line.

13 And speaking of the NPSC, I think you may have heard
14 it earlier in some of the comments. We are working with them
15 to present a community meeting on our unmanned aircraft
16 system, the drone policy. That is critical that we hear from
17 residents and that they have a comfort level with introducing
18 this new technology into Ferguson Police Department's just
19 cadre of tools that we're going to be using to make sure that
20 we're keeping our community safe and that we're using this
21 cutting-edge technology responsibly, Your Honor.

22 I'm happy to say -- I think you also heard this
23 during the comments -- that we have launched our Explorer
24 program. Very thrilled about that. We are now recruiting for
25 that program. The ages are 14 to 20. We're receiving

1 excellent feedback. We did a media blitz last week, and so
2 the calls are coming in. I want to thank Officer Jontaine
3 Glover, who has led this effort in terms of making sure that
4 we had accreditation from the Boy Scouts and that we are
5 moving forward with this program.

6 Officer Glover has been working with Officer Andre
7 Spraggins and Officer Michelle Merriweather to implement our
8 new Explorer post. Officer Merriweather is a former school
9 resource officer; so that's going to be really helpful to us
10 as we move forward with the Explorer program.

11 And so that is essentially the updates on the major
12 pieces in the last, I would guess, I want to say 6 to 8 weeks.
13 But I just -- I want to, in closing, just be intentional about
14 letting the Court know, letting our citizens know that our
15 goal is to be more strategic, more efficient, and making sure
16 that we are thinking more globally about how we execute all of
17 the initiatives of the Consent Decree.

18 We want to make sure we tighten up our internal
19 processes so that we can move things along in a more
20 expeditious manner, and we want to make sure that as we do the
21 work, we are letting people know that we are doing the work.
22 It doesn't matter if we're doing it and we're doing it in a
23 silo and people don't understand what we're doing and they
24 don't see the evidence of the work. So the people of
25 Ferguson -- they deserve our very best, Your Honor, and that

1 is what we intend to give them.

2 So I thank you for indulging me. I know that was a
3 long report, but I definitely appreciate it.

4 THE COURT: Thank you. You know, when we have
5 those -- we have a monthly telephone call with lawyers, and
6 usually Mr. Carey has various members of the staff, the
7 Consent Decree Coordinator, et cetera, speak. And in the last
8 call we had, we talked about a lot of deadlines, and when you
9 kept saying, yeah, we'll have that by Friday, et cetera, I
10 thought, hmm, that's a tight deadline, and I've heard things
11 like this before occasionally. And you did it.

12 So I'm very appreciative of how much has been
13 accomplished, and I'm confident that we will consider moving
14 ahead quickly. So thank you very much.

15 MS. WASHINGTON: Thank you very much, Your Honor.

16 THE COURT: All right. From the Department of
17 Justice?

18 MS. SENIER: Good morning, Your Honor. Thank you.

19 DOJ appreciates the opportunity to brief the Court
20 and the public on the progress that Ferguson and the police
21 department have made over the past quarter in terms of
22 implementing the decree. We want to thank the public for
23 their comments today. We know the time it takes to prepare
24 and to come here and to deliver them, the intimidation factor,
25 as well as standing at a podium. So we appreciate that. As

1 well as their longstanding commitment to helping the City and
2 FPD implement the decree. Many who have spoken today have
3 been actively involved in that, and we want to acknowledge
4 that.

5 And we also want to acknowledge and echo the City's
6 and FPD's enthusiasm for the significant progress that's been
7 made over the past quarter and that we were heartened to hear
8 echoed in public comment today. This is due in large part to
9 Chief Hampton and Chief Doyle committing to disseminating
10 responsibility for implementing the decree more broadly
11 throughout the City and FPD.

12 We are starting to see other members of the City and
13 FPD participate in policy revision, in training development,
14 and this has undoubtedly alleviated some of the burden on
15 Captain Dilworth, although he remains as engaged as ever.

16 In her very short term as Consent Decree Coordinator,
17 Pat Washington, as you have acknowledged, has already provided
18 a very key deliverable, the internal tracker that she spoke
19 about. As her comments today demonstrate, the pace of output
20 has increased dramatically under her brief tenure, and we are
21 particularly grateful for the transparency she has been
22 providing today in terms of public deadlines that will
23 undoubtedly help with accountability and the implementation
24 process moving forward. This is new, and it has the potential
25 to accelerate the pace of implementation dramatically.

1 Lisa Stephens, in addition to accelerating the pace
2 of training development, which I will address in a moment, is
3 also stepping in to shepherd policies through the review
4 process, and we are grateful for her taking on that
5 responsibility as well.

6 Lastly, Michelle Richmond continues to work with us,
7 as you've heard today, on developing a self-assessment
8 methodology for the Ferguson Municipal Court, and this is a
9 critical step in helping the City demonstrate the significant
10 strides that we all know they have made in implementing this
11 section of the decree.

12 We also recognize, as has been mentioned today, this
13 is the highest level of sworn staffing that FPD has enjoyed in
14 the better part of a decade. Much credit goes to Chief Doyle,
15 his team, and the City for the significant milestone. We
16 understand that there are visions on the horizon to expand
17 supervisory capacity, and they seem to be positioning
18 themselves well to do that.

19 Just a few notes on policy development because
20 Ms. Washington covered the waterfront very well. We also want
21 to acknowledge that FPD is working to ensure that any new law
22 enforcement technology it acquires is deployed in a manner
23 that is consistent with the decree.

24 As you've heard today, the City has acquired an
25 unmanned aircraft system, or drone, license plate reader,

1 fleet GPS tracker. The use of this technology can
2 implement -- implicate concerns addressed in the decree,
3 including the Fourth Amendment and transparency. So in
4 recognition of those concerns, the City has committed to a
5 community outreach process you've heard a little bit about
6 today, including a joint forum that's going to be hosted with
7 the Neighborhood Police Steering Committee and rolling out the
8 policies to the public online and through a variety of
9 channels that Ms. Washington demonstrated.

10 We really want to encourage the public to participate
11 in this feedback process. Their comments have always been
12 taken into account, and it's really critical that they have --
13 that they take advantage of that opportunity that's being
14 presented to ensure that FPD proceeds with this technology in
15 a manner that is consistent with the decree and the law.

16 In terms of training over the past quarter, there's
17 been hard work by many people at FPD, especially Lisa Stephens
18 and Captain Dilworth and members of the Training Committee,
19 that has led to marked progress in this area.

20 I just want to echo that in December alone, FPD
21 submitted training materials for in-service trainings on use
22 of TASERS, body-worn and in-car cameras, firearms. The
23 monitors already approved the TASER and firearms trainings.
24 We're looking forward to getting dates for those.

25 As Ms. Washington mentioned, in the course of

1 developing those trainings, there have been possibility of
2 revising some of the use-of-force policies. If that is to
3 occur, we would just encourage that those be rolled out again
4 with some sort of a public comment period. Many people in
5 this room have participated in the development of those
6 policies at the initial stage, and it's really important that
7 they be looped into any subsequent policy updates in the
8 interest of transparency.

9 As FPD continues to build out its training program,
10 we have said in the past, and we will echo here comments that
11 the Monitor has made as well, it's really important that they
12 ensure that all of these trainings are being coordinated, not
13 just the trainings required by the decree, but the trainings
14 required by the state, FPD priorities, to make sure that those
15 trainings are all developed and delivered in as cost and time
16 efficient a manner as possible.

17 In terms of monitoring, we want to thank Ms. Tidwell
18 and her team for being so responsive with their comments,
19 their technical assistance, and their approvals of the flurry
20 of policies and trainings that have been rolling out over the
21 past quarter. We really appreciate her and her team's subject
22 matter expertise here.

23 As Mr. Noll mentioned, she and her team delivered yet
24 another use-of-force investigation training to the Civilian
25 Review Board last night, which we're very grateful for.

1 We also appreciate that the Monitoring Team right now
2 is in the process of conducting no less than three audits, a
3 phase two use-of-force audit which covers portions of Section
4 9 of the decree, a camera audit that covers portions of
5 Section 12 of the decree, and accountability audit that covers
6 Section 14 of the decree.

7 We look forward to receiving these audits which,
8 under paragraph 427, will explain to the parties, the Court,
9 and the public a few things: First of all, whether the City
10 and FPD have incorporated the requirements of Sections 9, 12,
11 and 14 into policy; whether they have trained all relevant
12 personnel on the requirements of Sections 9, 12, and 14; and
13 whether they are carrying out the requirements of Sections 9,
14 12, and 14 in actual practice.

15 This information will provide the parties, the Court,
16 and the public not only with the current state of play with
17 respect to implementation of these sections, but will also
18 provide the City and FPD with really important information
19 they need so that they can move forward towards complying with
20 these sections of the decree.

21 I have nothing further, unless you have any
22 questions.

23 THE COURT: All right. Thank you.

24 Ms. Tidwell?

25 MS. TIDWELL: Thank you, Judge. Just one moment. My

1 iPad lock is now demanding my face; so I'm going to try to
2 open it. And it's not recognizing me. So now I have to
3 remember the password.

4 THE COURT: Take your time. It's never easy to
5 remember passwords when everybody is looking at you.

6 MS. TIDWELL: I know. Exactly. No pressure at all.
7 Thank you, Judge.

8 So I just want to begin by where the parties left off
9 in thanking the members of the public who took the time to
10 come here today to share their perspective.

11 Mr. Noll, we want to -- I'm grateful for his
12 acknowledgment of our training last evening. It's one of mine
13 and Mr. Owens' favorite things to do to sort of engage
14 directly with the CRB in that way. I think they have a great
15 group on board. They were so engaged and so interested in the
16 subject matter but knowledgeable about the subject matter.

17 So I take issue with Mr. Noll saying they're not
18 professionals because they certainly -- you know, their
19 questions were insightful, probing, and I really think that
20 they've got sort of what not only the constitutional
21 underpinnings of the use-of-force provisions but also where
22 the Consent Decree is trying to go. And so it was a very
23 robust and a great session, and I'm glad we were able to do
24 it.

25 Mr. Noll also mentioned that the City has a shuttle

1 bus that brings people to court for these hearings, and I was
2 unaware of that. So next time instead of getting an Uber from
3 my motel, perhaps I'll get on the shuttle bus. But I want to
4 thank the City for fostering and encouraging people to come
5 here and helping him to do that by making a bus available.

6 Since the last quarterly conference, I think the
7 parties have already provided an update on some of the things
8 that the Monitoring Team is working on or has been working on
9 since the last conference, including the three -- the audits
10 and the three areas that Ms. Senier just mentioned.

11 We have supplemental document requests out to FPD for
12 additional materials for each of those audits. I think we've
13 gotten just about everything we need. Ms. Washington and I
14 will follow up. I think there's some items in the
15 accountability audit that we're still waiting to get so that
16 Mr. Thompson can continue his review of investigations and, as
17 Mr. Noll said, furnish rubric similar to the one that we use
18 for the use of force, one that will guide his review of
19 internal investigations and hopefully be helpful to the CRB
20 after that rubric checklist is completed. So those audits are
21 up and going.

22 My plan is that even if they are not finalized or
23 fully completed by the time of the filing of our next status
24 report, we will at least have some preliminary findings or
25 something that we can update the Court and the community about

1 the progress of those if they're not completed; although I
2 think at least two of them will be by the time of our next
3 status conference and the filing of the next semi-annual
4 report.

5 Speaking of the semi-annual report, as Mr. Mueller
6 said and as Ms. Senior and Ms. Washington echoed, we are at a
7 place of sustained administrative staffing and staffing of FPD
8 at levels that we have not seen throughout the Consent Decree.
9 So as the parties have mentioned and we've been in discussion,
10 it is a good time for the Monitoring Team in its -- the
11 semi-annual reports, as we've done them traditionally, have
12 provided at a high level by subject area where the City is in
13 terms of policy development, training, and Monitoring Team
14 assessments.

15 In this upcoming semi-annual report, the
16 discussion -- and we agree -- will be to provide that
17 information at a more granular level, particularly sort of
18 paragraph or provision by provision of the Consent Decree, to
19 provide that information to everyone. So we look forward to
20 working with the City and with DOJ to find out where the
21 status of things are.

22 We appreciate Ms. Washington putting together the
23 tracking sheet, the updated Smartsheet tracker. That will be
24 helpful in us building out the semi-annual report. But we
25 will, because of all the transition in the past few years and

1 the different hands that have been involved in everything, it
2 will take some time to gather that information, particularly
3 at a granular level, provision by provision. So I'm thanking
4 the parties in advance for their efforts to assist us in
5 putting that together.

6 And then lastly, Your Honor, if you will indulge me
7 before I go, I just want to take a moment and recognize
8 Attorney Kiah Duggins, who was one of the souls lost on
9 American Airlines Flight 5342. And I didn't know Ms. Duggins,
10 but her work for the Civil Rights Corps, where she was an
11 attorney, and just leaving there and preparing to join the
12 faculty at Howard Law, her work in the police reform and bail
13 space obviously echos why we're all here today and the work
14 that we do.

15 I also learned that while she was at Harvard Law, she
16 mentored students at Cambridge Rindge & Latin High School,
17 which is the school where I served as a school resource
18 officer just out of the academy, and it's where my interest
19 and my commitment to this work, I'd like to think, was born
20 there.

21 And so although I didn't know Ms. Duggins, I feel
22 like her work intersects with mine, and her commitment, I
23 think, echos and speaks to all of the work that we do.

24 And so I want to thank the parties for their
25 commitment to this mission, to this work. I think we all have

1 a shared destination in mind. We don't always agree how best
2 to get there, but I appreciate their work. I honor their
3 work, and I hope that we continue to honor their work and give
4 the community what they expect and what they deserve and to
5 honor, in our way, Ms. Duggins' memory.

6 So thank you, Judge.

7 THE COURT: Thank you for that thought. That plane
8 crash was certainly a tragedy, and our thoughts are with
9 everyone who has family members or others who were lost there.

10 So on all the things you all have been telling me, I
11 mean, I think from the comments the public should know that
12 there has been -- I mean, we still have a lot. Every hearing
13 I say we have a lot of work to do, but you're doing a good
14 job, but I think they've really -- the City has started
15 working very intentionally, if you will, to get these things
16 done, to use Ms. Washington's terms, and to move forward on
17 this.

18 And I'm looking forward to getting to a point where
19 we will have the ability to start issuing some compliance
20 orders, certainly, you know, when things are getting to that
21 point where that makes sense.

22 I really appreciate the citizen comments. And as I
23 said today, I think you all have given me -- you know, there's
24 a lot still to be done. And some things that are the problem
25 are the same problems we have throughout our society of

1 systemic racism and other issues, but others are things
2 specific to Ferguson. And so I hope that we can -- that the
3 parties to this Consent Decree and the citizens, most
4 importantly, of Ferguson, along with the City, can continue to
5 make improvements.

6 Nobody expects the City of Ferguson to come out of
7 this solving all of the problems that exist in our society and
8 everyplace, but there's a lot of room for cities to do a lot
9 and to -- that's where, you know, what the City does affects
10 the citizens the most directly.

11 And I think that it's wonderful to see improvement
12 with the recognition that there is still a ways to go and that
13 I do hope, to the extent there's tension among the officials
14 or leaders as was referenced in a couple of the comments, that
15 everything is being done to work together to try to alleviate
16 concerns and also keep our focus going where it needs to go,
17 which is doing the things that the City agreed to do in this
18 Consent Decree.

19 And so I appreciate all of that. I appreciate your
20 comments especially here today, and we'll keep working. And
21 so we'll have another quarterly meeting in three months, and
22 then the next three months later we will have public comment
23 again.

24 And I am looking forward to the time when I won't be
25 seeing you all again, but that's going to be still a ways.

1 But we're working on it.

2 So thank you very much. And I appreciate the
3 handouts. I'll read -- I'll do my homework and read that.

4 Thank you, Mr. Shropshire. So court's in recess.

5 **(PROCEEDINGS CONCLUDED AT 11:38 AM.)**

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CERTIFICATE

I, Shannon L. White, Registered Merit Reporter and Certified Realtime Reporter, hereby certify that I am a duly appointed Official Court Reporter of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri.

I further certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of the proceedings held in the above-entitled case and that said transcript is a true and correct transcription of my stenographic notes.

I further certify that this transcript contains pages 1 through 59 inclusive and that this reporter takes no responsibility for missing or damaged pages of this transcript when same transcript is copied by any party other than this reporter.

Dated at St. Louis, Missouri, this 17th day of February, 2025.

/s/Shannon L White
/s/Shannon L. White
Shannon L. White, CRR, RMR, CCR, CSR
Official Court Reporter