

**PINELLAS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS BUREAU
INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

DATE: JUNE 21, 2018

TO: DISTRIBUTION

FROM: CAPTAIN RAY WHITELEY *Rw*
Professional Standards Bureau

SUBJECT: SHERIFF'S FINDING

Per Sheriff Gualtieri, Lieutenant Dennis Dotson, #55445, will receive the following as a result of AI-18-009:

1. Forty (40) hours Suspension to be served on:
June 21, 22, 25, 26 and 27, 2018 (8 hours/day).

DISTRIBUTION:

Sheriff Bob Gualtieri
Chief Deputy Dan Simovich
Assistant Chief Deputy Sean Jowell
Assistant Chief Deputy George Steffen
Colonel Paul Halle
Major Stefanie Campbell
Major Dave Danzig
Major Bill Hagans
Major Rich Nalven
Major Lora Smith
Lieutenant Deanna Carey
Director Jennifer Crockett
Director Nancy Duggan
Director Susan Krause
Director Jason Malpass
Shannon Lockheart, General Counsel
Payroll
Purchasing-Uniform Supply
Lieutenant Dennis Dotson

RW/kmm

**PINELLAS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

DATE: JUNE 19, 2018

TO: LIEUTENANT DENNIS DOTSON, #55445

FROM: SHERIFF BOB GUALTIERI

SUBJECT: CHARGES RE: AI-18-009

An investigation has been conducted by the Administrative Investigation Division, Professional Standards Bureau, of the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office. As a result of this investigation, the Administrative Review Board has determined you committed the following violation:

On January 27, 2018, while on duty in Pinellas County, Florida, you violated the Pinellas County Sheriff's Civil Service Act Laws of Florida, 89-404 as amended by Laws of Florida 08-285, Section 6, Subsection 4, by violating the provisions of law or the rules, regulations, and operating procedures of the Office of the Sheriff.

1. You violated Pinellas County Sheriff's Office General Order 3-1.1, Rule and Regulation 5.4, Duties and Responsibilities.

Synopsis: You engaged in the pursuit of a vehicle which violated Pinellas County Sheriff's Office Policy.

Specifically, a Lealman Fire District Chief's vehicle was reported as stolen from 4360 55th Avenue North. The vehicle was identified as a Ford Expedition, Sport Utility Vehicle (SUV).

The vehicle was initially located by a deputy and a traffic stop was attempted at Park Boulevard and Park Street. The vehicle fled from this location and continued eastbound on Park Boulevard. The vehicle made a northbound turn onto Belcher Road, proceeding to the intersection of Bryan Dairy Road.

After the attempted traffic stop and while awaiting the arrival of the Flight Unit, several marked Pinellas County Sheriff's Office cruisers followed, at your direction, in efforts to maintain visual contact with the stolen vehicle until the surveillance could be relinquished to air support.

INS 18-0023

As the Flight Unit arrived overhead, the stolen vehicle turned east on Bryan Dairy Road. You acknowledged their arrival and directed the Flight Unit to take control. With the Flight Unit on scene, you attempted a Precision Immobilization Technique (P.I.T.) maneuver on Bryan Dairy Road as the vehicle traveled eastbound from Belcher Road.

The P.I.T. was unsuccessful and the vehicle turned northbound onto 74th Street North. A box-in attempt was conducted on 74th Street North, but the vehicle eluded apprehension and fled north.

At this time, a pursuit involving several Pinellas County Sheriff's Office members, then ensued north on 74th Street North and westbound onto 114th Avenue North to the intersection of Belcher Road.

As members approached the intersection of 114th Avenue and Belcher Road, you provided direction to other involved members to, "back off," the pursuit as the vehicle turned southbound onto Belcher Road and then westbound onto Bryan Dairy Road. The vehicle continued westbound on Bryan Dairy Road and made a northbound turn onto Starkey Road and then eastbound onto Ulmerton Road.

The vehicle stopped for the light at Ulmerton Road and Belcher Road. You gave a command to, "Let's try to move up on it and take it in. Box it in." You admitted to having concerns for ramming of cars and involving innocent citizens at this intersection, however, you authorized and directed this action.

At the time of the Administrative Review Board, you provided the following testimony:

- You acknowledged familiarization with Sheriff's Office policy and that you engaged in a pursuit of a stolen vehicle which did not meet the criteria established within agency policy.
- You testified you recognized you should have let the Flight Unit take more control and, "just take it." You stated, "Looking back and accessing it, the best action would have been to let the eagle (helicopter) go ahead and take it."
- You testified, "The contact that we had at Ulmerton and Belcher should have never occurred."
- You testified, "I take fault myself."
- You acknowledged that you were affected by, "tunnel vision" and "caught up in the moment."
- You testified, "I could do a better job" and that you were not "satisfied" with a lot of things that took place. You acknowledged that if faced with a similar event, you would do things differently.

You acknowledged that as the supervisor, you were ultimately responsible for control of this event. You testified, "I took active control of it" and stated, "I understand that I take responsibility for leading the shift."

You acknowledged you engaged in pursuit of the vehicle on the aforementioned roadways which was unauthorized and in violation of policy as the vehicular pursuit did not involve a forcible felony, an imminent and/or continuous threat, or any extremely dangerous driving.

You admitted to this violation.

Disciplinary Points and Recommended Discipline Range:

You were found to have violated one Level Five Rule/Regulation, totaling fifty (50) points. These points, which were affected by no modified points from previous discipline, resulted in fifty (50) progressive discipline points. At this point level, recommended discipline is five (5) days Suspension to Termination.

Disciplinary action shall be consistent with progressive discipline, for cause in accordance with the provisions of the Pinellas County Civil Service Act.

 51864

MAJOR RICHARD NALVEN
PATROL OPERATIONS BUREAU
FOR BOB GUALTIERI, SHERIFF

I have received a copy:

Date 6/20/18

Time 1600


SIGNATURE

RW:MWW:kmm