To: Chief Romero

CC: Scott McNamara, Superior Officer Union President

From: Sgt. James Raso

Date: May 20th, 2011

RE: Patrick Blanchette

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Chief,

On May 20, 2011, I was working the 5pm – 1am shift as the patrol supervisor. I wrote the following parking tickets at 37 Essex Street:

# 523064 – MA # 1TK190 blocking a driveway at 10:50 PM

# 523065 – MA # RS953K, parking on sidewalk at 11:00 PM

# 523066 – MA # 9RJ980, parking on sidewalk at 11:20 PM

# 523067 – MA # 752GV3, parking on sidewalk at 11:20 PM

# 523068 – PA # HCN0665, parking on sidewalk at 11:20 PM

# 523069 – MA # 47NV51, blocking driveway at 11:50 PM

At midnight four of these cars were still illegally parked and I called Sheehan's Towing. Only the PA plate # HCN0665 was towed (all other moved their cars). As the tow trucks were getting ready to tow them I noticed Pat Blanchette, who is the Economic and Planning Developer for the City videotaping the incident from his phone while standing on the sidewalk. I overheard Blanchette state to pedestrians "look at what's going on, it's going to get very interesting in the City." Mr. Blanchette then walked into the street in between the tow trucks and police cruisers. At one point a tow truck couldn't back up because he was standing there. Officer Farrington stated "sir you have to get on the sidewalk you are blocking the tow truck." Blanchette did not acknowledge but walked slowly continuing to videotape.

While Blanchette was standing on the sidewalk I approached him and asked if we could speak. He immediately stated "I know what you guys are doing this is [redacted]." I detected a strong odor of alcohol, slurred speech and glassy eyes. I pointed out the four vehicles that were illegally parked. Blanchette stated "I know they are not supposed to park here but you have a boner for the Mayor and that's why you are here." Blanchette started to raise his voice and flail his arms stating "on St. Patrick 's Day at the Claddagh there were many illegally parked cars and you did nothing about it." I explained to him that the parking problem around all the night clubs in this area is a huge problem and I have written hundreds of tickets and towed cars. I then pointed to

the security guard at Bali's night club and told him that I speak with him weekly about this problem and have given many warnings and even allowed people to move their cars without a ticket.

Blanchette then stated, "and you were running plates at the City Council Meeting the other night!" I explained to him that the law allows the police to run any plate they may see for any reason. I also told him that I was there for all the car breaks and he yelled stating "my car got broken into 6 times since I have been at City Hall!" I further explained that there are nights that I run between 50-70 plates without knowing who owns the cars and I would be happy to show him the history on the RMV computer.

Blanchette then went on to say "you only write parking tickets at the Mayor's establishments." Again, I invited him to research all my parking tickets and tows that I have done over the past 15 years. This conversation lasted 3-5 minutes and during this conversation I estimated 15 – 20 people standing behind me, some with phone recorders taking notice of our conversation and how he was challenging what we were doing. Unsure of where the situation was going I requested the Shift Commander, Lt. Conway to come to my location.

Blanchette then noticed five other officers (Farrington, J Cerullo, Bussy, Murphy and Melendez) standing behind him. Blanchette then yelled "now this is [redacted] intimidation, what do you guys all want to arrest me?" He then placed his hands out and together motioning for us to put the handcuffs on him. I ordered the officers to stand a few feet back because I wanted to talk more to Blanchette. Blanchette throwed up his hands and stated '[redacted] this I feel intimidated and not talking to you," he then walked away.

Lt. Conway arrived and I briefly explained what had transpired. Lt. Conway told me to wait there and walked over to Blanchette. Blanchette waived me over and stated "no I want Jimmy here I have a lot of respect for this guy." I walked over and listened to Blanchette reiterate his story and complain about the officers intimidating him. He again was swearing telling Conway that we were targeting the Mayor. Conway told Blanchette he didn't agree with him. Again Blanchette looked at me and put out his hands and stated "go ahead and arrest me!" Blanchette walked away and over to the patrons standing outside Bali's night club.

NOTE: During this whole incident there was a light skin male who kept trying to interject during the conversation. He was told 10-12 times by various officers to leave the area but kept returning. It was believed that this individual is Venicio Formeta and he is the mayor' aid..

I have previously documented two similar incidents (Feb 8th & April 30 2011) regarding intimidation from this current administration. I feel that Patrick Blanchette was at the least unprofessional in his actions. He could have been arrested for disorderly conduct and probably should have been. His interference only made the situation worse. I am worried that with the weather getting better and the low man power we have on the streets if situations like this

continue they are going to quickly escalate to a situation that cannot be controlled. I would invite any further investigation if deemed necessary.

Many officers that I supervise have expressed that they feel that they should stay away from the places that the Mayor or his administration frequent in fear of retribution. It is my opinion that that since Blanchette wasn't personally involved in this incident his only role was trying to intimidate the police not to write tickets or tow illegally parked cars. This behavior by him shows that this is a real possibility in future situations and needs to be addressed. We should be able to continue to properly do our jobs and enforce the laws without second guessing decisions because of fears of political retribution.

I will instruct the five Officers present to write additional memo's to me of what they observed.

Chief's office (received copy)

Scott McNamara, Superior Officer Union President (received copy)

TO: SGT. James Raso
From: Officer Christopher Bussey
RE: Tow at Bali's Restaurant

On May 19th 2011 I was assigned to Uniform Patrol in car #407. While on patrol and monitoring the radio during the course of my shift, I heard SGT. Raso call in for tow trucks in the area of 37 Essex ST. for cars blocking a driveway and parked on the side walk. I began to make my way to his location as this is a frequent problem and Officers have met with problem patrons of the Bali's Restaurant in the past while conducting similar operations. At one point I heard over the radio Sgt. Raso stating "I have a situation over here".

Upon arrival I noted Sgt. Raso speaking with Pat Blanchete on the side walk and several people standing behind the Sgt. I ordered the people to back away from Raso as he spoke with Blanchete. I remained in the area with other Officers as people were still milling around and appeared agitated about the tows. At one point during Raso conversation Blanchete He was angry and I noted him to be animated flailing his arms and swearing at the SGT. Concerned about his behavior I walked closer along with Officers Farington, Cerullo and Melendez. Blanchete turned and noted our presence and began to yell "What the[redacted] do you want to arrest me". At that time I was close to Blanchete and noted a strong odor of alcohol coming from his breath and he appeared to be under the influence. It was explained that his actions were amounting to a breach of the peace and he needed to calm down. At that point a male walked up behind the Sgt. And I ordered him to stop and step away from him. Blanchete stated ( Paraphrasing)"[redacted] this I'm not talking to you I feel intimidated". He walked away from us and towards LT. Conway.

I am some what confused as to why a city official would interject himself in Police Operations, when he has no chain of command with in the Lawrence Police Department His vehicle was not being towed. In fact it is my opinion that Blanchete actions amounted to a breach of the peace and should have been arrested, not to mention his interjections in Police matters while under the influence. It was clear that he was trying to intimidate the Sgt. To stop the tow of illegally parked and cited vehicles, I am disturbed by Mr. Blanchete actions and will follow up with a complaint with the MA Ethics Commision..

Respectfully submitted

Christopher Bussey PO#118 LPD

# LAWRENCE POLICE DEPARTMENT

90 LOWELL STREET
LAWRENCE, MASSACHUSETTS 01841
(978) 794-5900

To: Chief Romero

From: Off. Cerullo

RE: Patrick Blanchette

On May 20, 2011, I was working the 5pm -1am shift on patrol. I was assigned on this night this night as a city rover. At around midnight I heard Sgt. Raso calling for several tow trucks in the area of 37 Essex Street. I at that time was traveling south on Union Street approaching Essex Street so I turned onto Essex Street to assist Sgt. Raso.

When I arrived on scene I observed Patrick Blanchette standing in the street holding a cell phone videotaping officers and the tow trucks as they were getting ready to tow several cars. At one point Blanchette was asked to get on the sidewalk by Off. Farrington because the tow truck could not back up to tow the vehicle. Blanchette did comply with Off. Farrington order but Blanchette never looked at Off, Farrington he just continued to videotape the incident.

At that point I observed Sgt. Raso walk over to Patrick Blanchette to speak to him off to the side. Several people from the clubs now began to come out and gather around. I could hear Blanchette yelling at Sgt. Raso. At one point I heard him say to Raso this is "[redacted]" what you are doing this is a waste of manpower. Where were you guys when my car got broken into six times. Blanchette contined to raise his voice as he talked to Sgt. Raso and flail his arms. Blanchette then towards me and several other officers that were standing in front of him. Now this is [redacted] intimidating. You guys want to arrest me. Blanchette then threw his hands in the air and said [redacted] this I feel intimidated and then walked away from Sgt. Raso.

Lt. Conway then arrived on scene and began to talk with Patrick Blanchette and Sgt. Raso I then left the scene and returned to patrol.

Respectfully,

Off. Joseph Cerullo

To: Sgt. James Raso
From: Officer Ivan Melendez
RE: Patrick Blanchette

On May 19th at approximately 23:45 pm, I Officer Melendez along with Officer Cerullo; were dispatched to 9 Summer St. for a Domestic in Progress. Upon our arrival to the area where the caller stated the domestic was taking place, we noticed all was clear and quiet. We spoke briefly with a security guard who is hired to watch the area and he related to us that he saw nothing nor heard any screaming from a woman as the caller exclaimed. We patrolled the area and even checked the Haverhill St. side for a couple fighting and saw nothing. Officer Cerullo cleared us from the call and both cruisers started to drive towards Essex St. from Union St. As both cruisers turned right onto Essex St. I saw a large flatbed tow truck blocking the street as it was towing a vehicle. Originally I didn't see any police presence but knew that it was Sheehan's turn to tow for The Lawrence Police Department. I then saw Sgt. James Raso walk to the driver's side of the flatbed tow truck; I exited my cruiser and saw that Officer Cerullo did the same.

During this time I started walking towards Sgt. Raso in order to see if I could assist with anything on scene. I then noticed Patrick Blanchette; the city of Lawrence's Economic Development and Planning Director standing in the middle of the street. I noticed that he had what appeared to be a cell phone in his hand and he was pointing it at three cruisers parked before the flatbed tow truck blocking off Essex St. It appeared to me that Patrick Blanchette was either video taping or taking pictures of the cruisers. At first I was confused but then I heard him speak, he stated "The city must be really busy tonight!" Patrick Blanchette made this statement in a very sarcastic tone. Then I saw that Officer Farrington ask Patrick Blanchette to go to the sidewalk. Mr. Blanchette just ignored Officer Farrington's commands. I have been a Lawrence Police Officer for eleven years and never ever witnessed such behavior from any prior personnel from any prior administration. I never saw a person from any administration from our city interfere with any type of police investigation weather a simple tow to a more serious investigation such as an attempted hit and run.

I saw Patrick Blanchette finally walk over to the side walk and stand there making comments which I could not hear but I did see his lips moving. I walked closer and saw that Sgt Raso initiated a civil and professional conversation with Patrick Blanchette. As I saw both men stand in front of one another speaking I could visibly see Patrick Blanchette swaying back and forth. It appeared to me that Patrick Blanchette was under the influence of alcohol. As I got to both men speaking I could hear Patrick Blanchette state, "I don't see you towing and ticketing cars at the Claddagh on St. Patrick's Day!" From what I witnessed Sgt. Raso acted very professionally and attempted to explain a civil answer to every one of Patrick Blachette's questions. Patrick Blanchette still acted very agitated and was unreasonable in the conversation that he was having with Sgt. Raso, often interrupting and being very rude.

It was during this time I noticed that Officers Cerullo, Farrington, Bussey and myself; stood near Sgt. Raso and Patrick Blanchette in order to hear their conversation. Well, at least this is why I was near both men; I just couldn't believe what I was witnessing on the part of Patrick Blanchette. I heard Patrick Blanchette state "This is

intimidating!" Then he turned toward the street and saw all officers paying attention to their conversation, Patrick Blanchette then turned towards Sgt. Raso in an aggressive manner and flailed his arms open all the while saying "This is intimidation, I feel intimidated!" Patrick Blanchette then stated "What?! Are you going to arrest me?! Go ahead, arrest me!" All officers were told by Sgt. Raso to stay put, then Sgt. Raso stated "Better yet, guys walk away." Which; was a clear attempt by Sgt. Raso to prevent the arrest of Patrick Blanchette. We obeyed the sergeant's command and started to move a few paces back. Understand that it was not the behavior of Patrick Blachette that worried officers but rather what this behavior could have caused with the crowd gathering around both men. Clearly we were there to ensure the safety of Sgt. Raso.

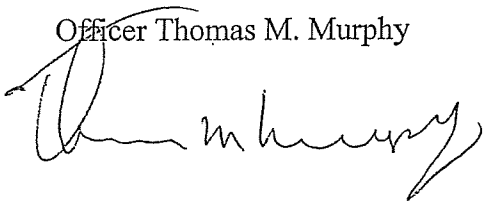
I know that my opinion is just my opinion but the behavior of Patrick Blanchette was that of a drunken person attempting to use his power to stop and intimidate police from doing their job. I have arrested many civilians in the City of Lawrence for disorderly conduct in my eleven years of service. Due to political retribution I held myself back and didn't take any action as a police officer for Lawrence, please do note that Patrick Blanchette's actions did constitute disorderly conduct and he should have been placed under arrest for his actions.

Respectfully Submitted

Ivan Melendez #95

Ivan Melendez #95 LPD

To Chief Romero,

At approx. midnight. This officer went to Bali's Restaurant on Essex St. to assist Sgt. Raso who had called in several cars, parked illegally on the sidewalk, and in no parking areas. This officer was assigned to sector six downtown, so I was only a street away upon my arrival the Sheehans Tow trucks were arriving. This officer assisted the trucks in enabling them to tow the vehicles. Moments later I observed Patrick Blanchette had exit Bali's Resturant and approach Sgt. Raso in between the moving tow trucks with his arms extended out toward the Sgt. Mr.> Blanchette was filming Sgt. Raso with his telephone and began to engage the Sgt. And a few additional officer that had arrived on the scene. A small crowd had gathered and although I could not make out what Mr. Blanchette was saying I could here his tone and loud volume. At that point this officer had resumed traffic in the street while the tows were in progress.

Officer Thomas M. Murphy