

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 22, 2014

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At 1:00 p.m. this afternoon, Jonesboro Mayor Harold Perrin suspended Chief of Police Mike Yates for 30 days without pay as part of disciplinary action stemming from recent posts on his Facebook account directed towards a reporter from *The Sun*. The suspension was immediate. Assistant Chief of Police Tim Eads will serve as acting Chief during Yates's suspension.

Yates was also ordered to complete a training course to be determined by the Mayor's Office and related to the online media posts. The Mayor has directed the city's Human Resource Director to present him with a list of appropriate training opportunities. The training must take place and be completed during the 30 day suspension.

The Mayor also directed Chief Yates to issue a formal, written letter of apology to both former *Sun* reporter Sunshine Crump as well as *The Sun*. Proof of those apology letters must be presented before reinstatement of his duties with pay. In addition, Perrin has directed the City Attorney's office to conduct a review of FOIA policies currently in place at the Jonesboro Police Department and to notify him and acting Chief Eads of any violations so they can be immediately corrected.

Lastly, Perrin issued a written warning to Yates stating that "...future use of social media or any other forms of personal communication to imply threats, actions or consequences tied to your influence or authority as Chief of Police or as an employee of the City of Jonesboro will be cause for immediate termination."

"This has been a challenging week for me," Perrin said in a release statement. "These last few days have been long. This is not the sort of thing I want to be taking my time and the city's resources dealing with. We have far too many important issues that affect our community that have been robbed of our full attention, and that is tragic. To say that I am disappointed is an understatement."

Perrin said that throughout his investigation and consideration of what action to take, one thing became clear. "There was not a single decision that I could make that was going to make everyone happy," Perrin said. "There were many that were outraged and rushed to the conclusion that I should act in a certain way, and many others that were supportive of the Chief and rushed to the conclusion that I should act in another. At the end of the day, I had to weigh all the factors in play, including not only this one particular series of events involving Chief Yates, but also the job he has done for the citizens of Jonesboro during his entire tenure as our Chief of Police.

"Not a single one of us is infallible, and any human being is capable of erring in judgment and making mistakes. But like all decisions, those made by the Chief have consequences. I do not condone the comments that Chief Yates made through social media concerning Ms. Crump or her employer, and I have made it clear through my disciplinary action that I will not tolerate any such future behavior."

"I have carefully weighed all my options and firmly feel that this is the best course of action to take at this particular time. I pray that we can all move past this as a community, learn from our mistakes, and get back to serving the citizens in a manner that instills confidence and pride in our city."