



MEMORANDUM

Austin Police Department *Office of the Chief of Police*

TO: Mark Washington, Director of Civil Service

FROM: Art Acevedo, Chief of Police

DATE: June 27, 2012

SUBJECT: Temporary Suspension of Officer Sean McWhorter #6298
Internal Affairs Control Number 2012-0270

Pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 143 of the Texas Local Government Code, Section 143.052, and Rule 10, Rules of Procedure for the Firefighter's and Police Officer's Civil Service Commission, I have temporarily suspended Officer Sean McWhorter #6298 from duty as a police officer of the City of Austin, Texas, for a period of five (5) days. The temporary suspension is effective beginning on June 28, 2012 and continuing through July 2, 2012.

I took this action because Officer McWhorter violated Civil Service Commission Rule 10.03, which sets forth the grounds for disciplinary suspensions of employees in the classified service, and states:

No employee of the classified service of the City of Austin shall engage in, or be involved in, any of the following acts or conduct, and the same shall constitute cause for suspension of an employee from the classified service of the City:

- L. Violation of any of the rules and regulations of the Fire Department or Police Department or of special orders, as applicable.

The following are the specific acts committed by Officer McWhorter in violation of Rule 10:

On December 31, 2011, at approximately 10:21 p.m., Officer McWhorter, while on-duty, assisted in the arrest of a suspect for Driving While Intoxicated. While assisting with the search of the arrestee, Officer McWhorter used force that was not objectively reasonable or necessary under the circumstances in violation of Austin Police Department policy.

By these actions, Officer McWhorter violated Rule 10.03(L) of the Civil Service Rules by violating the following rules and regulations of the Austin Police Department:

➤ **Austin Police Department Policy 200.2: Response to Resistance: Response to Resistance Policy**

200.2: Response to Resistance Policy

While the type and extent of force may vary, it is the policy of this department that officers use only that amount of objectively reasonable force which appears necessary under the circumstances to successfully accomplish the legitimate law enforcement purpose in accordance with this policy.

- (a) Given that no policy can realistically predict every situation an officer might encounter, it is recognized that each officer must be entrusted with well-reasoned discretion in determining the appropriate response to resistance in each incident.
- (b) Circumstances may arise in which officers reasonably believe that it would be impracticable or ineffective to use any of the standard tools, weapons, or methods provided by the Department. Officers may find it more effective or practicable to improvise their response to rapidly unfolding conditions they are confronting. In such circumstances, the use of any improvised device or method must still be objectively reasonable and used only to the extent which reasonably appears necessary to accomplish a legitimate law enforcement purpose.
- (c) While it is the ultimate objective of every law enforcement encounter to minimize injury to everyone involved, nothing in this policy requires an officer to actually sustain physical injury before applying objectively reasonable force.
- (d) Any complaint by a subject that an officer caused pain or injury shall be treated as a response to resistance force incident, except complaints of minor discomfort from unresisted handcuffing.

By copy of this memo, Officer McWhorter is hereby advised of this temporary suspension and that the suspension may be appealed to the Civil Service Commission by filing with the Director of Civil Service, within ten (10) days after receipt of a copy of this memo, a proper notice of appeal in accordance with Section 143.010 of the Texas Local Government Code.

By copy of this memo and as required by Section 143.057 of the Texas Local Government Code, Officer McWhorter is hereby advised that such section and the Agreement Between the City of Austin and the Austin Police Association provide for an appeal to an independent third party hearing examiner, in accordance with the provisions of such Agreement. If appeal is made to a hearing examiner, all rights of appeal to a District Court are waived, except as provided by Subsection (j) of Section 143.057 of the Texas Local Government Code. That section states that the State District Court may hear appeals of an award of a hearing examiner only on the grounds that the arbitration panel was without jurisdiction or exceeded its jurisdiction or that the order was procured by fraud, collusion or other unlawful means. In order to appeal to a hearing examiner, the original notice of appeal submitted to the Director of Civil Service must state that appeal is made to a hearing examiner.



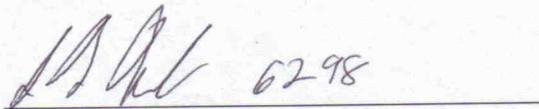
Art Acevedo
Chief of Police

6/27/12

Date

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the above and foregoing memorandum of temporary suspension and I have been advised that if I desire to appeal that I have ten (10) days from the date of this receipt to file written notice of appeal with the Director of Civil Service in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 143 of the Texas Local Government Code.



Officer Sean McWhorter #6298

6/27/12

Date