

Update on FOIA Request and other stuff hanging out there!

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Christian Reporter News
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This has been quite the experience. I've been working in Missouri, and then Arizona, while my phone has been blowing up, Facebook pings going off, private texts coming in, and FOIA request dragging its feet. I must thank everyone for all the kind words I have seen in regard to the two articles I've pushed out in regard to the three men running for Chief of Police.

As I said previously, little ole San Angelo – wow!

In all seriousness, the position of Chief of Police is so critical. I believe that is why we, the citizens, continue to fight for this right to select who we want to oversee this incredible department of men and women who are willing to protect us.

First, let me update you on my FOIA request, which yes, it appears that to do one hour of work, it took 13 days to complete. Not happy with what appears to be a deliberate delay in getting the response back to me.

April 23, 2024

RE: PD PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST of April 10, 2024., Reference # P006841-041024.

Dear Kat Rowoldt,

The San Angelo Police Department received a public records request from you on April 10, 2024. Your request mentioned:

"Lt. Mike Hernandez has stated that he has been shot at 11 times while performing his police duties. I would like to request the dates of each incident, the capacity he was functioning in (SWAT, patrol, etc), and if the shooter was apprehended and charges filed."

Good morning,

Prior Administrations, as well as the current Administration, have never had a policy tracking of incidents involving stray bullets in the line of duty and involving any police officer. Nothing of this sort has ever been formally documented by the Police Department. According to the Public Information Act, a governmental body is under no obligation to create a report that is not currently in existence. With that being said we do not have records responsive to your request.

The San Angelo City Council adopted a policy at their December 13, 2022 meeting to enact Section 552.275 of the Texas Government Code,

After using 36-hours of staff time in a fiscal year (Oct. 1 – Sept. 30), you will be charged at a rate of \$15/hour for future requests. No work will be done until payment is received.

The total number of hours worked on this request was: **1.00**

The total number of hours worked on all requests submitted by you since October 1 is: **1.00**

Sincerely,

San Angelo Police Department

My reaction: sad.

When I began sitting through the San Angelo City Council weekly meetings back in 2013, which I did for years, we seldomly had a shooting or murder in our community. Even four or five years ago, it was still a very rare occurrence. Things have greatly changed.

The financial impact on our county is huge when we must hold a murder trial. Money is one thing, but the cost of lives lost is another. On top of that, the unsung heroes who are putting their lives at risk to protect us is another.

When Lt. Hernandez threw out the number of eleven incidences where he was shot at in the line of duty, it greatly concerned me. He is only one of many officers out there in our community. I'm sure he's not the only one who has had this happen. I am truly shocked and saddened that our police department is not tracking this. I find it really hard to believe, personally.

Maybe I need to resubmit this request with it worded differently. Surely, they must have some type of stats when their officers have been in danger. Maybe I just need to interview past and present officers and get the stories directly from them. We need to know what's really going on.

As citizens, I like to think we care. I know I do. When Sgt. Korby Kennedy was killed, it rattled me to my core. I considered him a friend. It took months to move past that horrible moment. That was a car - not a gun.

Secondly - oh my. It's the daily mudslinging. Facebook is a great place to watch it happen. While good or bad, legit or not, it does have the citizens discussing this very important race.

There's mudslinging between David Nowlin and Joe Hyde, Joe Hyde and one of the candidate's wives, one of the candidates is maxed out with SA LIVE and stands-up for one of the other candidates. Bottomline: wipe off all the mud and I hope what we really do find is a wonderful group of people who really want to live in the best community possible.

There is so much stress, fear, concerns, good-ole boy deals, feelings of helplessness, boundaries that have been violated, and weariness that we all are ready to throw up our hands and just scream.

Here's some kudos:

Hernandez – If you have been shot at that many times, thank you for being in harm's way so someone else was not. I'd love to visit with you more about each of these situations. Call me – you've got my number.

Cimino – I really appreciated your last post on your Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/CiminoforChief>), Friday, April 26, 2024, standing up for Griffith. Kudos and salute to you, sir.

Griffith – After a very long two-day drive home from working for four days in Phoenix in their hot sun, I really appreciated your morning words of wisdom, “God is with Us!” from Friday, April 26, 2024 on your Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61552912171680>). How we all need to remember that each and every day. It was very refreshing hearing a leader share from his heart.

Well, I think I have another FOIA request to prepare and submit. This will not be on the same subject matter. I'll keep you posted.