

The recent process for the selection of Chief of Police, for Tallahassee, Florida, has been met with much publicity and emotion...and rightfully so. For too long, the citizens of Tallahassee, as well as the sworn and civilian staff within the Tallahassee Police Department, have yearned for consistent, long term, and stable change within the Agency.

On December 4, 2019, along with you, I believed that agent of change was coming. But, not due to any lack of effort on my part, which you shall see, it was not to be the case.

On the evening of Thursday, November 21, 2019, I met with City Manager Reese Goad, and Deputy City Manager Cynthia Barber, at 300 S. Adams Street, Tallahassee, FL (City Hall). This meeting would last for over 1 ½ hours. At the time, the final three candidates for Tallahassee Chief of Police had already been announced. No final decision was made at this point.

During our discussions, I made it an emphasis to discuss the unwavering importance of having a transparent employment contract in place, if I were to receive an offer and ultimately become the Chief of Tallahassee Police. I provided both Goad and Barber the factors that were vital to the contract. Two of the most significant agreements were:

1. The Chief would have autonomy over the promotion, selection, assignment, and restructuring, of agency personnel, and particularly, command staff members (i.e. Deputy Chiefs and Majors). Therefore, the Chief would have the freedom to promote and assign the most suited members for the positions most aligned to their individual skillset, without fear of interference or reprisal from people outside of the police department. This includes the City Manager and Manager.
2. The Chief would have enough tenure in this new position, to enact positive changes through policy and procedure, and would remain in place to ensure those changes continue to manifest agency wide. I requested, that absent a "just cause" basis for termination or separation from employment, that I would be employed through October of 2026, which is the same month/year I was set to retire at my current Agency. Furthermore, I explained that based upon feedback from police employees, city employees, citizens of Tallahassee, and others, it was critical to ensure that the next police chief would remain in place to create a sense of internal stability.

Now, to both of the above points, both Goad and Barber "verbally" agreed to those points and others, should I receive the job offer.

On November 27, 2019, I received a phone call from Goad and Barber, offering me the position of Chief of Police. I expressed my appreciation and honor for the offering, and discussed the need to have a written contract in place prior to acceptance. Later that evening, I spoke to Barber on the phone, and reemphasized the aforementioned terms that were vital to the contract. Barber advised she would call me back after speaking to Goad. A while later, Barber called me back and advised that "Reese" didn't have any issues with the terms.

On December 2, 2019, I received the first written "offer of employment", which was emailed to me by Human Resource Director Ellen Blair, but written by in the name of Reese Goad. This offer of employment indicated that I had a deadline to accept the terms of employment by the next day, of December 3, 2019. This employment offer omitted any and all language concerning Personnel

Autonomy. It also expressed a contract with an initial five-year term, as opposed to the verbally agreed upon date indicated earlier.

The next date, on December 3, 2019, I sent an email to Blair, stating numerous concerns and language contrary to earlier discussions, that was contained within this written offer. This includes language indicating that the City Manager's discretion to employ me can supersede the contractual term.

On December 4, 2019, Goad and I spoke over the phone in person. He advised that he received my emailed response via Blair, and wanted to ensure I signed the employment agreement. I inquired as to the reason for the "quick turnaround" on a signature and response from me. I advised Goad that I wanted to ensure my attorneys had an opportunity to review the terms. Goad advised that he did not want "the grass to grow" underneath this process, and wanted to get everything done. He also indicated that he needed to make an announcement on the police chief selection soon. I explained to Goad that I would not accept the written offer. Goad advised he would change the language himself, and resend the offer to get it done.

Around noon, on December 4, 2019, I received an updated "offer of employment", this time, containing much of the initially agreed upon terms. I was also reassured by Goad that the exact language in the "offer of employment" would be included in the final "Chief of Police Employment Agreement."

To summarize, as of December 19, 2019, there has never been a Chief of Police Employment Agreement that has accurately reflected the language expressed in the "offer of employment" dated December 4, 2019, nor the verbally agreed to terms that were discussed on November 21, 2019, and November 27, 2019.

Instead, I have received, on more than one occasion, iterations of a Chief of Police Employment Agreement, that is:

- Devoid of any discussion regarding Command Staff Autonomy,
- Inclusive of new language, which indicates I can be terminated from employment, even **when I AM ABLE** to perform the duties of Police Chief.

Finally, to clear up any doubt of my willingness to serve the people of my hometown, I want to list a few pieces of factual information:

- Prior to even completing a final contract, I executed a lease on an apartment in Tallahassee, and made an initial payment of \$409.65, on December 13, 2019. I now owe a total of \$6,768.30, due to early termination etc.
- Prior to even completing a final contract, I scheduled installation of utilities and other services for Friday, December 20, 2019.
- Prior to even completing a final contract, I scheduled delivery of rental furniture, previously scheduled to be delivered on December 20, 2019.

- I booked an airline flight to complete more previously unannounced steps in this process, to take place on December 27, 2019.
- My current home was listed for sale.
- I have already worked diligently and been in discussions with the Interim Chief of Police, Local, State, and Federal officials, police department personnel, and community leaders, in a motivated effort to get a jump start on positive change in Tallahassee.

In closing, I want all citizens of Tallahassee Florida to know, despite unnecessary unresponsiveness, lack of internal coordination, and potential untruths on the part of some persons, I remained determined to arrive in Tallahassee. However, an individual can only proceed so far before his cognitive abilities overrides the emotion of returning home at any and all costs.

Tallahassee, I wanted to become your next police chief; but it should have been the priority of others in certain positions to want the same, and to get the job done. There is much, much more that I could publicly state, but I have only publicly responded thus far, to ensure you all knew the truth.

You have no idea what type of emotional roller coaster the past 48 hours have been for me or my immediate and extended family. From the responses I have received today, the same sentiments apply to citizens of Tallahassee. However, end the end, I remain steadfast in the belief that God has an ultimate plan. We shall all find out together, just what that may be.

Sincerely,

Antonio G. Gilliam
Tallahassee Native