

WOODBIDGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Frank P. Cappiello
Chief of Police

PRESS RELEASE

July 10, 2018

Administrative Review Findings – Sean Grace State Senate Campaign Canvassers

I have conducted an administrative review of the incident on July 3, 2018 involving the Sean Grace State Senate Campaign canvassers. As part of this review, in addition to examining all material evidence, I have spoken to Mr. Grace, both canvassers, the resident at the home where the incident took place, as well as, the officers involved.

I share the following information to clarify any misperceptions that seem to have arisen.

The police response was not self-initiated, but was a result of officers being dispatched to that specific area on a call for service after a concerned resident called and reported two males going from house to house knocking on doors.

The Police Department has recently responded to unrelated calls for service involving unregistered solicitors from a private company, who were advised to discontinue their activities until they complied with the Town's soliciting permit process.

Upon arrival, the officers found that the two males were not solicitors, but were political campaign canvassers.

Following a brief conversation with other neighbors, who approached the officers and felt it necessary to speak on behalf of the canvassers, and after confirming that no trespassing or permitting issues had occurred, the canvassers were promptly allowed to continue with their campaign efforts in the area.

The officers never told the canvassers to cease their activity, nor did they follow or monitor the canvassers' travels after allowing them to continue.

I applaud the resident who promptly reported the incident for doing exactly what we have been urging the public to do – look out for your neighbors, be vigilant and promptly report any unusual or suspicious activity immediately.

I find that the Police Department's response to this call for service was proper and the officers' investigation of the incident was thorough, expeditious and impartial. It involved absolutely no racial bias whatsoever on the part of the responding officers. This is a topic for which our personnel receive mandatory training during each recertification period and is a behavior that would never be condoned or tolerated by my Administration. Any unfortunate misperceptions surrounding this incident, which have been recently circulating, should not overshadow my officers' daily dedication to duty and this Department's ongoing commitment to community service and safety.

Although there is no wrongdoing on the part of the Woodbridge Police Department in this situation, due to the current climate that exists today, we are planning to proceed with additional training regarding situations of this kind.