

VOLUSIA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
INTERNAL AFFAIRS

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

REPORT NUMBER: IA-17-025

PERIOD COVERED: October 14, 2017
DATE REPORTED: October 14, 2017
SUBJECT(S) NAME: Sergeant Robert Rahn #2359
INVESTIGATING OFFICERS: Detective Glen Bennett #1452
BASIS FOR INVESTIGATION:

On October 14, 2017, it was alleged, that Sergeant Robert Rahn and his sixteen-year-old son engaged in a physical altercation within their residence. As a result of the altercation, Sergeant Rahn was charged with Domestic Battery by Strangulation and Child Abuse.

OFFENSES:

This investigation is relevant to an alleged violation of Department Standards Directives and Volusia County Merit Rules and Regulations:

26.2.130 Commission of Felony – Department personnel shall not commit any act or crime defined by state or federal law as a felony, whether chargeable or not. *(Violation subject to dismissal)*

Volusia County Merit System Rules and Regulations 86-453. *This violation may be sufficient grounds for disciplinary action ranging from oral reprimand to dismissal, depending on the seriousness of the offense and other circumstances related to the situation.*

RE: (2) Disregard for or frequent violations of Federal Laws, State Laws, County Ordinances, Department Standard Directives, and safety rules.

(13) Any conduct, on or off duty that reflects unfavorably on the County as an Employer.

INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY:

On October 16, 2017, Deputy Chief John Creamer assigned the above incident to the Internal Affairs Unit. Sergeant Robert Rahn was served with a Notification of Internal Investigation along with a copy of his Officer Bill of Rights and was placed on Administrative Leave with Pay. This report details the internal investigation conducted by Detective Glen Bennett. *(See Tab – B for Official Correspondence)*

Detective Bennett reviewed all reports and evidence related to the incident in question. According to Sheriff's Office report 17-25606, deputies responded to [REDACTED] FL in reference to a domestic disturbance. Upon arrival, deputies contacted Sergeant Rahn, who appeared to have dried blood around his inner lip, and his girlfriend Tonya Phillips, who called 911 to report the disturbance. *(See Tab – C for Sheriff's Office Reports)*

According to Sergeant Rahn, his son, Robert Rahn, Jr., asked for some money to go out with his friends, and was told he first had to pick weeds from the flowerbeds around the house. When Robert Rahn, Jr. started to demand the money, the two got into an argument. When his son did not get the money as requested, he began throwing the weeds he had picked all over the living room. The incident escalated and became physical when Robert Rahn, Jr. punched him in the face and put him in a headlock shutting off his airway. Sergeant Rahn responded by punching his son and placing him in a headlock in an attempt to calm him down. Deputies obtained a sworn written statement from Ms. Phillips, which explained a similar version of events as explained by Sergeant Rahn.

Deputies spoke to Robert Rahn, Jr., who was visibly upset and crying, as he described the physical altercation between him and his father. Deputies observed his torn shirt and red marks around his neck, which are consistent with blood vessels being damaged beneath the skin. According to Robert Rahn, Jr., he asked for money from his father and was told to pick the weeds in the flowerbed and he would be paid. After picking the weeds, Robert Rahn, Jr. asked for the money, which his father ultimately refused to give him.

Robert Rahn, Jr. put the bags of weeds in the living room, which resulted in a verbal argument. During this argument, Sergeant Rahn kicked the weeds all over the living room and the situation escalated. Robert Rahn, Jr. described how his father struck him in the face with a closed fist before

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

On October 14, 2017, deputies responded to Sergeant Rahn's residence in Deland, FL for the report of a domestic disturbance between him and his son Robert Rahn, Jr. When deputies arrived, they made contact with Sergeant Rahn who reportedly was engaged in a physical altercation with Robert Rahn, Jr. Sergeant Rahn had signs of dried blood around his mouth, which he explained was a result of Robert Rahn, Jr. striking him before placing him in a headlock

The incident began as a verbal dispute over money that was promised to Robert Rahn, Jr. for picking weeds from the flowerbed. The argument escalated when, according to Sergeant Rahn, Robert Rahn, Jr. threw the bags of weeds all over the living room floor. Deputies obtained a sworn written statement from Ms. Phillips, which explained a similar version of events as explained by Sergeant Rahn.

When deputies spoke to Robert Rahn, Jr., he was noticeably upset with redness around his neck area. According to Robert Rahn, Jr., he denied striking his father and explained how Sergeant Rahn punched and choked him as he sat on the couch. Robert Rahn, Jr. recorded the altercation on his cell phone, which he provided the investigating deputy.

The video captured Sergeant Rahn approaching Robert Rahn, Jr. asking, "*You wanna go mother fucker, you want to go?*" before a physical altercation began. The video went black, with only audio being recorded. In the audio, Robert Rahn, Jr. could be heard gagging and advising he could not breathe just before the video stopped. This video recording did not capture the physical altercation Sergeant Rahn claimed to have had with his son just prior to the beginning of the recording, in which he was battered and choked. Based on the evidence gathered on scene, deputies placed Sergeant Rahn under arrest and he was transported to the Branch Jail in Daytona Beach, FL.

The State Attorney's Office issued an "Announcement of No Information" on all charges against Sergeant Rahn. The Department of Children and Families conducted an investigation, "*At the conclusion of the investigation, the Department has determined that, based on results of interviews and information obtained, the findings of Substance Misuse are No Indicator and Asphyxiation and Physical Injury is Not Substantiated.*"

CONCLUSION:

On December 7, 2017, this investigation was presented to the Sheriff. After review, the Sheriff determined the violation of the below listed department policies to be:

26.2.130 Commission of Felony **Not Sustained**

Volusia County Merit System Rules and Regulations 86-453.

(2) Disregard for or frequent violations of Federal Laws, State Laws, County Ordinances, Department Standard Directives, and safety rules. **Not Sustained**


(13) Any conduct, on or off duty that reflects unfavorably on the County as an Employer. **Sustained**

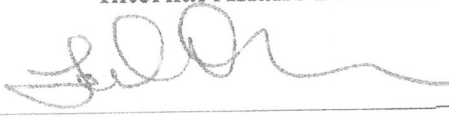
On February 8, 2018, Sergeant Rahn was issues a written counseling as a result of his actions.

EXHIBITS:

- A. Report of Investigation
- B. Official Correspondence
- C. Sheriff's Office Reports
- D. Miscellaneous Documents
- E. Digital Media

I, the undersigned, do hereby swear, under the penalty of perjury, that, to the best of my personal knowledge, information, and belief, I have not knowingly or willfully deprived, or allowed another to deprive, the suspect of the investigation of any rights contained in ss. 112.532 and 112.533, Florida Statutes.

INVESTIGATOR:  DATE: 2/5/18
Detective Glen Bennett
Internal Affairs Detective

APPROVED BY:  DATE: 2/5/18
Chief Deputy John Creamer
SHERIFF MICHAEL J. CHITWOOD
VOLUSIA COUNTY FLORIDA