



THE BOROUGH OF JENKINTOWN

700 SUMMIT AVENUE
JENKINTOWN, PA 19046
WWW.JENKINTOWNBORO.COM

PRESS RELEASE

Jenkintown PBA Vote of No Confidence for Chief of Police

The Jenkintown Borough Council and Mayor Lerman received a letter from the Jenkintown PBA describing a “unanimous vote of no confidence” on September 25, 2024, too late by Borough code to add to the formal agenda for the September 25 public meeting. In lieu of public discussion of this topic, the Mayor, with the support of the Board, offered a statement of appreciation to Chief Scott for all that he does for the Borough. Of note, Chief Scott was on a scheduled vacation during these events. We were notified that a similar letter was sent to a local reporter on October 9th. We have included both letters in this press release.

It is well known that the PBA contract term expired in December 2023. The Borough has made multiple offers to the PBA and has requested multiple times to meet for continued negotiations. The PBA has declined these requests to meet to continue to negotiate a new collective bargaining agreement. The PBA has not made any counter-offers of their own. Instead, the PBA leadership prefers to wait for arbitration while making repeated efforts to smear Chief Scott through members of the community and have now provided this no-confidence vote. We are aware that despite their claim of a unanimous vote, that not all officers supported this vote of no-confidence.

A vocal group of officers have resisted, rejected, and attempted to stymie efforts aimed at increasing accountability, productivity, and professionalism within the JPD. It required a mandate from the Chief to get the majority of the officers to incorporate something as simple as proactive traffic patrols into their daily work. This is something that the public is desperate for if you listen to public comment, speak with residents and business owners, and read social media. Even still, some officers are barely meeting this expectation. Normal and standard practices such as conducting performance reviews have been grieved, incurring additional expense to Borough residents and perpetuating a department culture that lacks accountability.

These claims being made are specious and serve to attempt to preserve a status quo that the officers have enjoyed for years, at the expense of the Borough, its residents, business owners and visitors. These issues were identified in the Smeal Report and are being systematically addressed by Chief Scott, at the direction of the Borough. Chief Scott is not acting alone as is being portrayed and Chief Scott has our full and complete support to accomplish the goals of providing Jenkintown with the highest quality public safety services. The tipping point was changing the minimum staffing requirements to adapt to the needs of the Borough. Through their no-confidence vote, the PBA is seeking to protect an overstaffing model, particularly at times when there are routinely zero calls for service and proactive police work is not being performed. Officer safety is not at risk. The primary risk to officer safety is an unwillingness to be part of proactive policing and to engage the community.

We do take all allegations of integrity and quality of work seriously and look forward to further investigating these issues and providing transparency to the community we serve.

Jay Conners, Council President