



The King of Bling
by Tom Lind

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Dedication

This booklet is dedicated to the hard working men and women of the Cincinnati Police Department, who endure regardless.

Table of Contents

In The Beginning	1
There's A New Chief In Town, Again!	1
2014 - We start To Wonder	3
Statistics Are Like a Box of Chocolates!	3
Thoughts on the H3Cincy Program	5
Un'friend'ly People	7
Does Diversity Really Matter?	9
It's All About Blackwell	11
The Magical, Mysterious, Land of Carpet (Revisited)	13
Best Police Agency in the U.S.?	15
You Must Call me Sir!	17
Blackwell's Annual Efficiency	19
Blackwell's Words Come With A Price	21
2015 - It's All Downhill From Here	23
Jeffrey Blackwell, It Is Time To Go!	23
Jeffrey Blackwell – The Puppet Police Chief	25
The Wrong Man	27
The Illusion of Transparency	29
The Elected and the Useless	33
The "Flexible Deadline"	35
The Summer Safety "Plan"	37
The summer Safety Plan Revisited	40



In The Beginning There's A New Chief In Town, Again!



On August 4th, 2011 I wrote a [blog article](#) reporting that the City of Cincinnati had a new Police Chief, James E. Craig. It is hard to believe just over two years later I am once again commenting on the fact that the City of Cincinnati Police Department has a new Chief. I am not reporting this with optimism, or even cautious optimism for I am not optimistic. I am only reporting and opining on the fact that there is a new Police Chief in town, again. The Townhouse Phoenix Blog officially welcomes Police Chief Jeffrey Blackwell. The question in everyone's mind is, what does it all mean?

The City Manager, Milton Dohoney, selected Blackwell from a short list of four candidates. One would think he made the choice based on the best candidate, but this does not seem to be the case. Chief Blackwell comes with some baggage. I have no intention of rehashing those issues. They are well documented and easily searched in any Internet search engine. I would like to mention, however, that at least one other candidate who was equally qualified did not have any such baggage attached. So the question is, did the City Manager really pick the best candidate from the pool? I am not going to go into the details of why I think others on the list may have been better qualified. I think the facts speak for themselves. The time for discussion is over. It is now time for the Cincinnati Police Department to pick up the pieces and move forward. It is now time for Chief Blackwell to take the reins and lead the Cincinnati Police Department.

But how will he do that? It is common knowledge that any new executive will make changes. Even if they say they won't, they will. That is how that make the organization their own. When Chief Craig was hired two years ago his path was simple. He had to take a demoralized agency and raise them back up. Of course, fowling the 12 year reign of terror of the previous administration, there was no way to go but up. Chief Craig grabbed the low-hanging fruits and quickly became popular with the rank and file. But the low hanging fruits have all been picked. Chief Blackwell cannot easily implement a [new uniform](#), considering the popularity of the current uniform, nor can he take away the white hats, nor can he implement ten-hour work days. And since those issues successfully raised morale in the Police Department, should Blackwell choose to reverse any of them, the effect will only be demoralizing. So what will he do to take charge and yet keep morale



high? Only time will tell. Once can only speculate. As you recall, Chief Craig made a number of changes that made the Cincinnati Police Department more L.A. like. I believe he did this to enhance his own comfort level. After all, you know what you know. Will Chief Blackwell make the Cincinnati Police Department more Columbus like? Will the officers soon be wearing eight point hats? Will the police Bureaus, which became Offices, and then reverted back to being bureaus now become subdivisions?

I guess the best approach is to take a wait and see attitude. I have seen the best and the worst over the years. Time will tell on which side of the best and the worst Chief Blackwell will fall. Until then, I suggest we all pop a top on a can of coke, propose a toast of welcome, and sit back and see what happens.

Those are my thoughts, what are yours?

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2014 - We start To Wonder Statistics Are Like a Box of Chocolates!



Statistics can lead and mislead. If an organization does a proper statistical analysis of events it can help to predict future trends and permit the organization to properly plan to manage these events. However, statistics can also be easily manipulated to misrepresent the facts and mislead the audience. Crime statistics are a good example. Crime statistics can provide good insight into the safety of a location and provide an assistance to the police agency as to where the crime is occurring and where resources should be allocated to help fight and prevent crime, or the numbers can be explained away to indicate that crime is not really as bad as it looks. Statistics can be smoke and mirrors, obfuscations, and untruths, or it can tell the true story. Unfortunately, the latter is not often the case, especially when telling the truth gives the corporate ego a smack-down.

To illustrate this point, I call your attention to a Cincinnati City Council [Law and Public Safety](#) Committee meeting held on January 6th, 2014. At this meeting, Cincinnati Police Chief Jeffrey Blackwell presented a Power Point presentation demonstrating the crime story in the City. When viewing the charts it was quite obvious that homicides in Cincinnati had dramatically increased in 2013. Chief Blackwell attempted to minimize the spike by stating, "If you look at the average number of homicides in Cincinnati over the last ten years, the number is 68 so if you go by that number and throw out the 53 in 2012 which was an anomaly in the other direction the increase was about 9.5%". I thought perhaps I did not hear what I thought I heard so I played it back several times, and then copied it down verbatim. Yup, that is what he said. I guess this means we should not be concerned because it isn't really that bad. All you have to do is look at a ten-year average, remove the 2012 number because it is an anomaly, and then the City is only slightly higher than average. See what you can pull out of the statistical box of chocolates!

I am fairly certain that someone, at some point, made mention of the low homicide rate in Cincinnati in 2012. I am sure it was mentioned that the City was safer and the low rate proved it. But now it doesn't count, it was an anomaly. Earlier in the presentation Lt. Col. David Bailey indicated the homicide rate was down in 2012 because a large investigation has put many of those responsible for the violence behind bars. It was a good thing that homicides were down then, but it is an anomaly now because it hurt the average. I wonder what the average number of homicides



would be if 2012 was included in the ten-year average. I don't have those numbers so I cannot provide that statistic to you. You just can't have it both ways. Was the 2012 rate low because of a good police investigation, or was it low because it was an anomaly?

I think the public has the right to a fair assessment by the police chief. He needs to stand up and say 2013 was a bad year, we will try to improve going forward or he needs to say police really do not have a lot to do with the rate. The police are mostly after the fact. They come in and clean up the mess, conduct the investigation, and hopefully put someone in jail. I think the statistic that really counts is not the murder rate, but the arrest rate. The more homicides cleared by arrest, the better the police are doing their jobs. Manipulating the statistics is not being transparent, and I think we were promised transparency.

Those are my thoughts, what are yours?



Thoughts on the H3Cincy Program



Call me cynical. Call me old school. You might even call me old-fashioned, but i cannot see the benefit of programs such as the H3Cincy program. There have been many programs of this sort over the years, but I have never seen any results that show any value or return on the investment. Are the outcomes of such programs even quantifiable? How is it to be known if any of the involved youths chose a life of lawfulness over that of an outlaw as a result of participating in such a program? How can it be determined if the money was well spent? Does a program such as this reach a large enough percentage of the youth population or have an overall impact on future crime rates? I think all these, and many more questions need to be asked and answered, but to my knowledge they have never been. So let us ask them now.

First off, let us examine the current H3Cincy program. It is my understanding that this program has run now for several weeks. The program has attracted approximately 200 young individuals to participate at a limited number of recreation centers throughout the city. The first question I would have to ask, is what percentage of all youths in the targeted age range are impacted? What percent of the total population of youths in the city are represented by those participating 200? Another question would be, of those 200 participating youths, what percentage of them will be dissuaded from participating in a criminal lifestyle solely because of the influence of the program? And what percentage of the 200 would never have considered a life of crime, regardless of the influence of the program? I realize that most, if not all, of these questions cannot and will not be answered. However, the core of the questions represent a thought process that needs to be addressed.

As a payer of taxes, an individual needs to ask if there money is being wisely spent on a program that minimally impacts the potential for crime. I know, the first response will be, the program is funded through asset forfeiture and does not cost the tax payer. But is this really true? Is there not still an impact on the tax dollar you have spent? Consider this. Asset forfeiture is money acquired by the police department as a result of seizure of money and assets of drug dealers caught by the agency. But tax dollars fund the law enforcement efforts that generated the seizures. Therefore, taxpayers are invested in the efforts and taxpayers have the right to question the effectiveness of the program. Once the questions are asked, and the answers are, or are not, forthcoming, do we continue, and if so, why?



Surely there is more reason for this type of program other than opportunity for the Police Chief to get photographed and his sound bites to be aired on the 6:00 O'clock news. The question is, why is the Police Department involved in providing activities that are better served by the experts at the Recreation Department? In my opinion, I think it is time for the police to get back to doing what the police are commissioned to do, enforce the law, protect society, and put the bad guys in jail. But then, that's just me.

Those are my thoughts, what are yours?

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Un'friend'ly People



As you may recall, several months before the November 2013 election I conducted an experiment with social media, specifically with [Facebook](#). I was attempting to see how responsive to a friend request current council members, and potential council members would be. So, I submitted a friend request to each category above, as well as to the Mayoral candidates. Overall, the results were mostly positive. All but two current council members are my Facebook Friends. All but a few of the contenders also accepted my friend request. One person who was a council member at the time, but subsequently lost the election also ignored my request. That one person of course was Laure Quinlaven. Who?

This particular blog article came about as the result of a comment made at the May 14th, 2014 Council meeting by [Council-member Chris Seelbach](#). Mr. Seelbach, addressing [Chief Jeffrey Blackwell](#), commented that several police officers have mentioned to him that they liked the ability to address the former Police Chief directly via his Facebook page. Chief Blackwell dryly informed Mr. Seelbach that he and James Craig have different management styles. He further informed him that he does have a personal Facebook page, and the [Cincinnati Police Department](#) has a Facebook page as well. That comment caught my attention for several reasons. First off, Mr. Seelbach is one of the two current council members who have not accepted my friend request. My thought was, practice what you preach Mr. Seelbach. I initially submitted the friend request several months before the election but to this date the request has been ignored. Additionally, I submitted a friend request several months ago to Jeffrey Blackwell as soon as I discovered he had a Facebook page. This request too has been ignored.

Being the proactive type, I immediately fired up my email software and composed an email to Chris Seelbach and cc'd Jeffrey Blackwell. In this email I advised him of the lack on his part to respond to a friend request and pointed out that he and Jeffrey Blackwell had this in common. Thus far, after a week. This email has also apparently been ignored. Although being a face book friend may seem insignificant, and it largely is, what is significant is the fact that elected politicians and high-ranking civil servants can blatantly ignore communications from the public. What if I was emailing about something much more important than Facebook friending, would that also be ignored? Actually, I think it would. I have, in the past, sent emails to other council members, to the



City Manager, and to various other officials. Typically these emails are ignored. Maybe I am on a black list. Maybe the City of Cincinnati has an email filter automatically deleting any emails from me. Maybe I am getting paranoid. Maybe not.

This entire experiment has been great fun. I enjoy poking the bear, and I enjoy making public the shortcomings of our officials. I am not an unreasonable individual. I know that the council member and the police chief are busy and important people with little time to devote to matters such as this. But on the other hand, all the other council members (except one) and the former police chief, managed to squeeze that one click accepting me as a Facebook friend into their busy schedules. As a side note, the other individual who has ignored my request and subsequent email, is [Christopher Smitherman](#).

Please notice the links to Chris Seelbach, Jeffrey Blackwell, and Christopher Smitherman's Facebook pages. Perhaps you will have better luck becoming their Facebook friends. If you do, let me know as it will help to add to my paranoia. ?

Those are my thoughts, what are yours?

Please consider commenting, liking, and sharing this blog.



Does Diversity Really Matter?



Recently in a [news release](#) published on the City of Cincinnati Website, Chief Jeffrey Blackwell was quoted as saying “Having a workplace that resembles your communities’ demographics is critically important in your public service delivery efforts and we are proud of that in Cincinnati.” This made me wonder how important diversity is, and what efforts were made to achieve the results obtained in the makeup of the 104th Recruit Class. Did the results occur naturally, or was it necessary that some qualified individuals be passed over to achieve the balance desired. If candidates were passed over to achieve the balance, did the City actually hire the best qualified candidates?

The next question that comes to mind is to what degree of granularity should the concept of “representing your community” be taken. For example, is it important that units within the police department represent the community they serve? Than if so, than I believe there is work yet to be done. For example, the Youth Services Squad is predominately composed of African-American Officers. Does this represent the community they serve? Another interesting example is the ethnic makeup of the “Chief’s Office” which, based on the [June 2014 Organizational Chart](#), is made up as follows: An African-American Police Chief, an African-American Executive Assistant, an African-American Adjutant, an African-American City Hall Safety Liaison, an African-American Public Information Officer, an African-American assistant Public Information Officer, an African-American Executive Aide/External Project Coordinator, and a female white Community Liaison Unit Commander. Additionally, reporting directly to the Police Chief is the Finance Management Section. This section is comprised exclusively of female members, both white and African-American. Hmmm, not a white male in the bunch. How diverse is that? Apparently diversity doesn’t count when the Police Chief selects his staff.

While discussing the concept of diversity, I can’t help but wonder how diverse the entire city workforce really is. The last I recall, almost all individuals who serve at the level of Director are persons of color. Many of them appointed by former City Manager Milton Dohoney. Does the entire city workforce represent the community they serve? Is each department fully diverse and each sub unit in each department diverse as well? I don’t have the numbers, but would be interested in seeing them.



Chief Blackwell also said “Perspective, balance, and increased efficiencies are all by-products of a diverse workforce”. I would be interested in seeing the data that supports this comment. I believe when it comes down to the nitty-gritty, most citizens really don’t give two hoots about this. Do you think a citizen who is a victim of a crime in progress cares what the racial make up is of the Police Officers who respond and protect them? If you are in a burning building, would it matter if the hero who came to save you was white or African-American? When you damage your car driving to work, is it important that the work crew that comes to fill the pothole be diverse? At what point is the line drawn to define diversity? Should there be inclusion of all groups? Should there be inclusion of the gay and lesbian community? Should we ensure proportional representation of Christians, Jews, and Muslims? What of other ethnic groups? Italian Americans? Irish Americans? This list could be broken down to the point of ridiculous, or are we already there?

Those are my thoughts, what are yours?

Thanks for reading and please consider commenting, liking, sharing, and following the blog.

It's All About Blackwell



It was mentioned in a social media that Cincinnati Police Chief Blackwell is basically invisible. He has not been heard from with regards to the high homicide rate or gang violence in the city. As a leader he should be in the front of his officers, providing leadership and encouragement. It is my understanding there is not too much of this going on. Do not worry. He is a very busy man. He is out there, posing for photo opportunities and getting his mug published on Twitter. As an experiment I pulled up the Cincinnati Police Twitter Feed. I was going to count the number of times “look at me” photos were published since the beginning of the year. I quit counting after only one months worth of feed. Here is what was released on Twitter between June 25th and July 25. The comments in parenthesis are mine.

- Chief shouting out with officers, Citizens on Patrol, cadets, and clergy for safe for safe, weekend full of events.
- Chief Blackwell speaking about comprehensive plans for Macy’s Music Festival and special events over the weekend.
- Mayor Cranley kicks off Youth 2 Work celebration. (Blackwell at his side)
- Youth this summer learned financial literacy – how to save \$\$\$ through work, balance needs vs. wants. (Blackwell on right side of group)
- Celebrating with our cadets and other youth employed through Summer Youth Emp Program with @yvette4council and others (Blackwell in background)
- Chief JB serving pizza for impromptu pizza lunch in Lower Price Hill. Showing love and being ‘True to 52’!
- Chief Blackwell, CPD joins @JohnCranley for the Mayor’s Taskforce on Immigration for the Rights & Safety Committee.
- Chief Blackwell providing State of the City address to CPD officers at annual inservice training.
- Chief Jeff Blackwell ?@ChiefBlackwell Jul 11
- Chief Blackwell and Cincinnati PD welcome King James back home to Ohio!
- Chief Blackwell, CBS/D1 Commanders Broxterman and John attend Operation Hospitality meeting hosted by Mayor Cranley.
- CM Stiles begins press conference. Acknowledges officers and Citizen on Patrol (Blackwell,



Bailey, Whalen on officers in Picture)

- Thanks @Local12 Dan Cavins for your assistance at the ice cream social at the Boys & Girls Club in Avondale! volunteers.
- Chief out working on a beautiful Saturday with the Recruiting Unit on the Riverfront. Be a Difference Maker!!! pic.twitter.com/IFiM1IJAVG
- The graduating recruits applaud their family and friends with @ChiefBlackwell for their continuous support!
- Thanks to all the officers who organized and all who participated in District 4's neighborhood walk in Walnut Hills. Blackwell prominent in the center of the group)
- Chief Blackwell attending Boys Hope Girls Hope Board of Directors Meeting.

Wow! Now that is a lot of self-promoting. To Save you the trouble of counting, that is sixteen photographs in one month, averaging a little better than one every other day. I should mention the Blackwell also has his own Twitter account (@Chief Blackwell) where even more instances of his face are displayed. Now I have to admit that I have never been a police chief so I probably am not qualified to comment, but I am going to do it anyway. Should not the Chief be promoting his department and not himself. Where are the photos of Officers who just made a great arrest? Or those officers who saved a life or performed some other heroic deed? Don't they count? Why are there not pictures and stories about the many accomplishments of the fine officers of the Cincinnati Police Department being touted every day. Not only on Twitter but on Facebook and the Department's Web site. These Officers deserve the recognition, they have earned it. They are the ones facing life threatening danger every day. The only danger Blackwell faces is that they may not show his best profile. Send their stories to me. I would be more than happy to publish them on this blog page.

Early in his tenure with Cincinnati Blackwell coined a phrase "True To 52". Most people go huh? When they hear it because they have no clue as to the meaning of the phrase. Typically after the slogan is uttered. an explanation is provided that it means true to the 52 neighborhoods that make up the City of Cincinnati. People then just smile and nod, still unsure. I have a suggestion for you Chief. Change your slogan to read "True to Me". That would require no explanation and would be more in line with the way you operate. Hey Chief, I hate to bring you the bad news, but it just ain't all about you.

Those are my thoughts, what are yours?

Thank you for reading the blog. Feel free to comment, disagree, like, share, and follow.



The Magical, Mysterious, Land of Carpet (Revisited)



I have been asked by a few for an update on the Magical Mysterious Land of Carpet (pronounced carpay). Not wishing to disappoint, here is what has happened since last we visited. After the departure of The High Sovereign, a strange calm, described by some as relief, fell over the land. Many stepped up to lead the kingdom but only one was chosen. A short, dark, stranger rode in out of the west (actually it was out of the north but I don't want to obfuscate the telling of this tale with facts) to take over the land, He was liked by many and have a very distinctive style of leadership. In fact, his leadership style was no leadership at all. He spent his days establishing no rules, and dismissing any enforcement of the rules that existed. He was well liked in the kingdom because his main philosophy was to offend no one. All his subjects were happy because they could do as they please, they could dress as they please, and they could get away with pretty much anything. But alas, his time in the Land of Carpet was short. He was summoned back to his home land and he took off in a northern direction (really) to see the brown, brown grass of home.

His parting allowed the big cheese to stick it to the kingdom one last time with the appointment of another short, dark, very strange stranger from the Northeast, known as Lord Blackhole. Lord Blackhole came to town with two goals in mind, the first to tell everybody how great he is, and the second to quietly slip out of his old kingdom before the authorities figured out what he had been up to. Oddly enough, he seems to have been successful in both endeavors . . . so far. He spends his day traveling about the kingdom, having his picture taken, and perpetrating they myth that he is solely responsible for all things good in the kingdom. Additionally, he spends a great deal of time convincing those around him that he is in charge. He must do this because most still find it difficult to believe he is in charge. At a recent meeting of the "Rectangle Table" he was busily trying to impress those present with all his cool ideas. One of the handmaidens in attendance exclaimed "But Sire, would it not be better to purchase new items of use to replace the worn out and dilapidated equipment currently in use such as rusty swords and old swayback horses instead of purchasing toys of little or no value? Lord Blackhole immediately became enraged and asked the handmaiden "What dungeon shall I throw you in?" It has been told that a champion of this very handmaiden, when speaking out against the threat was himself cast into a dungeon. All the serfs in the land are now afraid to speak out for fear of reprisal.



And so, once again, a dark cloud is over the Land of Carpet, even darker than when The High Sovereign was running amok in the land. Lord Blackholes's subjects are not happy. Lord Blackhole's superiors are not happy. Only Lord Blackhole is happy because he is oblivious to the fact that his true function is to provide comedic fodder for aspiring bards in the realm.

In closing, I must mention that the characters in this story are fictional and any resemblance to any person living, dead, or brain dead is purely coincidental. Below are links to related articles.

[The Magical, Mysterious, Land of Carpet \(Part One\)](#)

[The Magical, Mysterious, Land of Carpet \(Part Two\)](#)

[The Magical, Mysterious, Land of Carpet \(Epilogue\)](#)

[Do You Know Any Pronoids](#)

Those are my thoughts, what are yours.

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Best Police Agency in the U.S.?



On September 2nd the Cincinnati Police Department tweeted a picture of Chief Blackwell addressing the newly formed Police Recruit Class and making the statement “Day 1 of joining the best police agency in the US and we are expecting all of you to make it! “What caught my attention was the term “best police agency in the U.S.”. It is not that I disagree with the concept, after all, having been associated with the agency for 42 years I am sure my opinion is somewhat biased that it is the best. However, I was interested in how Blackwell came to this conclusion after being associated with the agency for less than one year. Is this to imply he thinks the Cincinnati Police Department is better than the Columbus Police Department, an agency he was associated with for 26 years? I decided to determine if there was any truth to the statement that Cincinnati Police Department was, in fact, the “Best Police Agency in the U.S.”

It would seem that some sort of quantifiable measurements would need to be established to ascertain who is the best. A police department does a lot of different things, and a lot of what they do cannot be measured. However, much can be measured, but who is keeping score? Some things that immediately come to mind are per capita crime rates, percentage of crimes solved, percentage of crimes not solved and not investigated, arrest and conviction rates, citizen satisfaction, officer satisfaction, average response time to calls for service, etc. This is just a quick list of items that could be measured and compared. I then spent a number of hours on Google trying to determine if such a list exists, with the above measurement points or any other measurement points. It would, in my opinion, be important that the determination of the best be the result of a standard list of measurements, and not just one or two points. In other words, it is quite possible that one agency is the best at solving homicides while another is best at citizen satisfaction. My conclusion is that I cannot draw a conclusion. Cincinnati may very well be the best, but I cannot prove or disprove the idea.

In 1957, Life Magazine did a [pictorial article](#) of the Cincinnati Police Division and deemed it “A model police force”. This did not mean the best, but it was a giant feather in the cap of the City. It meant a police department that all other Cities could model their agencies after. I think that if there was a list of data points that would grade a police agency, at least in 1957 Cincinnati would have been high on that list. Also believe that Cincinnati would be high on the list today, if such a list



existed. The closest I could find of any kind of list was "[Top 25 Cities For Police Officers](#)". Unfortunately, Cincinnati rated a dismal 23 out of 25. That, of course, is not surprising, when the City Administration makes an annual threat to lay off police officers.

I believe there are two components that will define a police agency. The first being the character and dedication of the men and women who make up the rank and file of the department. If morale is high, if there is pride in the agency, and if integrity is paramount then there is potential the agency will be the best. The second factor is based on leadership. Does the Chief command respect or demand respect? Do the officers willingly follow his/her orders because they instinctively know they are the right orders, or do they follow orders because of fear and intimidation? Does the chief lead by example, or does the chief lead with a do as I say, not as I do mentality? With the right combination of those two components an agency can be one of the best. I think Cincinnati is strong in the first component, the second, not so much. As far as the original question, is the Cincinnati Police Department the best agency in the U.S, I have no idea. You decide.

Those are my thoughts, what are yours?

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You Must Call me Sir!



In a recent [article](#) in the Cincinnati Enquirer it was reported that a directive had been relayed to all [Cincinnati Police Department](#) employees by the Police Chief's adjutant, Lt. Emmett Gladden. The directive ordered all personnel to begin addressing Jeffrey Blackwell as either "Chief" or "Sir" when utilizing electronic messaging. The directive further requires that personnel close these messages with the phrase "Respectfully, or Respectfully Submitted". Why should this matter to you, you may ask yourself? This is your lucky day for I am here to tell you.

This type of directive is indicative of a dysfunctional command structure. A dysfunctional command structure means your police department is not being properly led with the efficiency you have a right to expect. The fact that the Chief felt compelled to have this directive issued by his adjutant (and not himself) speaks volumes. The fact that this message was sent in the first place says even more. A leader either commands respect or demands respect. If a leader by his command presence automatically instills in his subordinates a feeling of confidence and a desire to follow then that person is a leader who commands respect. On the other hand, if a person feels compelled to instruct his subordinates that they must follow him because he is in charge, then he is demanding respect and is not a leader at all. This is the case with Blackwell, as the below email from Lt. Gladden indicates:

"Good afternoon all, Chief Blackwell would like for me to remind you all to be mindful of your professional decorum as it pertain(sic) to email and/or any other form of electronic message communications. Regardless of rank, all personnel should begin their correspondence to the Chief with "Sir" or "Chief". All correspondences should end with "Respectfully" or "Respectfully Submitted". As noted by Chief Blackwell, the casualness in our day to day business is becoming a bit much. Thank you for your immediate attention in this matter.

Lt. Emmett L. Gladden, Jr.

Cincinnati Police Chief's Adjutant"

In addition, Blackwell felt compelled to defend this by stating that it was taken "out of context" and



that in fact the issue was military courtesy, such as saluting a supervisor. The veracity of this statement is suspect because it is quite obvious that an email directing staff to utilize a particular greeting and closing in electronic messages has absolutely nothing to do with military courtesies such as saluting and calling attention when a Captain enters the room. Sorry Jeff, I have to call BS on this one. The full text of Blackwell's follow-up email is presented below:

"It has come to my attention that the email forwarded by Adjutant Lt. Gladden is being taken out of context as it relates to military courtesy and discipline. First and foremost is the necessity for our personnel to adhere to the policies and procedures as prescribed in our longstanding rules. Military courtesy and discipline is covered by [Procedure 18.125](#) and is essential to the character, efficiency, and effectiveness of our organization. The message was simply a reminder for personnel to follow that decorum. "Attention to detail" is a very important core value that I follow as your Chief. Please continue with the dedicated commitment to service and professionalism that has separated and elevated this department as the [finest in the Nation!](#)"

One point of clarification, I believe the email was originated by Lt. Gladden, not forwarded. And while on the subject of email, I have always been under the impression that email is a less formal means of communication, as well as other types of messaging such as texting and using Twitter. Based on the above correspondence, one would need to use the formal salutation and closing, even when sending a text message. That kind of defeats the point of using the media.

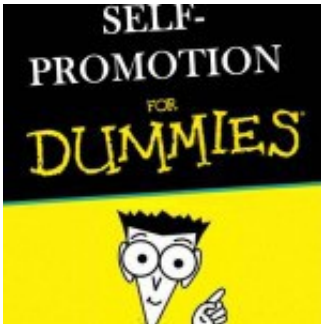
Blackwell also referenced the police department's procedure dealing with military courtesy. This probably can be confusing for many as Blackwell carries no military rank in the police department. All police chiefs up to an including Tom Streicher were designated as Colonel and wore the eagle insignia on their collars. Subsequent to Streicher, the police chief has only been designated as "chief" or Chief of Police", which has no associated military rank. Additionally, since Blackwell has assumed "command", the Chief's uniform has been drastically altered, specifically with a lot of gold stripes added to the lower sleeves of the uniform. It looks more like an Admirals uniform. I don't care how much bling you had to the uniform, it is not going to increase command presence.

I, for one, think that Blackwell should have more pressing concerns on his mind than how the salutations and closings are utilized in electronic messaging. And if he thinks ordering the troops to respect him is going to accomplish the desired results I think he needs to go back to command school. But, as always, I leave it up to you. You decide.

Those are my thoughts, what are yours?

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Blackwell's Annual Efficiency



Sir Chief Jeffrey Blackwell has now been the Cincinnati Police Department Chief for a year. As promised earlier, I will now provide my own rating for his performance during his first year in the position. I had previously completed this entire article and was preparing to publish it but decided to do some edits first. The first two sentences above is all that remains of the original article. The first time around the article was full of sarcasm (imagine that) and allegations based on rumor and third-party reports. After reading the article over several times I decided to take the high road and take an entirely different approach as to providing a rating for Blackwell.

One may ask, why do I feel I have any qualifications to provide any rating for him in the first place. I can only respond with one word, experience. In that I mean, during my tenure with the Cincinnati Police Department (1971-2014) I have served under seven different Police Chiefs, and a myriad of others acting as chief during administration changes. This experience gives me opportunity to evaluate by comparison. In my opinion, I have worked for some of the best and some of the worst. And, oddly, some that started out very good and ended up very bad. Based on these many years of "Chief Watching", I have drawn some conclusions regarding the current chief. I give Sir Chief Jeffrey Blackwell and overall rating of "DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS".

A few examples of what, in my opinion, keep him from being a good leader are:

Tends to assume credit for projects successfully completed during his administration but were the vision and were started by a predecessor. Owning the successes of others is fairly common in the Police Department, but one would expect more from the chief.

Tends to bring the spotlight upon himself as opposed to highlighting the accomplishments of members of the department. This is evidenced by the many self promoting pictures he publishes on his own personal Twitter account as well as the Cincinnati Police Department's Twitter account. I believe his job is to promote the Department and it's members, not himself.

His qualifications to be the Chief leave a lot to be desired. I spoke of this in earlier blogs and my opinion has not changed. He is one of the least educated of the Command Staff. He has a



questionable background and tends to put himself before others. Evidence of this are reports of demanding entry to a roof top event during the Black Family Reunion, (reported to me by a reliable source) his attempt to foist himself (unsuccessfully) upon the Vice President of the United States, and putting himself at the front of the line at a private funeral are just a few examples.

I need to make it clear that these are not only my opinions. I spoke with a lot of people who are familiar with Blackwell. I tried very hard, but unsuccessfully, to find someone with a positive opinion of him. I am sure there are those who like him just fine, but none came forward during my search.

I realize that none of this makes him a bad chief, on its own. But the old adage, where there is smoke there is fire, certainly applies here. His actions are more those of a politician than a Police Chief. And let's face it, he is a political appointee. He is where he is because he was appointed by a lame duck city manager. When selected he was demonstrably the least qualified of all candidates. His accomplishments, or lack thereof, thus far prove this to be true. Since his appointment the face of politics in Cincinnati have changed. I think it is time that the Mayor and new City Manager take the reins and right the wrong. It is time to bring an end to the Blackwellian era. The citizen's of the city of Cincinnati deserve better.

You can also rate the chief. Participate in the poll below. All entries are anonymous. I am interested in seeing how others rate him.

Sorry, there are no polls available at the moment.

Those are my thoughts, what are yours?

Feel free to comment, disagree, like or share. Thank you for patronizing the Townhouse Phoenix Blog.



Blackwell's Words Come With A Price



As most of you know, I have not been shy when it comes to reporting information with regards to Cincinnati Police Chief Jeffrey Blackwell. I have reported on his [hiring](#), and my concerns with that decision. I have reported on comments made with regards to the [homicide rate](#) and of is demanding that he be [addressed as sir](#). As a fan of the City of Cincinnati and a fan of the Cincinnati police Department, I am always looking for valid information about those entrusted with the leadership not only of the City, but any of it's departments. Consequently, because of my background, I am most interested in the Cincinnati police Department and find myself frequently reporting on both the department and it's leadership. Based on this I thought I had received an early Christmas present when I was notified, via [Google Alerts](#), of a recent interview Blackwell had with [WCPO](#).

Following this notification, I eagerly clicked on the provided link to read the story of and interview conducted with Jeffrey Blackwell with a promise of learning of Blackwell's feelings and concerns when the article promised "Chief Jeffrey Blackwell says meeting varied 'spectrum of expectations tough' today". I had no idea what this meant but felt I was about to find out. I clicked on the link, read a few short paragraphs, and then was stopped with a demand for money to find out more. The exact words from the article were "Subscribe to WCPO Insider or login below to to (sic) see what Blackwell had to say about race relations, curbing gang violence and more.". I clicked on the subscription link only to discover that subscribing meant paying a ransom to WCPO to find out what he had said. Being a senior citizen on a fixed income, I would rather not subsidize a big news conglomerate with my meager income. Don't they already make enough from their various advertisers? Do they need to gouge the public as well?

Normally something like this is not a real problem as anything news worthy is reported on by more than one news agency, but obviously, by its very nature, an "exclusive" interview will be reported on only by the news source that conducted the interview. This brings certain questions to my mind. I do not have the answers, so I am bringing them to you for your consideration and possible input. If a public official provides information via a local news agency, who actually owns the information? Is the information owned by the news agency or the interviewee? If a public individual is interviewed, are their comments a matter of a public record and does anyone actually own the comments or do they belong to the public? In my opinion this feels like collusion. Can a public



figure give a secret interview? If the public official gives the interview do they have any responsibility to ensure the results of the interview are available to the public? Is the news agency the only one who will profit from income generated by charging a subscription fee to obtain the information? As stated, I do not know the answers to these questions, but I believe they are questions that deserve an answer.

I would think many people would be interested in knowing what Jeffery Blackwell's concerns are and what he meant when he said "spectrum of expectations tough' today". I would like to know, as I am sure would many others, "what Blackwell had to say about race relations, curbing gang violence and more.". I would like to know if Jeffrey Blackwell was paid for this interview, if it was conducted on or off the clock, and if he will share in the profits generated by the ransom demands of WCPO. I am not implying that he is or is not profiting. I just want to know. I think they are valid questions, what do you think?

Those are my thoughts, what are yours?

Feel free to comment, disagree, share and [subscribe](#). Thank you for patronizing the Townehouse Phoenix.



2015 - It's All Downhill From Here Jeffrey Blackwell, It Is Time To Go!



Recently, following the overpass collapse on I-75, a comment was posted on a social media site by a Cincinnati Police supervisor who witnessed the collapse. The comment was written to praise the response of the first responders, both police and fire, as well as other agencies such as the Coroner's office. He was praising the quick action and reaction to the catastrophe and how ell the scene was quickly secured and traffic was rerouted. As of result of the quick professional response of the first responders, there was no additional injury or loss of life. The very first comment to this article was from Cincinnati Police Chief Jeffrey Blackwell. Although he was not one of the 55 people who clicked on the "Like" icon, his response to the article was "I think your Chief showed up too?". It is unclear why he chose to refer to himself in the third person, perhaps he was hoping people would not notice his lame attempt to beat his own drum.

I have [reported previously](#) on Jeffrey Blackwell's egotistical, self-centered, self-absorbed manner. There is no question in my mind that the man is completely and hopelessly in love with himself. Perhaps he was not hugged enough as a child, but it is not his place, as the leader of a major metropolitan police department to use his position to promote himself, post 'selfies' to social media, and conduct "hey, look at me" interviews with local news outlets. This attention to self management style is doing nothing for the Cincinnati Police Department or the public it serves. Jeffrey Blackwell often points out that the Cincinnati Police Department is held up as a model agency for other police departments to follow. What he doesn't say is that he had absolutely nothing to do with this. The Cincinnati Police Department had achieve the status of being a model police department years before he became police chief. And, the Cincinnati Police Department remains a model agency in spite of Jeffrey Blackwell. The Mayor, John Cranley, has stated that Jeffrey Blackwell is secure in his position as long as the numbers are good. What he does not seem to realize is that crime is down across the Nation, not just in Cincinnati. Therefore, Jeffrey Blackwell had nothing to do with the local drop in crime. It is just part of a natural cycle that is occurring everywhere.

The Citizen's of Cincinnati deserve to have the best person for a Police Chief and that person is not Jeffrey Blackwell. Jeffrey Blackwell was not selected as police Chief because he was the best Candidate, because he was not. Of all the finalist, he was the only candidate that did not possess a



Master's degree, although the job announcement indicated it was "preferred". Jeffrey Blackwell was the only candidate who had issues with his background, including admitted drug abuse. There is no question in most people's minds that the only reason he was chosen was because of his race. If nothing else, this has been the elephant in the room for some time. So now I have said it, it is out there, and most know it to be true. Jeffrey was selected for the position by then City Manager Milton Dohoney who almost exclusively filled top management positions with minority candidates. Jeffrey Blackwell's performance since he has been hired has been unremarkable and has not caused me to think otherwise. Making up catch phrases (and then telling all that he coined the phrase whenever possible) does not make him a good chief. Posting selfies on social media whenever possible does not make him a good chief. Causing low morale in the department, up to and including the command staff, because of his dictatorial management style does not make him a good Chief.

The fact that he was working for almost a year and did not know of his employment conditions, including whether he was under contract or not, the fact that he must order people to [show him respect](#), and the fact that the rift between himself and his top commanders is so wide that mediation was required to keep it functional says it all. He is not in command because he is unable to command. Some people are born leaders, Jeffrey Blackwell is not one of those people. It is time for Jeffrey Blackwell to step down. If he is not willing to voluntarily tender his resignation than the Mayor and City Manager need to step in and replace him. He is not good for the city and he is not good for the Police Department. What do you say, Jeffrey. Will you do the right thing?

Those are my thoughts, what are yours?

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Jeffrey Blackwell – The Puppet Police Chief



[Last week](#) the Townhouse Phoenix provided insight to issues with regards to the current Police Chief of Cincinnati, Jeffrey Blackwell. It is not my intent to rehash the same talking points I discussed last week. The purpose of this article is to continue the ongoing saga of how Jeffrey Blackwell continues to mismanage the Cincinnati Police Department, and to ask the question, why is he still here? The most recent issue is the handling of an article printed for all Cincinnati Police Department employees by the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender (LGBT) Liaison Officer. The article, and the position of the Liaison Officer brings several questions to mind.

First I cannot help but wonder why the tax payers of the City of Cincinnati are paying for a position such as this Liaison Officer. It is my understanding that this Officer is not used for street duty, this officer is not in a patrol car, this officer is not answering citizen's calls for service. This officer has no traditional police duties. Her only role is to interact with the LGBT community and to make Cincinnati Police officers more sensitive to the needs of the LGBT community. How exactly does the employee interact with the LGBT community that helps in any way to further the mission of the Police Department. Why is this position even necessary. We have many subcultures in the Cincinnati Community. If this position is important, should we not have a liaison officer for all the other subcultures. How about a homeless person liaison? How about a Southern Appalachian Migrant liaison? I have repeatedly heard Blackwell espouse the need for more cops on the street, yet he pulls cops from the street for positions such as the LGBT Liaison or the Executive Aide or the Police Chief's Adjutant, all members of the Police Chief's non-diversified staff, and all trained police officers who could be patrolling the mean streets of Cincinnati instead of bowing and kowtowing and feeding the Police Chief's ego. With such a large staff, one would think someone in that group would have caught the remarks in the news letter that Blackwell is now apologizing for, which brings us to my second point.

Police Chief Jeffrey Blackwell is now apologizing, I guess to anyone who may have been offended, by the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender news letter that is published on a regular basis and distributed to all Cincinnati Police Department employees. I wonder how much that costs? The keep the record straight, the remarks are not those of Jeffrey Blackwell, but as we all know, the Police Chief is at the top of the chain of command, and thereby is ultimately responsible. Well, he



used to be at the top of the chain of command, but now the City Manager has dictated that he wishes to review and approve all material generated by the Police Department. In my eyes this makes the Police Chief nothing more than a puppet of the City Manager. This of course will make him less effective (if that is possible) as the Police Chief. In my experience, which is extensive as I worked for seven police chiefs (and numerous acting police chiefs) during my tenure. I have never seen a Police Chief as weak or ineffective as the current police chief. For those who desire more information, I am linking the news article [here](#).

In my opinion this is just another nail in the coffin of Jeffrey Blackwell's service, or disservice, to the Cincinnati Police Department and the citizens of the City of Cincinnati. They deserve better, they are paying for better, but all they are getting is a puppet chief. It is time for him to move on.

Sorry, there are no polls available at the moment.

Those are my thoughts, what are yours?

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The Wrong Man



I have followed the news regarding the incident in Ferguson, Missouri on August 9th, 2014 when a man, Michael Brown, viciously attacked a Police Officer, Darren Wilson, who subsequently had to resort to deadly force in order to defend himself from life threatening violence. Notice how the preceding relates the basic facts of the story without bias. It provides the required information as to what happen without immediately drawing racial lines with regards to the criminal and the police officer. However, since it was not as sensational to report it in such a fashion, all media outlets had to report that Michael Brown, and unarmed black teen, was shot to death by white police officer Darren Wilson. As a result of this, many have come out of the woodwork and have presented themselves on the national stage as experts on such matters as racial relations, community relations, and community policing.

One such self-proclaimed expert is Cincinnati Police Chief Jeffrey Blackwell. Since this incident Blackwell has been very busy traveling about, appearing on cable news shows, instructing classes in Ferguson, Missouri and surrounding areas, and sitting on numerous panels. One might wonder what credentials he possesses that he should be considered such an expert in these matters. The immediate answer is that the Cincinnati Police Department has been held up as a model of police reform following the civil disobedience, a.k.a. riots, in Cincinnati in 2001. The line drawn by many is that the Cincinnati Police Department is a national model, he is the Chief of Cincinnati, therefore he is the expert on the reform in Cincinnati brought about by the Department of Justice Memorandum of Agreement or the Collaborative Agreement. Nothing could be further from the truth

Blackwell was transplanted into the Cincinnati Police Department when he was hired as Police Chief on September 30th, 2013. Before that he had not spent one day as a member of the Cincinnati Police Department. For 26 years prior to that he was a member of the Division of Police in Columbus, Ohio. He did not spend one day of his life serving on the mean streets of Cincinnati during the riots nor was he anywhere around when the DOJ Memorandum of Agreement was being drafted or the Collaborative Agreement was being hammered out. Consequently, at best, he can only be considered as a hearsay witness when he presents The Cincinnati Police Department's success story following the 2001 riots. He was not here, he has no firsthand knowledge of the violence or the aftermath. So, the question might be asked, if he is not the right man, then who is?



Currently in the service of the Cincinnati police Department are three Assistant Chief's. All three were members of the Cincinnati Police Department during the 2001 riots. All three were in the trenches during the riots and all three were in situations that put them at risk as the result of their service to the citizens of the City of Cincinnati. Consequently, anyone of the three would be an expert witness and would be most qualified to speak about the riots using firsthand knowledge. Of the three, one was a Lieutenant and two were Captains. All three were involved to some extent with the formation of the DOJ MOA and/or the Collaborative Agreement. Blackwell was not a Cincinnati Police Officer during the riots. He was not on the streets during the violence and he was not at the table during follow-up work. Blackwell is the least qualified of the four and yet he is the man in the spotlight. I find an interesting parallel between this and when Blackwell was hired. Of the short list of candidates he was the least qualified and yet he got the job. I can't help but wonder how many other times that has happened to him during career.

In conclusion I would like to say that I am a "silver lining" kind of guy. I always find it best to look for the silver lining in most disagreeable circumstances. This is not different. The silver lining here is that while the wrong man travels about the countryside being the "expert" the management of the Cincinnati Police Department is being left in the very capable hands of the three aforementioned Assistant Police Chiefs, Paul Humphries, James Whalen, and David Bailey. The citizens of Cincinnati are better off for it.

Those are my thoughts, what are yours?

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The Illusion of Transparency



On March 2nd, shortly after midnight, the Cincinnati Police department received a 911 called reporting an aggravated burglary that had just occurred. A description of the offender was provided and District 3 Police Officer's James Davis and Jason Bolte (the 'e' in Bolte is not silent) responded to the area. What happened next was nothing less than heroic and is indicative of the brave and selfless acts routinely performed by members of the Cincinnati Police Department. In short, the perpetrator was brandishing a shotgun and pointed the shotgun at the officers. After repeated and unheeded warnings, the officer's opened fire, striking the suspect, 24-year-old Christian Jackson, several times. Jackson attempted to flee but was overcome by his injuries and was apprehended at short distance away. It is my opinion that James Davis and Jason Bolte should be cited for bravery and heroism and perhaps that is yet to come. The preceding is the good news, and now for the bad news.

As many are aware, one of Cincinnati's Police Chief [Jeffrey Blackwell](#)'s favorite words to use when speaking in public is "transparency". Apparently this transparency does not extend to his own activities. Following this incident, I received a private message from an anonymous source reporting

"when it was time to notify the command staff, no one could find the chief to contact him and he never returned calls, he didn't find out about the shooting until the next day."

I, of course, was not there so I tried to confirm this report before I went any further. It was at this point that transparency went from transparent, to translucent, to opaque, to black. Following are the steps I followed, attempting to verify if Blackwell was notified, how and when he was notified, and if he did or did not respond to the scene. I was fairly certain he did not respond to the scene, because I did not see any photographs of him mugging for the camera on the [CPD Facebook page](#) nor his own personal [Facebook page](#), nor his [Twitter feed](#). Based on past performance, he would not pass up a photo opportunity such as this if he were there. That being said, I still do not know if he were there or not. However, the following describes the actions I have taken thus far to find out.

My first impulse was to simply asked someone who may have been on the scene. I sent an email



to several assistant police chiefs inquiring what command officers were on the scene. One responded that he was not on the scene and did not know who was, the other did not answer my email. I followed up by sending an email to the Police Department's Record Section under the heading of "Public Records Request" with the following four questions:

1. *Which command officers (Captain and above) were notified, how they were notified, and by who?
What time were they notified?*
2. *Once notified, did they respond to the scene?*
3. *If they responded to the scene, what time did they arrive?*

My email was answered by [Dianne Nelson](#), Records Section Manager, with the following response:

"I appreciate your request for public records. The Ohio Public Record Law requires that the City provide you with the records/documents responsive to your request. The Public Records Law, however, does not require that the City answer questions about public records. Therefore, Police Records will provide you with responsive records not considered an exception under ORC 149.43. Under the public records law, information in an ongoing police investigation is not releasable according to ORC 149.43 (A)(2). Consequently, please revise your request for the first item so that we can send provide the responsive records that are releasable at this time. "

Apparently I did not ask the right way. One would have thought that based on the specific questions I asked, the documentation could be provided, but what do I know.

Next I resubmitted my request asking,

"Please provide any documentation, logs, or rounds from any/all Command Officers who were on scene of the recent shots fired by Officer Bolte and Davis. Please provide any documents, logs, or other records maintained by the Emergency Communications Section with regard to the Situational Occurrences Notification List. as required in Police Procedure Manual Procedure 12.550. Please provide the rounds of the night inspector Lt. Tim Brown from the night of the officer involved shooting. as indicated above. Please provide any Commanding Officer's Daily Rounds, or any emails recorded on the date of the incident as indicated above. Please provide any logs, rounds or emails relative to the incident maintained by Police Chief Jeffrey Blackwell. "

Following that, I have received a copy of the Night Inspector's rounds for that night, which made no mention whatsoever of the incident. I also have received a copy of the notifications made by Emergency Communications Center (ECC). From that I discovered that Jeffrey Blackwell was left a voice mail and that Mayor Cranley's cell phone was disconnected. I have had several phone conversations with a Records Section Supervisor. The first asking for clarification on several items, which I provided. The second phone conversation was the same as the first, asking for clarification on the same items (logs and email) as the first. I did not feel as if I was making much progress so I



decided I would, once again, email the assistant police chiefs with more specific questions. I asked:

- *What Command Officers (including night inspector) were notified of the incident and when were they notified?*
- *What Command Officers (including night inspector) responded to the scene, and when did they arrive?*
- *When did Chief Blackwell acknowledge his voice mail, was he on the scene, and when did he become aware of the incident?*

One assistant replied “I responded to that scene promptly after it occurred. I don’t have specific information to your other requests”. One would think that if the Chief showed up on the scene, his subordinate might have noticed. Since he did not, I will make an assumption Blackwell was not there. A second respond with the comment “I was not called, nor did I respond” and the third assistant once again did not answer my email.

That is where it is now, almost two months after the incident. I have been promised, but have not yet received, Blackwell’s email of the incident (if they exist). I have been promised, but have not received, the daily rounds of the District Three Commander or any other Captain or above who were on the scene. I have been promised, but have not received any log of events, should such a log exist. I was informed that the Assistant Police Chief’s are not required to maintain daily rounds or any other method of determining what they do, if anything, with their day. Again, I probably did not ask the right question.

All in all, I would have to say that this exercise was a huge success. I set out to get answers and those answers would have been readily available in an administration that was “transparent”. I only wanted some corroboration of the information sent to me. That seems like it should have been quite easy for someone to either affirm or deny. I only wanted to find out whether Blackwell was, or was not, on the scene. I still don’t know.

As a footnote, I thought it only fair that I ask Blackwell directly. I sent an email to him with the following:

“I have received the following from an anonymous source about circumstances at the Officer involved shooting of March 2nd, 2015. The information I have received is:

“when it was time to notify the command staff, no one could find the chief to contact him and he never returned calls, he didn’t find out about the shooting until the next day.”

I am planning to publish a blog article regarding this, and what I have discovered thus far. I would like to give you the opportunity to comment, should you be so inclined.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration



I have received no response from him. So the questions are still unanswered. Maybe someone who was on the scene and remembers seeing Blackwell can leave a comment below and help to clear this all up. But, until I hear otherwise, I am inclined to believe the information provided to me originally is factual. What do you think?

Those are my thoughts, what are yours?

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The Elected and the Useless



Not that there was ever any chance that Jeffrey Blackwell would be an effective leader or a good police chief for the Cincinnati Police Department, recent events have ensured that he has become even less effective, if that is possible. I am referring to the events of the past few days whereby rumors of his pending resignation have been running rampant. Rumors do not make for accurate reporting, and the comments of politicians or even non-politicians controlled by politicians generally are even less accurate as they frequently obfuscate the truth to mislead the public. All of this tends to make the citizen's of Cincinnati, who are footing the bill, have less confidence in their government, their police chief, and their police department.

What is most concerning is that Blackwell is under orders not to speak to the media. First off, What is it that he may have to say that the City Manager does not want him to say? I think this denotes lack of confidence of the Police Chief by the City Manager. I can't help but wonder if he was actually ordered not to speak to the media or if he just said that he was ordered not to speak to the media. Wasn't he speaking to the media when he said he was ordered not to speak to the media? Blackwell's comment will certainly not sit well with the City Manager as I am sure many in the media are now knocking on the Manager's door asking him what it is that Blackwell is not permitted to say. [The puppet-police chief](#) continues to have his strings pulled by the City Manager.

The City Manager has given the Chief until Friday to provide a plan to reduce violence. He has given this plan 90 days to be successful. The unanswered questions are: what happens if the plan is not successful? What are the parameters of success? What percentage of reduction is expected? Which violent crimes will this plan address? What happens if the plan is not a success? We should know these things. After all, did not both the City Manager and the Police Chief, on more than one occasion, promise transparency? How transparent is it when the Manager is not talking and the Police Chief is under orders not to talk?

This whole thing is starting to take on a soap opera like characteristic. Will the City Manager update the public. Will the gag order be removed from the police chief. Will the chief make his Friday deadline? Will the chief be successful in reducing violence in 90 days? Will Blackwell still be the police chief in 90 days. All of these questions may, or may not, be answered in the next episode of



The Elected and the Useless. Stay tuned.

DISCLAIMER: Before the obvious is pointed out, I wish to acknowledge that for the most part, the title of this soap opera is redundant.

Those are my thoughts, what are yours?

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The "Flexible Deadline"



In an article appearing on Cincinnati.com entitled "[Anti-crime plan deadline passes, but not an issue](#)", Cincinnati City Manager Harry Blackis quoted as saying "the Friday deadline was always meant to be flexible". This caught my attention as I was always under the impression that a deadline was meant to be rigid. Admittedly, there is a lot I don't know so I turned to Google for clarification. Google tells me that flexible means "able to be easily modified to respond to altered circumstances or conditions" and deadline means "the latest time or date by which something should be completed". Taking this into consideration, I guess a flexible deadline would be defined as "the later or another latest time or date by which something should be completed." Oh well, that changes everything.

Now that we have this new definition of what a deadline is, City employees can be less concerned about deadlines in their day-to-day activities. Here might be a few examples with the new flexible deadline could come into play.

Officer to judge: Yes your honor, I realize I was due in court by 0900, however I thought that "due incourt" time was flexible." or

Subordinate to boss" Don't write me up for being late to work, I thought my starting time was flexible". Unless of course one is on flex time, in which case it just might be flexible. But let us not nitpick.

Or in real life situations

"Yes honey, I knew the wedding was to start at 7:00 PM, but I thought it was a flexible time so I thought a few more drinks at the bar would be okay.

"I missed the bus. Damn bus drivers are so inflexible when it comes to arriving at the stop"

Of course I could go on and on, but I am sure you get the drift. The world could quickly become quite chaotic if all deadlines were truly flexible.



Here is the part I don't understand. Why would [Chief Jeffrey Blackwell](#) assume the deadline was flexible and proceed as if it was? Did [Harry Black](#) know in advance that the deadline would not be met and if so, did he give his approval to extend the deadline? Did Harry Black tell Jeffrey Blackwell that the deadline was flexible when he set the deadline? If Harry Black knew the deadline would not be met, when did he know? If he knew, should he have been expected to tell the waiting media and impatient blog writers that the plan would not come out on schedule and possibly set a new expectation? It could be, and I am just surmising here, that the anticipated plan is just an attempt to massage the public's expectations that something actually can be done to curb the violence.

I think it will take a lot more planning that a few days and a few meetings to put together a viable plan that will actually have a possibility of succeeding. I am truly hopeful that something can be done but if they are going to do it, it should be done right. Thus far I have only heard rumors and speculations so I will admit up front I really don't know what I am talking about. But that has never stopped me before. I would like to see a plan that could quickly step down the violence but I do not believe that can happen in a few days. I do not believe the police have the resources to cause such an effect. Lack of police patrols or walking beats in a certain area have far less effect on crime and criminals than due depressed economic conditions and blighted neighborhoods. The perception needs to change that it takes more than a quick thrill to make a man a father and that manhood is not determined by the number of children one can father. Government has to realize that removing the blight from a neighborhood does not mean relocating people to different Section 8 housing in another neighborhood building some new, non-affordable condos in the old neighborhood. In short, a quick three-day plan is not going to correct all the social ills that are the root cause of the violence in the first place.

The city is experiencing an uptick in violence because the city is dying. Cincinnati has over 200,000 people less than it did in 1970 and the people who left are the hard-working, responsible citizens. The people left are the criminals and the impoverished. It is hard to care what happens in your neighborhood when you can't stop thinking about how to get something to eat. It is hard not to turn to violence and gangs and drugs when they seem to be the only way to ease the hunger and the thirst and the sense of abandonment. But hey, don't look at me. I don't have the answers. Do you?

Those are my thoughts, what are yours?

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The Summer Safety "Plan"



I, like many others, waited for the Police Chief's 90-Day Summer Safety Plan to be revealed. You remember, back in early June of this year. It seems like a long time ago but was really only about a month ago, when Cincinnati Police Chief Jeffrey Blackwell was in the news because the mean streets of Cincinnati were starting to look like Dodge City in the old wild west. So as the shots were ringing out, Jeffrey Blackwell was called on the carpet to account to the Mayor and City Manager why this was happening, and what did he plan to do about it. The chief quickly informed his bosses that he was already working on a plan and that it was almost done, to which Harry Black said, "oh yeah, well show it to me by Friday", or something to that effect. The chief offered to resign but changed his mind and decided instead to ask the community to think of something to help him write the plan that was almost done. As you may recall, Friday came and went but [no plan was presented](#). The City Manager was not upset, he said that was okay, he did not really mean Friday as in Friday but he meant Friday as sometime within seven days of a Friday. (or something to that effect).

Finally the plan was revealed. Curfew Centers! Shift Changes! Personnel reassignment! Overtime for Captains! Almost immediately after the plan was revealed, Blackwell discovered what Lincoln had discovered many years ago, that is, one cannot please all the people all the time. To almost every element of the Chief's plan there was opposition. The first problem was the concept of enforcing long-standing curfew ordinances. But the laws were not to be enforced in the traditional fashion whereby police officers arrest the offenders and take them to detention. No, instead, the police would escort the misguided youth to one of two area churches where they would be counseled, told of God, and encouraged to lead a more civilized life. They would be encouraged to do so by Pastors, outreach workers and police officers. But wait someone said. We cannot do that. That would violate that "Separation of Church and State" thing that might be somewhere in some document, or maybe it was something someone once said. We must not corrupt our youth with information about God, doing good, and obeying the law. So that part of the plan changed.

New Plan! Curfew violators will not be arrested but will be taken, not to a church but to a recreation center. Once taken there they will be greeted by Pastors, outreach workers, and police officers where they will be counseled, told of God, and encouraged to lead a more civilized life. See the



difference. In church there were no basketball courts. But wait, there is more. The plan changed again. The new plan is that curfew violators would not be arrested, or detained, nor would they be counseled, told of God, or encouraged to lead a more civilized life. Instead, they would be left to wander the streets, dodge the bullets and in some cases to fire the guns. Yeah that's it, that's the plan, we can now move forward with the Police Chief's Summer Safety Plan 3.0.

Of course, the curfew part of the plan is not the only part of the plan that has changed. In fact, almost all parts of the plan have changed. The original plan to shift officers from many preferred assignments to street patrol was scrapped. I think someone realized there was value in what many of those preferred assignment officers were doing and that value would be lost if they were transferred. The part of the plan where patrol officers would be put into a different off day rotation was scrapped. Somebody forgot to factor in such things as training days, sick days, etc. Oops! I do not know for a fact, but I suspect there was a lot of push back from the rank and file with regards to that plan to change off day groups. However, the good news is that the Gang Unit will be out on the weekends patrolling the hot spots, if only someone could figure out where those hot spots are. Of course, that is what the Gang Unit is supposed to be doing anyway, so that is not really much of a "new" plan, is it? One element of the plan that seems to have some stability is the part where the Youth Services Unit will be stationed around the recreation centers and pools, to insure the typically crime free parks and pools stay crime free, I guess. But, of the 90 day plan that is in only the beginning of those 90 days, less than 60 days are left until the schools open and the pools close. The Youth Services Unit, of which a large part is composed of School Resource Officers, will then be pulled from the "Plan" and returned to their normal duties in the schools.

From my perspective, this is a plan that has not been planned out very well. In fact, I would feel more accurate in reporting the plan as a knee jerk reaction to pressure on the Police Chief by City Manager Harry Black and Mayor John Cranley. I realize that the police Chief can do little to influence crime trends. Crime trends are typically influenced by social-economic factors, populations shifts, and the current drug of choice in the city (now heroin). But, the Police Chief gets paid the big bucks to try, and if those attempts are not successful then it is the old buck stops here concept. Nobody knows how much of the plan is viable. Cranley said in the beginning that the plan would be fluid, that it would be tried and if it did not work, another plan would be tried. Little did anyone know that the plan would change, several times, even before it was implemented. Maybe that is the plan, to use smoke and mirrors, misdirection and obfuscation to keep the focus on the planning of the plan, hoping that the reasons for the plan will go away on their own.

I love Cincinnati. I grew up in Cincinnati and I worked for over 40 years in and for the City of Cincinnati. I truly hope something can be done to curb the violence. I want my old Cincinnati back. I hope Jeffrey Blackwell is able to do something to improve the quality of life in Cincinnati by providing a safer environment.. If he cannot, I hope his successor can.

Those are my thoughts, what are yours?



I urge you to comment and discuss. Feel free to disagree. Interested people debating the issues is where the answers will be found.



The summer Safety Plan Revisited

US	YTD 2014	% CHANGE	YTD 2015	3 YEAR AVERAGE	Ch
	44	2%	45	39	
	146	5%	154	153	
	771	-2%	753	853	
	410	9%	445	458	
7	1371	2%	1397	1343	

US	YTD 2014	% CHANGE	YTD 2015	3 YEAR AVERAGE	Ch
3	2828	-9%	2573	3122	
5	1804	24%	2236	1998	
1	4415	2%	4485	4470	
	627	6%	663	664	
7	9674	3%	9957	10254	
4	11045	3%	11354	11797	

As summer winds down, school has restarted, and the overall concept of the summer season comes to an end, I can't help but wonder about the [Summer Safety Plan](#), and how that worked out for the city. As you may recall, in early June there was much said by politicians and public officials about the need to reduce the violence in Cincinnati. The City Manager got on board and issued a directive to the Police Chief to produce a 90 day plan that would help reduce violence in the City of Cincinnati. Several days later the Police Chief, the mayor, and the City Manager took to the podium and explained to us how the plan would work. Almost immediately following that, the plan was revised once, twice, maybe three times until the final watered down version was put into place in July. Since then very little was said or written about the plan and whether it has been effective. So I did my research. Here is what I found.

Finding crime statistics for the City of Cincinnati turned out to be somewhat difficult. The Cincinnati Police Department publishes only one document called the [Statistic and Tactical Analytical Review for Solutions \(STARS\) Report](#). This report publishes limited crime statistics but is enough to find out if crime is up or down in the City. The report is not real-time but is as up to date to within several days of the time it is published. The report is published on a weekly basis, but older reports do not seem to be readily available with the published report limited to only the latest report. This is all that is necessary to determine if crime is up or down, but not enough if one is looking to compile week by week statistics. Additionally, the report is limited to reporting only by the Police District of occurrence and an over all city-wide report, but it does not drill down and provide neighborhood crime statistics. This is surprising as the City of Cincinnati is neighborhood centric and the Police Chief himself coined the Phrase "True to 52". Yet one cannot easily find out the safest and the most dangerous of the 52 neighborhoods. But I digress, back to the Summer Safety Plan.

The question is, is the Summer Safety Plan working? Recent comments by Jeffrey Blackwell indicate that it is, but the STARS report says otherwise. It would appear that crimes of violence are on the upswing with the City experiencing an increase in all violent crime except Robbery. Violent crime in Cincinnati per the latest report is up 2% over the same time period last year. Additionally, all property crimes are also increasing with the exception of Burglary and Breaking and Entering offenses. A separate page of the report details shooting offenses, a crime the Summer Safety Plan



was specifically designed to address. If one uses this as a barometer to gauge the effectiveness of the plan, one would have to surmise that the plan has failed up to this point. Shootings for the past 28 days are up 63.6 per cent over the same time period last year. Bear in mind that the summer Safety Plan was in effect over those same 28 days. The numbers do not lie.

At the initial press conference when the original Summer Safety Plan was revealed, Mayor John Cranley stated they would try this, and if it did not work, they would try something else. I have heard some recent reports that he is meeting with communities for input. I wonder if the Mayor is also meeting with the Police Department for input? They may be a good resource. Is it not working and so the mayor is meeting with the communities to help formulate a new plan. Chief Blackwell has been quoted as saying that he thinks the plan is working even though crime is still rising. However, he is quick to point out that crime is rising overall nationally. I suspect that the citizens of Cincinnati do not really care about the overall national crime trend, they only care about crime in Cincinnati. To point out the national trend is a diversion.

It is my opinion that the answer has not been yet found. Reduction of violent crime in the City is necessary. Cincinnati needs to be known as a safe city, and Cincinnatians deserve to feel safe in their city. I believe that more cops need to be put where more cops are needed, in patrol. More cops need to be patrolling the streets, riding in beat cars, walking in neighborhoods. More cops need to be hired, not only to replace those who are leaving, but to increase the complement back to safe levels, safe for the citizens and safe for the cops on patrol. When that happens, when the city is safe again, we will know. Once the numbers on the STARS report are back in the black, then it might be considered a safe city. Until then, it is back to the drawing board boys.

Those are my thoughts, what are yours?

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Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci — Horace