SHREVEPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT

INTERNAL AFFAIRS INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Phone: **(318) 673-6920** **Fax: (318) 673-6905**

DATE: July 15, 2020

TO: Ben Raymond
Chief of Police

FROM: Sergeant Michael D. Tyler
Internal Affairs Bureau

THRU: Lieutenant Amy Muller
Internal Affairs Bureau

Captain Gayle McFarland
Internal Affairs Commander

SUBJECT: **P 06-072 (I) - COMPLAINT AGAINST: OFFICER LATHAN MEYERS #1609**

INITIATING INCIDENT

The Internal Affairs Bureau has reviewed the available information relating to this complaint of **policy violations** involving **Officer Lathan Meyers #1609** for **SPD 306.01, Commissioned Personnel, Duties and Responsibilities, SPD 404.01, Completion of Reports and SPD 502.01, Evidence/Property Operations**. This complaint was initiated by [redacted] on **June 2, 2020.**

COMPLAINANT'S STATEMENT

The Internal Affairs Bureau was provided with a typed affidavit by [redacted] dated **June 2, 2020** that reads as follows:

"I [redacted] have received information alleging on or about the **17th day of April 2020** at **2202 PM, Officer L. Meyers #1609 did commit the following infractions of the Shreveport Police Department Rules and Regulations and/or the Louisiana Municipal Fire and Police Civil Service Code, and/or the laws of the State of Louisiana;**

I, [redacted] received information from [redacted] of SPD OSI that on April 17, 2020 Officer L. Meyers# 1609 responded to a disorderly person call @ 452 Rutherford. Officer Meyers was assigned as 6C4 in unit 570. While on that call, Officer Meyers engaged in a foot pursuit of a male subject and apprehended him. In a post Miranda statement during a criminal investigation (2020009316) Officer Meyers stated that he had charges of Resisting, Possession of Schedule I and Possession of Schedule II. In the post Miranda statement, Officer Meyers stated that he took the male subject to an unknown location in Bossier City and let the subject go and placed the narcotics in a trash can in the same vicinity that he released the subject. Post Miranda, Officer Meyers also stated that he never did positively identify the subject and that the bag contained "no more than 20 multicolor pills believed to be ecstasy

and no more than 4 to 5 grams of marijuana ." No criminal charges were filed, no evidence was recovered, and no report was written.

If these allegations are found to be true and Shreveport Police Department members are involved, they would be in violation of:

SPD 502-01 Evidence / Property Operations: Specifically:

V. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

A. All articles of evidence, confiscated property and found items of value, except evidence involved in Caddo Shreveport Financial Crimes Task Force investigations, coming into the possession of any member of the Shreveport Police Department will be booked through the PMU.

SPD 404.01 Completion of Reports : Specifically "Members shall produce a report when required for a record of facts, for further investigation, and for purposes that would benefit the courts, law enforcement and/or the department. The circumstances that may require a report include, but are not limited to, complaints of a crime, making arrests, executing warrants, incidents which could result in potential civil litigation against the member or the department, a-situation where the facts should be recorded to create a record for possible future reference of any possible criminal activity. Members who are uncertain about the requirement of a report shall contact a supervisor.

SPD 306.01 Commissioned Personnel, duties and Responsibilities: Specifically

A. PROFESSIONALISM

1. Members shall not read, play games, watch television or movies, or otherwise engage in any activity not directly related to official police operations while on their regular tour of duty, except as may be required in the performance of duty. They shall not engage in any activities or personal business that would cause them to neglect or be inattentive to duty. Further examples include, but are not necessarily limited to, failure to take appropriate action on the occasion of criminal offenses, disorder or other act or condition deserving police attention, absence without leave, failure to report for duty at the time and place designated, unnecessary absence from one's assignment during a tour of duty, failure to perform duties or comply with any rule or regulation, general or special order, or failure to conform to department operation policies and/or procedures.

MVS RECORDINGS

Upon reviewing the related MVS recordings, it was determined that the actions noted by Sergeant Dean Willis during his investigation is consistent to what was observed during my review. Sergeant Dean Willis' report noting the MVS recording review is attached to this report.

OFFENSE REPORTS

20-063372 [redacted]
04/22/2020

On April 21, 2020 I was contacted by Sgt. [redacted] and asked to review a patrol incident

involving narcotics where the evidence alledgedly was not turned in to the property room. [redacted] advised the incident occurred at Highland and Rutherford in the Highland neighborhood of Shreveport on April 17, 2020 on shift C. I advised [redacted] I would research the incident on April 22, 2020.

On April 22, 2020 I researched the RMS database for calls for service and for evidence turned in by any of the Area 2 C shift and early side A shift officers.

I located one report, CAD # 20-060693 written by Officer [redacted] at 1200 Gilbert at 1739 hours where narcotics were submitted as evidence. Based on the location and time of day, this report was ruled out as being the incident described to me by S[redacted]

I then located a call for service, CAD # 20-060808 which was dispatched as a disorderly person at 452 Rutherford. The call for service indicated the suspect ran and 6C4 was not answering the radio. The call for service indicated units were at Columbia and Highland at 2211 hours. This incident matched the description of the incident described to me by [redacted] I then began reviewing MVS videos of the officers who responded to the scene. I located video for Officer [redacted] which shows two officers standing a suspect up and searching him in front of unit 533. Officer L. Meyers #1609, assigned as 6C4 in unit 570, appears to be the lead officer on this incident based on the call for service and the activity observed on the video. I was initially unable to locate video for Officer Meyers because he was not logged in to his MVS. I then located the video by searching for his assigned unit, unit 570. After reviewing these videos, it is apparent narcotics were recovered during this incident. It is difficult to determine the exact quantity of narcotics, but marijuana and MDMA were recovered. There was no offense report written on CAD 20-060808 and no evidence bar coded or submitted to the property room to be destroyed or kept as evidence. During the review of the MVS for this incident, Officer Meyers can be heard stating he was going to take the suspect to Bossier and drop him off and then makes a statement indicating he is going to discard the narcotics in the river.

I have flagged the aforementioned videos to be saved in the system and will schedule an interview with Officer Meyers. This investigation is on-going.

Supplements (Sergean[redacted]
04/24/2020

[redacted]

On April 24, 2020 at 0918 hours, I initiated phone contact with Shreveport Police Officer Lathan Meyers # 1609, and advised him I needed him to come to the department to be interviewed in reference to this investigation. Officer Meyers advised he was not going to do that, because he had not been advised of the reason he was placed on administrative leave. I told Officer Meyers he should have been told he was on leave for violation of departmental rules and regulations and he would be contacted with further instructions. I advised Officer Meyers his presence was not optional, but he did have the right to consult with an attorney and to not provide a statement. Officer Meyers advised he would consult an attorney and call me back.

On April 24, 2020 at 1047 hours, having not heard back from Officer Meyers # 1609, I initiated a second call to him. I advised Officer Meyers, I was instructed to give him a direct order to come to the police station and contact me. I further advised Officer Meyers this order did not prevent him from exercising his rights or require him to make a statement if he did not want to do so. I explained to Officer Meyers if he wanted time to obtain counsel, we could schedule an interview, but he would still be required to come to the station on this date.

At 1109 hours, I received a call from Attorney [redacted] advised he would be

representing Lathan Meyers and asked what the case was in reference to. I advised Attorney [redacted] the investigation was in reference to missing evidence from a patrol call Meyers made. An appointment was set up for Lathan Meyers and Attorney [redacted] to be at the station at 1430 hours on April 24, 2020 for an interview. I received another call from [redacted] at 1416 hours asking if the interview could be pushed to 1530 hours. See supplement report for details of the interview with Lathan Meyers, and his attorney, [redacted]

05/02/2020

[redacted]

On April 24, 2020 at 3:35 pm, Lt. [redacted] and I (Sg[redacted]) conducted an audio recorded interview with Officer Lathan Meyers in the presence of his attorney, [redacted] Myers is currently employed as a police officer with the Shreveport Police Department. I began the interview by advising L. Meyers of the nature of the investigation and of his rights per Miranda (as read from a standardized rights form) in accordance with article 218.1 of the Louisiana Code of Criminal Procedure.

The following is a summary of the audio recorded interview with Lathan Meyers and his attorney [redacted]. To hear the interview in its` entirety please refer to the audio recording.

Lathan Meyers advised he understood his rights and wanted to answer question in reference to this investigation. Lathan Meyers signed the standardized rights form indicating he understood his rights and wanted to make a statement. This investigation is in reference to a dispatched disorderly person call at 452 Rutherford on April 17, 2020 at 2202 hours.

Meyers states he has been employed with the Shreveport Police Department since February of 2019. Meyers states his police training officers were [redacted] Meyers advised the call was in reference to a disorderly person and as soon as he arrived on scene and got out of his vehicle, he immediately noticed a silhouette towards the back of the house at the tree line. Meyers states it looked like somebody was running so he put his flashlight on it, and someone was running. Meyers advised he got into a foot pursuit with the individual. Meyers advised he could not say how far the pursuit lasted before he caught the individual. Meyers advised at that time, Office[redacted] showed up and he had the individual on the ground and handcuffed. Meyers advised they searched the suspect and put him in the back of [redacted] car. Meyers advised they never went back to Rutherford but believed they ended up at Columbia. Meyers states he chased the suspect a good distance through the alley and during the chase it appeared the suspect was throwing stuff from his pockets. Meyers advised after the suspect was placed in [redacted]s car, he went back and tried to find the items the suspect was throwing. Meyers states they recovered a bag that looked almost like a lunch bag. Meyers states the bag was brought in front of the camera and mixed in with the suspect`s personal belongings was some narcotics. Meyers states there was a sandwich bag of weed and a thing of pills that appeared to be ecstasy pills. Meyers states they were trying to identify the suspect so he could work on an affidavit. Meyers states the charges they had were Resisting, Possession of Schedule I and Possession of Schedule II and possibly something else. Meyers states the suspect would not identify himself. Meyers states the suspect was either intoxicated or a mental patient and was uncooperative throughout the contact with officers. Meyers states this was around the time Sgt. [redacted] showed up at the scene. Meyers states [redacted] showed up. Meyers advised Sgt. [redacted] was not there long before leaving the scene. Meyers advised they were trying to come up with a plan on what to do with the suspect so he called the Caddo Correctional Center to see if they would take him. Meyers advised Caddo transferred him to several people and he advised them of the charges he had on the suspect and the suspect would not identify himself so Meyers was trying to see if they would take the suspect. Meyers states the last person he talked to at Caddo told him to contact the Shreveport City Jail. Meyers said he then called Shreveport City Jail and advised them of the charges he had on the suspect. Meyers advised jail personnel told him he could bring him up there and then they could call the captain at Caddo to see of Caddo would accept the prisoner. Meyers states he thought the whole thing

was "quite the cluster fuck" since he was supposed to be getting off right about that time. Meyers states he called Sergeant [redacted] and advised him he wanted to drop the suspect off in Bossier and get rid of the drugs. Meyers said the suspect could not be given a summons because they could not identify him and the whole situation with the jails and Corona Virus was "a cluster". Meyers advised he told Sgt. [redacted] he was going to do that on the phone, and he said that was fine. Meyers advised he wasn`t trying to be secretive about what he was doing, he made it clear about what he was going to do, and that`s that. Meyers states they put the suspect in the back of his car, because the suspect had been in [redacted] car. Meyers states he is not too familiar with Bossier, because he moved up here for the police academy. Meyers states he doesn`t have any business in Bossier and it was also nighttime, so he doesn`t know the area well. Meyers states he got on Benton Road in close proximity to the Porter`s Dry Cleaning. Meyers states he pulled in, it was secluded, and he put the drugs in the trash can. Meyers states he gave this guy his property and told him to "stay the fuck out of Highland". Meyers states he then went to the station and got off work. Meyers advised the suspect did not ask to go to Bossier, the suspect was either inebriated or mental and was not really talking to them. Meyers states the suspect was not really saying anything to them, he was screaming and eventually he calmed down, possibly falling asleep. Meyers states after talking to the complainant, the suspect was in an argument and trying to fight a female over a cell phone. Meyers advised he was trying to remove the suspect from the scene because of the fight over the cell phone. Meyers states he let the suspect go at the same place he discarded the narcotics, but he did not think the suspect was cognizant of the drugs being thrown away at the same location. Meyers states he did not take any photographs of the drugs with his phone, but the MVS should have caught the drugs on the hood of [redacted] car. Myers advised he did not call in on the radio to advise he was transporting the suspect to Bossier and his video was not on when he transported the suspect to Bossier. When asked why, Meyers advised he knew it was against policy to take someone to Bossier, he knew he was "fucking up" when he did that. [redacted] asked Meyers, "but you did it anyway?" Meyers nodded his head in agreement but did not answer verbally. I asked Meyers if the policy violation was the only reason he turned the video off and he answered yes. I asked Meyers if there was a trash can or dumpster at Porters. Meyers advised there was a trash can somewhere in that area near Porters, but he could not tell me exactly where, just near Porters. Meyers states he does not have prior law enforcement experience and was never told during training it would be okay to do away with evidence. Meyers states it is talked about and it is one of those old school police things. Meyers states it obviously does not fly now. Meyers was asked to describe the narcotics that were located in this incident. Meyers states there were no more than 20 multicolor pills believed to be ecstasy and no more than 4 to 5 grams of marijuana. Meyers states none of the narcotics were field tested. Meyers never mentioned the crack cocaine discussed on the video. Meyers states he can not take me to the exact trash can but can take me to the area where he threw the narcotics away. Meyers states it was nighttime, but he can take me to the general area. Meyers states time and frustration were the only reasons he did not write a report and turn the evidence in to be destroyed. Meyers states this is the only time he has really done something like this. Meyers states before the virus there was a clear-cut thing on what to do, the process was easy and this time the process was complicated. Meyers states he used a very ineffective method. Meyers states the last felony arrest he had was approximately a month ago where he had a domestic violence with child endangerment and the jails would not take the suspect. [redacted] asked Meyers if it ever occurred to him, he could let the suspect go and still turn the evidence in to the property room. Meyers states that was not really a thought, but the time and frustration was the reason he decided to do this. Meyers states he called Sgt [redacted] to run the plan by him. Meyers states he was not trying to be discrete about this or trying to hide it. Meyers states he did not keep the evidence for personal use or gain. Meyers stated again he threw the narcotics away. Meyers states he threw the evidence away to get rid of it and to resolve this situation. Meyers states he was never able to get the suspect positively identified. Meyers advised he did not personally speak to the complainant that extensively and did not want to misspeak. Meyers states there has been a lot going on with the current situation and he was also present during an incident where a suspect died in police custody a couple of days prior to this incident. Meyers states this is not a common practice for him, and no one instructed him to throw the narcotics away. [redacted] asked Meyers if he had ever dumped

evidence before and Meyers answered no. [redacted] advised Meyers was currently a student at Northwestern and served four years in the Marine Corp and was honorably discharged, and a graduate of Many High School and ran track. Meyers asked me what was next on this case, and I advised him the case would be forwarded to the Caddo Parish District Attorney`s Office for review. The interview was concluded at 3:59 pm.

[redacted]

During my follow up investigation in this case, I reviewed video from Shreveport Police units [redacted] (Officer [redacted]) and unit [redacted] (Officer L Meyers). I was initially unable to locate video for Officer Meyers because he did not log onto the MVS in unit 570. The following is a summary of the activities observed noting the times of any occurrence deemed to be significant to this investigation. To see the video of each unit in its` entirety please refer to the video recording.

The first video I reviewed was that of Unit 533 assigned to Officer [redacted]:

2207 Video Starts
2208 Officers Meyers and [redacted] are in front of unit 533
2211:46 Officer [redacted] locates marijuana in [redacted] belongings
2213 Officer [redacted] tells Officer Meyers the suspect has to go to Caddo for the drugs
2214:47 Officer [redacted] locates crack cocaine in [redacted] `s belongings
2215:02 Officer [redacted] locates ecstasy pills in [redacted] `s belongings - Officer [redacted] tells Officer Meyers [redacted] has to go to Caddo for the drugs
2215:53 Officer [redacted] tells Officer Meyers she will log the evidence
2216:01 Officer [redacted] locates another baggie containing ecstasy pills
2220:01 Officer [redacted] looks at documents with the name [redacted] on them and states [redacted] is the name of the suspect
2221 external audio is lost
2233 Officer Meyers takes possession of the narcotics
2234 Officer Meyers is seen walking to his unit with the narcotics
2234:45 [redacted] is removed from Officer [redacted] unit
2239:30 video ends

The next video I reviewed is from unit 570 assigned to Officer L. Meyers:

2205:30 Officer Meyers arrives at 452 Rutherford
2205:37 Officer Meyers initiates a foot pursuit with [redacted]
2206:05 MVS audio is intermittent Officer Meyers can be heard giving [redacted] verbal commands
2207:07 Officer Meyers can be heard asking [redacted] what he threw over the fence
Note: Officer Meyers assigned unit is not at the scene where [redacted] was apprehended, and the audio is intermittent.
2213:40 Officer Meyers states the jails are not going to take the suspect because he did not resist with force - Audio is Intermittent
2215:35 Officer Meyers can be heard saying "some crack" then the audio is intermittent
2219:48 Officer Meyers moves unit 570 to Highland and Columbia
2221:43 Officer Meyers ask the suspect his name, but [redacted] does not answer - Officer Meyers then states "he [redacted] is high as shit"
2222:21 Officer Meyers says "he [redacted] took that fucking ecstasy, he is sweating way too much just from that little foot chase"
2222:56 Officer Meyers makes a phone call to the Caddo Correctional Center and ask if they will take [redacted] and tells the person on the phone the charges are Resisting, Possession of Schedule I and Possession of Schedule II. Officer Meyers is transferred several times before being told to contact the Shreveport City Jail.
2225 Officer Meyers audio is lost
NOTE: At this point in the incident, unit 570 creates a second video file. The second video picks up

were the first ends.
2230:04 Officer [redacted] can be heard telling Officer Meyers if he(Officer Meyers) wants to let the suspect go she will log the drugs in- Officer Meyers states "hang on let me figure this shit out".
2230:39 Officer Meyers talks to someone about calling Sgt. [redacted]
2231:02 Officer [redacted] tells Officer Meyers "you know what [redacted] is going to tell you, he is going to tell you to get rid of that shit and let him go, Officer Meyers replies "honestly, I`m about it, this shit disappears"
2231:18 Officer [redacted] is heard saying "[redacted], this dude is going to end up having to go to the hospital - Meyers wants to know what you want him to do with him, he is going to have to go to the hospital - [redacted] then says "he said he don`t give a fuck, he said he wouldn`t arrest him but you can do whatever you want to do".
2231:47 Officer Meyers says alright let me go drop him off in Bossier
2231:52 Officer Meyers appears to be talking on the phone and says" Hey I`m just going to drop this dude off in Bossier"
2232:05 Officer Meyers says he doesn`t know if the jail will take him but even if they did he would have to go to the hospital
2232:23 Officer Meyers says Alright boss - appreciate it, you have a good one
2232:24 Officer Meyers (after his phone call to Sgt. [redacted]) "Alright, I got it handled, I`m taking this dude to Bossier and I`m going to drop him off on the other side of the river and this shit is going in the Red River"
2232:33 Officer [redacted] says I`m going to fill out the property sheet then (indicating she is going to turn in the narcotics) Officer Meyers says No, No, No- get off on time
2232:44 Officer [redacted]`s birthdate is August 9, 1982, [redacted]
2233:09 Officer Meyers states all the contraband - Officer [redacted] says You can turn it in, you can destroy it or turn it in to be destroyed but if you turn it in to be destroyed you have to write a report Officer Meyers states "we ain`t doing all of that"
2233:17 Officer Meyers says [redacted] put all of the contraband in this bag and I will get rid of this shit
2233:22 Officer [redacted] says Or we can just smear it right here in front of the camera
2233:26 Officer [redacted] says just put it all in the bag and stomp it all out
2233:31 Officer [redacted] says Meyers it is your call, whatever you want to do - Inaudible
2233:43 Officer Meyers says all of this like ecstasy, when they test it at the lab it is coming back as like meth it is not even MDMA
2234:00 Officer Meyers is seen walking to his vehicle with the bag of narcotics
2234:26 Officer [redacted] is seen walking to Officer Meyers unit and gives Meyers the toiletry bag with [redacted]`s property in it. [redacted] asks Meyers where do you want this, Meyers said Oh that`s his shit, I guess it can go to Bossier with him
2234:49 Officer Meyers video is turned off
2254:01 Unit 570 Speed trigger of 74 MPH turns video on. Unit is traveling on I-49
2255:07 Unit 570 Speed trigger of 74 MPH turns video on. Unit is traveling on I-49

END OF VIDEO SUMMARY

05/03/2020

Sgt [redacted]

On April 28, 2020 at 2104 hours, Agent [redacted] and I (Sgt. [redacted]) conducted an audio recorded interview with Officer [redacted] with the Shreveport Police Department in reference to this case. I notified [redacted] she was a witness in this case which was dispatched at 452 Rutherford on April 17, 2020 at 2202 hours. The following is a summary of Officer [redacted] interview. To hear the interview in its` entirety, refer to the audio recording.

I asked [redacted] to tell me what happened on the call. [redacted] states the call went out as either a

disturbance or disorderly person call. [redacted] states a male was on the porch being aggressive and took a lady`s phone and she wanted her phone back. [redacted] states she heard an officer say the suspect was running west so she came down Highland and saw the officer and the subject on the ground. [redacted] states when she arrived Officer Meyers was the only officer present with the suspect. [redacted] states Officer [redacted] came running down the alley shortly after her arrival. [redacted] states she believed Officer [redacted] arrived just after Meyers, but [redacted] fell during the foot pursuit. [redacted] states after they sat the suspect in the back of the car, Meyers said he saw the suspect throw something. [redacted] states there was a house with a fence a little north of where they were, and they went in the fence and recovered a black toiletry bag. [redacted] reviewed the video as the suspect`s property was searched/inventoried. [redacted] states the bag of marijuana in the suspects property was less than 10 grams, but she could not say the exact amount. While reviewing the video, Officer [redacted] recalled recovering a small bag of crack cocaine. Officer [redacted] said there was one to two small rocks of crack (indicating .1 to .2 grams of crack cocaine). In the video Officer [redacted] referred to pills in a bag. When asked about this in the interview she said they were not prescription pills. [redacted] is seen on the video holding up another plastic bag and saying, "he got some beans" referring to ecstasy pills. I asked [redacted] how many ecstasy pills were in the bag and she answered more than 10 but she was unsure of the exact amount. [redacted] states there was some mail in the bag addressed to [redacted] states everything was handed to Officer Meyers. [redacted] states she did not leave the scene with any of the suspects property or evidence. [redacted] states if she stops someone with narcotics, she takes them to the jail and then return to the station to log in the evidence. [redacted] said if the suspect is not being arrested the only other option, she knows of is to have the suspect destroy the narcotics in the presence of one to two officers. [redacted] states she does not know where the suspect ended up but Meyers said he was taking him to Bossier. [redacted] state when she left the scene, both the suspect and narcotics were with Officer Meyers. The interview was concluded at 2122 hours.

S[redacted]

I conducted a follow up investigation in this incident to determine if narcotics were recovered, and if narcotics were found to be recovered, were they handled by acceptable guidelines or common practice to rule out the possibility of wrong doing by any member of the Shreveport Police Department.
In an attempt to reveal all of the facts of this investigation I have searched for and reviewed all MVS video pertaining to the incident, conducted audio recorded interviews, obtained GPS data for SPD unit 570 during the time of this incident, and located/identified [redacted] to confirm his wellbeing.

At the conclusion of the activities listed above, I have learned the following:

Officers responded to a disorderly person involving [redacted] (B/M, 8/9/82) at 452 Rutherford. Washington fled on foot and was pursued by Officer Meyers and [redacted] Officer [redacted] falls during the foot pursuit and is not immediately on scene when [redacted] was taken into custody by Meyers. During the foot pursuit, Officer Meyers sees [redacted] throwing items over a fence. A small black bag is recovered from the area [redacted] was seen throwing things during the foot pursuit. The small black bag is taken to the front of unit 533 and searched/inventoried. The bag is found to contain marijuana, crack cocaine, and ecstasy (MDMA) pills and a document with the name [redacted], an alias of [redacted]'s. The exact amount of each narcotics was not determined, but the best estimate obtained during this investigation is less than 10 grams of marijuana, .1 to .2 grams of crack cocaine, and 10 to 20 ecstasy pills. Officer Meyers talks to several people at Caddo Correctional Center to determine if the jail will take [redacted]. During this phone call, Officer Meyers states the charges he would have on [redacted] are Resisting, Possession of Schedule I, and Possession of Schedule II. At some point in this incident, Sgt. [redacted] arrives on scene and leaves and is later contacted by phone and speaks to Officer [redacted] and Officer Meyers. Officer Meyers decides to take [redacted] to Bossier and makes several statements about getting rid of the narcotics. Officer [redacted] is heard several times telling Officer Meyers she will log in the narcotics. Officer [redacted] tells Officer Meyers he can

destroy the evidence on scene in front of the camera or turn in the evidence to be destroyed. Officer [redacted] tells Officer Meyers to destroy the evidence in front of the camera. Officer Meyers insists on leaving the scene with the narcotics. Officer Meyers video is turned off. Officer Meyers (unit 570) GPS data shows Officer Meyers leave the scene and leave Caddo Parish traveling east on I 20. Unit 570 travels into Bossier City and then returns to Shreveport. Officer Meyers (unit 570) travels west on I-20 o I-49 south to Pierremont, then north on I-49 to the station when he returns to Caddo Parish. During my interview with Officer Meyers he states he threw the narcotics away in Bossier City, but there are no witnesses or video to corroborate this statement and Officer Meyers states he could only take me to the general area where the trash can was located because he is not familiar with Bossier.

[redacted] was arrested by Officer [redacted] on 4/27/2020 and was at the Caddo Correctional Center. Many of the reports in RMS indicate [redacted] is uncooperative with police and possibly a mental patient, and therefore was not interviewed as part of this case. Officer Meyers states [redacted] did not see where he discarded the narcotics so [redacted] would not be able to attest to this fact and would not likely admit to or quantify an amount of narcotics he possessed. A statement from [redacted] would only determine he is in fact safe which is reasonably determined by his incarceration at the Caddo Correctional Center.

05/11/2020

Sgt [redacted]

On May 7, 2020 at 2116 hours [redacted]) conducted an audio recorded interview with Sgt. [redacted] was interviewed as a witness in this case; therefore, he was not advised of his rights per Miranda. I advised Sgt [redacted] of the nature of the call I wanted to interview him about and queued video of the incident to be reviewed by Sgt. [redacted]. I asked Sgt. [redacted] if he remembered the incident and he said he did.

I asked Sgt. [redacted] to tell me about the incident. Sgt. [redacted] advised he heard the call go out and heard the officers chasing someone and they "33`d the channel" (meaning the SPD East channel was cleared for emergency traffic only) and dispatch was calling the officers and no one was answering the radio. Sgt [redacted] advised he went to check on the officers. Sgt. [redacted] advised when he got on scene they already had the suspect behind the car and had "the weed and all the other crap on the hood of the car". Sgt [redacted] advised the officers described briefly what was going on and he made sure everyone was ok and then left and went on about his business. Sgt. [redacted] advised he was just starting his shift when this incident occurred. Sgt. [redacted] advised the officers on scene were evening shift officers except for Officer [redacted] who is on shift A with Sgt. [redacted] states the officers did call him from the scene. Sgt. [redacted] states Meyers told him the jails were giving him "the run-around" about taking the suspect at the jail. Sgt. [redacted] states Meyers asked him if he minded if he (Meyers) did not arrest the suspect and took him to Bossier. Sgt. [redacted] states he asked Meyers, "why Bossier, does he have family in Bossier?" Sgt. [redacted] states Meyers said yes. Sgt. [redacted] states he told Meyers, I can`t tell you what to do but, you would be helping me out because the suspect was complaining of a respiratory infection and an officer would have to go to the hospital with the suspect and stay all night. Sgt. [redacted] states he never told Meyers not to arrest the suspect or that he could not arrest the suspect. At this point, I played the video for Sgt. [redacted]. Meyers can be heard saying, "Hey, I`m just going to drop this dude off in Bossier". There is a pause in the conversation and Meyers then says "Yeah, I can, yes it is a cluster fuck and I already talked to the jail and I talked to Caddo, we don`t even know if the jail will take him and if they did he would have to go to the hospital". Meyers then says "alright, appreciate it boss, you have a good one". The phone call ends with no discussion of the narcotics. After the phone call with Sgt. Hathorn ends on the MVS video, Officer Meyers can be heard telling the other officers at the scene, "alright, I got it handled, I`m going to drop this dude off in Bossier, and this shit is going in the Red River". Sgt. [redacted] said they never discussed the narcotics on the phone and he would never tell an officer to throw narcotics in the river. I asked Sgt. [redacted] if

there were any other details of the case he wanted to add or we had not discussed. Sgt. [redacted] advised there was no other information about the incident. Lt. [redacted] then asked Sgt. [redacted] for clarification about the summary of the incident. Sgt. [redacted] advised he gave permission for the officer to give the suspect a ride to Bossier because it was his understanding the suspect had somewhere to go in Bossier (a residence or family member) and the officer would write a report documenting what occurred and turn the narcotics in to the property room.

This concluded my interview with Sgt. [redacted]

06/01/2020

Sgt [redacted]

At the conclusion of this investigation, the information was sent for review by the Caddo Parish District Attorney's Office. On May 28, 2020 I received an e-mail from First Assistant District Attorney [redacted] the case would not be prosecuted criminally. At this time, this case is closed by exceptional clearance, prosecution declined.

OFFCIER LATHAN MEYERS' IAB INTERVIEW

Officer Lathan Meyers #1609

I, [redacted] conducted the recorded interview with **Officer Lathan Meyers #1609** on **July 7, 2020.** Officer Meyers was present with his attorney, Mr. [redacted] and advised of his Garrity Warning as a Law Enforcement Officer under Administrative Investigation. Officer Meyers advised he understood the warning and affixed his signature to the Garrity form indicating the same. Officer Meyers acknowledged that he was given a copy of her Police Officer Bill of Rights, Notice of Investigation, and the Complaint Affidavit prior to investigatory questioning. Officer Meyers his attorney were also given the opportunity to review his related MVS video. The following is a summary of the interview:

Officer Lathan Meyers states when he arrived at the scene and after getting out of patrol car, he saw a shadow of an individual towards a tree line running. He states he was giving the suspect commands to stop and identified himself as the police. At around Columbia and Highland, Officer Meyers states he apprehended the suspect and after getting the suspect handcuffed, Officer [redacted] showed up, and the suspect was placed in the rear seat of Officer [redacted]s car.

Officer Meyers states the suspect was being uncooperative and refusing to give his name. He states during the foot pursuit, he noticed that the suspect was throwing stuff and upon retrieving the items, it was discovered that he was throwing narcotics. Officer Meyers states the issue was the fact that this was during the stay at home order because of the pandemic. He stated the protocol during that time was to call the jail and see if they would take him, because he was non-violent.

Officer Meyers states he called the Shreveport City Jail and the Caddo Correctional Center and never got straight answer on whether or not they would accept the suspect. He states he then called [redacted] about the situation. He stated nothing excuses the policy violations on his part that were not normal procedure.

Officer Meyers states after speaking with Sergea [redacted], it was decided that he would drop the suspect off in Bossier City and destroy the narcotics. I asked Officer Meyers if he obtained any information that the suspect had family in Bossier. He states he didn't because the suspect wasn't really talking or giving them any information. Officer Meyers states he just wanted to remove the suspect from the scene of

where he was trying the fight a lady over a cell phone. I asked officer Meyers if any identification was ever found for the suspect. He stated Officer [redacted] eventually found some identification, which was a piece of mail found in his bag and had his name of it, but there was no photo identification.

In an effort to get some understanding, I asked Officer Meyers why he chose to drop a suspect from Shreveport off in another jurisdiction, (Bossier City) when he had no family or connections to anyone in Bossier. He again stated he just wanted to remove him from the scene of the incident. He stated they could get no information from the suspect about whether he had family or if he was homeless. When asked about shelters in Shreveport, Officer Meyers stated he had tried to take people to the Salvation Army in the past but they have a certain cut off period for accepting people. I then asked Officer Meyers if he felt that the suspect could have been a problem in Bossier since he responded to him being disorderly in Shreveport. Officer Meyers stated it was possible.

I then asked Officer Meyers how he disposed of the narcotics and he stated he threw them away in a trash bin in Bossier. I then asked Officer Meyers why he took illegal narcotics to Bossier City and threw them away in a trash bin, where someone could potentially get a hold of the narcotics. I also asked why he failed to make a report and turned the narcotics in to be destroyed. He stated in hindsight, it was pretty foolish. Officers Meyers acknowledged that there were approximately 20 ecstasy pills, a baggie of marijuana and crack cocaine that he just threw away in a trash bin in Bossier City.

I then asked Officer Meyers about the statement he made on the MVS recording where he stated he was going to drop the suspect off in Bossier and throw the drugs in the river. He stated he traveled to Bossier via I-20, but did not dispose of the drugs by throwing them in the river. I then asked Officer Meyers if Sergeant [redacted] may have been under the impression that he was taking the suspect to Bossier because he had family there. Officer Meyers states he doesn't know, but he thought they were on the same page. I asked Officer Meyers if something like this had happened before that made him feel Sergeant [redacted] would be okay with it. He stated no, this was the first time, because he had never had an issue booking someone.

After listening to the MVR at the 22:31:52 mark, Officer Meyers takes Officer [redacted] s phone and speaks to Sergeant [redacted] nd says, "*Hey I`m just going to drop this dude off in Bossier*". He then explains that they didn't even know if the jail would take the suspect. After getting off the phone with Sergeant [redacted] Officer Meyers tells other officers that he had it handled and was going to drop the suspect off in Bossier. He then says that he was throwing his shit in the Red River.

It should be noted that during his conversation with Sergeant [redacted] Officer Meyers is not heard mentioning anything about what his intentions were with regard to the recovered narcotics. Officer [redacted] at one point offered to help him with the report by completing the property sheet and he declines and tells her to go ahead and get off on time.

Officer Meyers states he thought process at the time was to just move the suspect from the location to protect the potential victim that called the police. I asked Officer Meyers if there was nowhere in Shreveport he could have taken him, instead of just taking him to Bossier and dropping him off. He stated could have technically taken the suspect anywhere. I then asked him why Bossier was the place that came to his mind and why would he leave Shreveport to take a suspect to another city and just drop him off. He stated there was no particular reasón.

I asked Officer Meyers if he and Sergeant [redacted] ever discussed the Narcotics he recovered. He stated Sergeant [redacted] was made aware of the Narcotics and knew that he was going to throw the narcotics away. Just to get an understanding, I asked Officer Meyers if he was saying that he believed Sergeant [redacted] knew he was going to take a suspect from Shreveport to Bossier, drop him off somewhere, and throw drugs away, and he stated that was correct.

I then asked Officer Meyers if he made his intentions clear to Sergeant [redacted] or if he assumed that Sergeant [redacted] knew what he was going to do. He states it was clear and they weren't mincing words. I then asked Officer Meyers to tell me specifically what he told Sergeant [redacted] as it relate to how he was going to handle the situation with the suspect. He stated Sergeant [redacted] mentioned it when he was on scene and then when he had issues with the jail, he called Sergeant [redacted] and let him know he was going to drop the suspect off in Bossier and get rid of the drugs and Sergeant [redacted] said that was okay. Officer Meyers states he was pretty clear and there was no way to misinterpret what plan he had.

I then asked Officer Meyers if he acknowledges that his actions were not in line with Shreveport Police Department Policy and what the consequences could have been because he put the Police Department and the City in a position of liability because the suspect was in our custody prior to him just dropping him off in Bossier City. Officer Meyers states looking back on it now, he realizes how wrong that was.

Mr. [redacted] then said there was nothing right about what happened, but he sympathized with the situation the officer was in. He states he believes the officer excuse was the best out of other officers he had represented that did something similar as it relates to discarding narcotic evidence. Mr. [redacted] states he always advises officers he represents that if they are ever in a situation and don't know what to do, call their Sergeant. He states it disturbed him when he heard one of the other officers say, you know what Sergeant [redacted] is going to say, "Dump the suspect and dump the drugs." Mr. [redacted] states it disturbed him, because he thought maybe Sergeant [redacted] had been coaching officers that way. This statement is in reference to what is heard on the MVR where Officer [redacted] tells Officer Meyers "*you know what* [redacted] *is going to tell you, he is going to tell you to get rid of that shit and let him go, Officer Meyers replies "honestly, I`m about it, this shit disappears*".

Mr. [redacted] states there are written polices and then there are practices and maybe Officer Meyers understood that this was acceptable. He stated he didn't know what motivated Officer Meyers to take the suspect across the river and he sees all the problems with that decision. Mr. [redacted] stated he believes this was an extraordinary circumstance and a young, inexperienced officer didn't get good leadership and made some mistakes that he owns.

Mr. [redacted] stated he doesn't believe officers understand that when they get rid of drugs, what a question mark it leaves because they can't prove that they didn't keep the drugs and that's the reason they should always write a report and turn the drugs into evidence. Mr. [redacted] states he knows the Shreveport City Jail wasn't' taking anyone and at the time of the incident, he believes there may have been 4 inmates there.

I then asked Officer Meyers about an officer on scene, (Officer [redacted]) was offering to help him with the report as it relates to the property sheet for the drugs and he told her "don't worry about it." Officer Meyers stated that did occur, but he had already spoken to Sergeant [redacted] and he was going by the premise that he would just throw the drugs away and therefore there was no need for a property sheet.

I then asked Officer Meyers if what he did was something he has seen other officers do or if he has been told by any other officer that it was okay. He didn't seem to understand my question and we then clarified that the drugs were a significant amount and I asked him if he has ever witnessed an officer dispose of drugs in that amount or has anyone told him it was okay to do so. He then stated he has seen it done, but the difference is a report was written noting what the officers did and he didn't.

Mr. [redacted] stated he was disappointed that the other officers on the scene did not let Officer Meyers know that he couldn't do the things he did. Officer Meyers then stated it was a lesson well learned. I then asked Officer Meyers if he ever got a definitive answer from the Shreveport City Jail about whether they would take the suspect before he dropped him off in Bossier. He stated he didn't. He states he called the Caddo Correctional Center first because that was what they were doing at the time and he got transferred to different people between Caddo and the City Jail and never got a straight answer.

THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS BUREAU FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the information discovered during the course of this investigation, the Internal Affairs Bureau determined that **Officer Lathan Meyers #1609** is **In Violation** of **SPD 306.01, Commissioned Personnel, Duties and Responsibilities, SPD 404.01, Completion of Reports** and **SPD 502.01, Evidence/Property Operations** based on the following:

SPD 306.01, COMMISSIONED PERSONNEL, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

III. PROCEDURE

In addition to specific duties outlined in State Civil Service Law, members shall perform within the guidelines listed below:

A. PROFESSIONALISM

1. Members shall not read, play games, watch television or movies, or otherwise engage in any activity not directly related to official police operations while on their regular tour of duty, except as may be required in the performance of duty. They shall not engage in any activities or personal business that would cause them to neglect or be inattentive to duty. Further examples include, but are not necessarily limited to, failure to take appropriate action on the occasion of criminal offenses, disorder or other act or condition deserving police attention, absence without leave, failure to report for duty at the time and place designated, unnecessary absence from one's assignment during a tour of duty, failure to perform duties or comply with any rule or regulation, general or special order, or failure to conform to department operation policies and/or procedures.

SPD 404.01, COMPLETION OF REPORTS

IV. PROCEDURE

A. Reporting Requirements

Members shall produce a report when required for a record of facts, for further investigation, and for purposes that would benefit the courts, law enforcement and/or the department. The circumstances that may require a report include, but are not limited to, complaints of a crime, making arrests, executing warrants, incidents which could result in potential civil litigation against the member or the department, a-situation where the facts should be recorded to create a record for possible future reference of any possible criminal activity. Members who are uncertain about the requirement of a report shall contact a supervisor.

SPD 502.01, EVIDENCE/PROPERTY OPERATIONS

V. REPONSIBILITY OF MEMBERS

A. All articles of evidence, confiscated property and found items of value, except evidence involved in Caddo Shreveport Financial Crimes Task Force investigations, coming into the possession of any member of the Shreveport Police Department will be booked through the PMU.

Officer Lathan Meyers responded to a disorderly person call and engaged in foot pursuit with a suspect. After apprehending the suspect, illegal narcotics were recovered after it was determined that the suspect threw them during the pursuit. Officer Meyers stated this incident occurred during the time of the pandemic and the jails were not taking non-violent suspects. Officer Meyers states he contacted both the Shreveport City Jail and the Caddo Correctional Center and could not get a definitive answer about whether or not they would accept his suspect. He states he then spoke to Sergeant [redacted] *and let him*

know he was going to just take the suspect to Bossier and get rid of the drugs. He states Sergeant [redacted] was fine with that.

Upon asking Officer Meyers if he made it clear to Sergeant [redacted] what his intentions were, he couldn't say that he specifically told him what he was going to do, but he did not feel it was unclear and they were not mincing words. When asked about the statement he is heard making on the MVS recording to other officers on the scene, where he states he was going to drop the suspect off in Bossier and throw the drugs in the river, he acknowledged that he did make that statement. It should be noted that Officer Meyers did not say this was what he told Sergeant [redacted] he was going to do.

Officer Meyers states there was nothing that excuses the policy violation but he also stated the only difference between what he had done and what he has seen other officers do was other officers made police reports. I then asked Officer Meyers if he was saying he has witnessed officers discard illegal narcotics and he stated he has but they documented what they did in a police report.

When asked what location in Bossier he dropped the suspect off at, Officer Meyers stated he did not remember and is not familiar with Bossier because he is not from here. I then asked him where he disposed of the illegal narcotics and he states he put them in a trash bin somewhere in Bossier, but he didn't remember the location. Officers Meyers acknowledged that there were approximately 20 ecstasy pills, a baggie of marijuana and crack cocaine that he just threw away in a trash bin in Bossier City. Officer Meyers states that he knows what he did was wrong and not in line with departmental policy.

*It should be noted that both **Office**[redacted] and **Sergeant** [redacted]**'s** recorded statements given to Sergeant [redacted] are included with this file.*

***Office**[redacted] verified that they did recover illegal narcotics. She states they also discussed stomping out the narcotics if Officer Meyers wasn't going to arrest the suspect. She stated she also advised Officer Meyers to call Sergeant [redacted] about possibly releasing the suspect because of the pandemic situation.*

When asked by Sergeant [redacted] what the current practice or procedure was for handling illegal narcotics, Officer [redacted] stated after she finished booking a suspect, she would complete her paperwork and turn the narcotics in at the property room.

Officer [redacted] states Officer Meyers told her he was taking the suspect to Bossier City. She states Officer Meyers also let her know that he would take care of the illegal narcotics as well.

***Sergean**[redacted] gave a recorded stated to Sergeant [redacted] and stated Officer Meyers told him that the jail would not take the suspect and he wanted to know if it was okay to drop him off at a relative's house in Bossier. Sergeant [redacted] states he never told Officer Meyers that it was okay for him to dispose of the drugs.*

Officer Meyers took a suspect from our jurisdiction to Bossier City and dropped him off at a random location. He also states he disposed of illegal narcotics in a trash bin at an unknown location in Bossier City. When asked why he would take a suspect to Bossier and also dispose of illegal drugs in another city, Officer Meyers stated he just wanted to get the suspect away from the location to protect the potential victim that called the police.

Officer Meyers' actions put the City of Shreveport and the Shreveport Police Department in a position of liability and his attorney, Mr. [redacted] stated he had also discussed with Officer Meyers all the bad that could have come as a result of his actions. Officer Meyers also failed to make a police report to document the incident or any actions he took.

It should be noted that upon reviewing the GPS data from communications, it could not be determined what location Officer Meyers dropped the suspect off at in Bossier. It just appears that he went across the I-20 bridge into Bossier City.

1/2/87

Sergeant Michael D. Tyler
Internal Affairs Bureau