

*Venice of America*CITY OF
FORT LAUDERDALE

May 28, 2008

George Gretsas, City Manager
City of Fort Lauderdale
100 N. Andrews Avenue
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

Dear Mr. Gretsas:

For the past thirty five years, I have had the privilege to serve the Fort Lauderdale community. Since 2001, I have had the honor to direct the Police Department as its Chief. Needless to say, many positive changes have occurred over that span of time.

This Department has accomplished so much since we had the dubious distinction of being "number one" in crime during the 1990's. However, I am most proud of two achievements: the lowest crime rates on record and the diversity of the Department's staff. The City's lowest crime rate was in 2003, while the second lowest crime rate occurred in 2007. Overall, the crime rate remains approximately 60% lower than the crime plagued 1990's.

The diversity of the Department's staff has served as a catalyst to provide better services to the community. During my tenure, we have hired two hundred eighty (280) police officers while simultaneously reaching our consent decree hiring goals for women, Blacks and Hispanics. In fact, the Police Department received dissolution of the consent decree by the U. S Department of Justice Civil Rights Division. Additionally, I have had the pleasure to promote fifty-two (52) sergeants, eleven (11) lieutenants, twenty-four (24) captains, thirteen (13) majors and seven (7) assistant chiefs; these promotions include the first women to become majors and assistant chiefs, as well as the first blacks to become majors and assistant chief. Four of these command staff promotions have been selected as chiefs for other police departments and one has received a cabinet post for the current Florida governor.

These and other successes have been attained during difficult economic times and without additional staffing. In FY 1998/1999 our operating budget was 36% of the General Fund budget. Our current adopted operating budget (\$86,796,822) is just 27% of the General Fund (\$320,108,689) and 16% of the City's total budget (\$536,215,354). The strain on police services is further exacerbated by an increasing population, a thriving and expanding tourist industry, and a vibrant downtown which swells with 80,000 people during the work week. The financial impacts of recent state legislative initiatives have yet to have their full impact. Truly, more has been done with less.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

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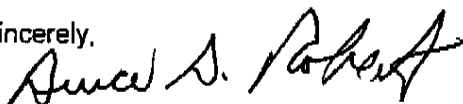
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I do not believe we can sustain this momentum. Having just endured painstakingly long police contract negotiations, there is now a demand for retribution and punishment of the union leadership. Furthermore, unless command staff recants emotional statements made by the union president during negotiations, future command promotions will be prohibited from within the Department. Not only will this chill morale further, it will negatively impact retention and future hires. A request for valuable safety equipment is intentionally being delayed. Micromanagement and intimidation are the order of the day. Instead of exerting leadership and moving on, a suffocating atmosphere demanding a personal allegiance preoccupies decisions which will have harmful consequences for public safety, and police officers' careers will be destroyed.

I take no pleasure in having to publicly disclose my fears. However, professionally and ethically, I cannot stand idly by while the safety of a community is at stake, and I will not participate in the dismantling of the community's police department. In effect, I have been constructively terminated. Therefore, this letter is to inform you that I am resigning my current position as Chief of Police for the City of Fort Lauderdale effective ninety days from this date.

Sincerely,



Bruce G. Roberts
Chief of Police

c: James Naugle, Mayor
Charlotte E. Rodstrom, Vice-Mayor
Cindi Hutchinson, Commissioner
Christine Teel, Commissioner
Carlton B. Moore, Commissioner
Harry A. Stewart, City Attorney