

Sheriff's Command Staff Insult and Ridicule Citizens and Supervisors

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How would you feel if the command staff of your local law enforcement agency called you an "[idiot](#)" and "[creepy](#)"?

What would you think if you took time off from work to attend a local government meeting to voice your concerns, and the second-in-command of you local law enforcement described it as "[locked in mortal combat](#)".

I for my part am deeply disgusted!

The links above show the full text of e-mail exchanges between mostly high-ranking command staff of the Orange County Sheriff's Department.

These mails were sent during the board meeting of November 18, that saw over 200 CCW supporters, over 60 of which voiced their concerns about the pending revocation of over 400 legitimately issued permits.

[Ordinary California Citizens Concerned With Safety](#) (OCCCWS) obtained these records through a public records act. These mails were sent with department-issued Blackberries. According to the OCCCWS, the 400+ pages that they received still appear to have several gaps in them.

During the meeting of November 18, a lot [disparaging remarks](#) were exchanged between high-ranking OCSD officers. Target of these remarks were CCW supporters as well as Supervisor Nguyen. The **Assistant Sheriff** [e-mailed](#) to **Undersheriff** John Scott "hope Janet has a pet she can call a friend". None of the involved officials ever replied that the tone was inappropriate.

I can only speak for myself, but I consider these messages insulting and arrogant. Since no one made any attempts to call the involved to order, I see them as an indication for the true attitude that these appointed officials have towards their constituents.

It fits into the line of previous incidents that include attempts of intimidation through and abuse of security cameras. On January 13 an excessive number of deputies was present and singled out OCCCWS button-wearing civilians to search them for weapons. During the same meeting an OCSD investigator zoomed the security cameras onto the notes of two County Supervisors. Subsequently, Sheriff Hutchens refused to hand the original data over to the Board of Supervisors. The list seems to get longer with every week that passes.

As far as the most recent e-mail exchange is concerned, Sheriff Hutchens issued the [following apology](#) to one of the victims:

Mr. XXXXXXXX:

As I stated in the paper, I deeply regret the unkind comments made by members of my staff on text messages. I have admonished all involved that this behavior was inappropriate and unprofessional. This behavior was not condoned by me. I have the utmost respect for you and the work that you have done. I only hope that you will continue to support the Orange County Sheriff's Department.

I think that you can agree that no one expected these comments to be made public and they did not intend to embarrass anyone. The text messages were released pursuant to a CPRA request from OCCWS. Again, you have my personal apology.

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I'm still looking for the logic in the highlighted sentence.

Since I was at the meeting in question, I contacted Sheriff Hutchens and asked which disciplinary measures had been taken particularly against the person who referred to the speakers as "idiots".

Her response:

Mr. Gebhard,

I assure you that the appropriate disciplinary measures have been taken. As I have stated publicly, I was very upset at the tone and tenor of the comments made by members of my staff and have addressed the issue. I apologize for their statements and take full responsibility. I respect your position and welcome your comments on this issue.

Respectfully,
SANDRA HUTCHENS, SHERIFF-CORONER

On the same day I talked with a long-time LEO. He is just as disgusted as I am and he assured me that his department has a zero-tolerance policy for officers and employees who make disparaging remarks. He emphasized that at least two people had been fired because of remarks similar in content to the e-mails in this article.

Strangely, there have been no press releases indicating similar consequences from the OCSD.

Where am I going with this? We have a Sheriff that was appointed by .001% of the county's population. She now acts out her own personal political agenda

without any apparent regard for reason or for the true needs of the people that she took an oath to protect.

Pressing issues remain unsolved while precious time, manpower and funds are wasted with efforts that would benefit only criminals.

Over 30,000 of you have followed the last newsletter and quite a few helped us by writing to the supervisors as well as to the [Governor](#).

Please keep those complaints going! A few minutes of your time can go a long way to help several hundred CCW holders whose permits are marked for revocation. Select “need help” and subject “other” so that all mails end up in the same spot.

The next Board of Supervisors meeting will be on Tuesday, February 10. It looks as if a lot of CCW supporters will attend. Given the questionable tactics of the OCSD during the meeting in January, I have very mixed feelings.

Just to make myself perfectly clear: I’m in no way concerned about the CCW holders – all of them have presented their concerns in a professional and disciplined manner.

I will provide an update next week. If you are interested to follow the concerns and arguments live, the Board of Supervisors Meeting is available as [live web broadcast](#). The CCW issue is currently item 22 on the Agenda.