



OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

HALL OF JUSTICE

ALEX VILLANUEVA, SHERIFF



July 14, 2021

Brian K. Williams, Executive Director
County of Los Angeles
Sheriff's Civilian Oversight Commission
350 South Figueroa Street, Suite 288
Los Angeles, California 90071

Dear Mr. Williams:

**CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT COMMISSION MEETING
AGENDA ITEM ON JULY 15, 2021**

The purpose of this correspondence is to address Civilian Oversight Commission (COC) member, Sean Kevin Kennedy's memorandum dated May 27, 2021, set to be discussed on July 15, 2021, under Agenda Item 2d.

It is of great concern that the COC, acting in a subordinate role to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and various news groups, apparently collaborated to spread false accusations against Sheriff Alex Villanueva and the entire Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

The substance and text of the message put out by the COC lends credibility to, at a minimum, the appearance that the OIG is utilizing the COC as a vehicle to obtain information on current and active criminal investigations that are being conducted.

As you are well aware this is not only a violation of the law, but a gross overreach of the authority granted to the OIG by the Board of Supervisors' ordinance.

The wild accusations made in the memorandum are completely irresponsible. It seems that Mr. Kennedy is unaware of California Government Code 25303, which specifically prevents a board of supervisors from "*obstructing the investigative function of the sheriff.*" Clearly the legislative intent of this

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section was to encompass any ancillary commissions, boards, or other functionaries of a board of supervisors.

Without responding to Mr. Kennedy's memorandum point by point, it is particularly troublesome that Mr. Kennedy cites, (not counting footnotes) numerous publications ~~22~~ times, with no basis in fact other than what he is regurgitating was published on the internet, in the *Los Angeles Times*, *Witness LA*, *La Opinión*, *ABC 7 Investigations*, *Facebook*, *LA Magazine*, *Pasadena Star News*, *LAist*, or elsewhere, so it must be true.

Late in his memorandum, Mr. Kennedy goes on to accuse Sheriff Villanueva of extortion, a felony under California Penal Code 518. It is nothing short of outrageous slander and disingenuous of him to do so.

As a member of the California State Bar, Mr. Kennedy has to be aware that he is skirting numerous rules of conduct prohibited by the bar.

If he sincerely believes that Sheriff Villanueva committed extortion, or any other crime, he has a right and a duty to report it to the proper investigative authority, not publish it as a poorly developed, absurd, accusatory manner, in a document and in a venue that is totally inappropriate for that type of hyperbole.

Lastly, a complaint was received from a Department employee regarding Mr. Kennedy's memorandum, wherein Mr. Kennedy makes a totally fabricated allegation regarding the employee's character, with no basis in fact.

This employee is seeking counsel and considering a civil suit against both Mr. Kennedy and the COC.

Sheriff Villanueva is a firm believer in the words of Justice Brandeis that "*sunshine is the best disinfectant*". Sheriff Villanueva was elected on a platform of transparency, and he strives daily to fulfill that duty as best he can with competing forces, various laws, and other outside influences that make it a difficult task.

Sheriff Villanueva pledged to those that elected him that he will continue to strive to accomplish that mandate without reservation. The language and demeanor demonstrated by Mr. Kennedy demeans all of that and is an unnecessary distraction for all concerned parties.

Mr. Williams

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July 14, 2021

Should you have any questions, please contact Chief of Staff, Commander Jorge A. Valdez, at (213) 229-3001.

Sincerely,

ALEX VILLANUEVA, SHERIFF



TIMOTHY K. MURAKAMI
UNDERSHERIFF