

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI
EASTERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)
)
 Plaintiff,)
)
 v.) No. 4:16-CV-180-CDP
)
 CITY OF FERGUSON, MISSOURI,)
)
 Defendant.)

STATUS HEARING
BEFORE THE HONORABLE CATHERINE D. PERRY
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

APRIL 23, 2024

APPEARANCES:

Monitor: Natasha Tidwell, Esq.
MINTZ LEVIN COHN FERRIS GLOVSKY POPEO PC

For Plaintiff: Jorge M. Castillo, Esq.
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

For Defendant: Aarnarian (Apollo) D. Carey, Esq.
Thomas R. Selig, Esq.
LEWIS RICE LLC

Also Present: Christopher Crabel

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APRIL 23, 2024

(The proceedings commenced at 10:02 a.m.)

THE COURT: All right. Good morning. We are here in the case of United States of America versus the City of Ferguson, Case No. 4:16-CV-180. And we are here for a quarterly status hearing. This is a hearing where we do not have comments by the public, but we'll hear presentations by the attorneys.

And I have received and reviewed some letters that were sent to the Monitor, and I wanted to thank the people who sent those. Just so you know, we did get them and review them. I think there were three letters.

Also, you may notice that Ms. Tidwell is here on video. She's had a medical issue that prevented her from traveling and so that's why she's here, but we will hear from her when the time comes.

So let me begin by asking counsel to please identify yourselves for the record. For the Department of Justice.

MR. CASTILLO: Good morning, Your Honor. Jorge Castillo on behalf of the United States.

THE COURT: Thank you. And counsel for the City of Ferguson.

MR. CAREY: Good morning, Your Honor. Apollo Carey with the City of Ferguson.

MR. SELIG: Good morning, Your Honor. Thomas Selig

1 for the City of Ferguson.

2 **THE COURT:** Okay. All right. And Ms. Tidwell is
3 there on the monitor.

4 Ms. Tidwell, can you say your name just so I'll know
5 I'm going to hear you.

6 **MS. TIDWELL:** Thank you, Judge. Natasha Tidwell on
7 behalf of the Monitoring Team.

8 **THE COURT:** All right. Thank you.

9 All right. Mr. Carey, before we begin, I would ask
10 you to introduce any people you wish to introduce here. I
11 know there have been -- there may be some new people since the
12 last time we were here. If not, anyway, if you would
13 introduce whoever is -- that you wish to who is here.

14 **MR. CAREY:** Sure. Actually, I'll ask Mr. Selig to
15 do that, if that's okay, Judge.

16 **THE COURT:** That's fine. Yes.

17 **MR. CAREY:** Okay.

18 **MR. SELIG:** Thank you, Judge.

19 We have a full house from the City of Ferguson
20 today. So we have Mayor Ella Jones is here along with
21 Ferguson Police Chief Troy Doyle is here. City Manager John
22 Hampton. We also have our Ferguson Police Department Training
23 Coordinator Lisa Stephens is here. We have a new City Council
24 member, Nick Kasoff, here this morning. Shahidah Sirraaj, who
25 is the assistant to the Ferguson Police Department Chief of

1 Police. We have Councilwoman Heather Robinett who is joining
2 us. I think she is joining via Zoom today.

3 **MR. CAREY:** Yeah, she's listening.

4 **THE COURT:** Okay.

5 **MR. SELIG:** And Councilwoman Naquittia Noah is here
6 as well. We have Captain Harry Dilworth from the Ferguson
7 Police Department and Patricia Washington who is the Public
8 Information Officer for the FPD. And, finally, Michelle
9 Richmond, who is the Ferguson Municipal Courts Administrator.
10 And I believe that's everyone, but let me know if
11 I've missed anyone.

12 **THE COURT:** Mr. Crabel is sitting at your table.

13 **MR. SELIG:** Oh, yeah. And, of course, yeah, last
14 but not least, Mr. Crabel.

15 **THE COURT:** All right. Yeah. And I'm glad you
16 mentioned the remote participation. We don't actually -- what
17 we have is this is being broadcast on the Court's YouTube
18 channel. And so people can listen in, any member of the
19 public can. We don't have any two-way communication except
20 for Ms. Tidwell.

21 And I do want to remind everybody who is listening,
22 the same rules apply to when we have this on the YouTube
23 channel as if you were here in court. There's no recording or
24 broadcasting allowed of any court proceeding. And that's a
25 national rule for the federal courts. It's not necessarily my

1 rule.

2 So with that said, Mr. Selig, are you going to make
3 the presentation here today? Or who is going to speak on
4 behalf of the City first?

5 **MR. SELIG:** Mr. Crabel is going to be speaking on
6 behalf of the City, Your Honor.

7 **THE COURT:** Okay. So, Mr. Crabel, I'll ask you --
8 and it would be good if you -- why don't you stand up at the
9 lectern so we can hear you on the, you know, so we can hear
10 you on the mike.

11 **CHRIS CRABEL:** Okay. Good morning, Your Honor. As
12 I was introduced, my name is Chris Crabel. And I stand before
13 you as the Consent Decree Coordinator for the City of
14 Ferguson. I would like to provide you with a comprehensive
15 update on the progress and initiatives within our organization
16 covering staffing, policy development, plan development,
17 audits, projects and other important matters.

18 Let's start with the staffing updates. Over the
19 recent months our organization has been focused on enhancing
20 our teams with talented individuals who bring diverse skills
21 and experiences to support our progress, particularly in the
22 context with the Consent Decree.

23 I'm delighted to announce several key hires and
24 promotions within our ranks. Firstly, we welcome Patricia
25 Washington as our new Public Information Officer, bringing

1 with her a wealth of experience in communication and public
2 relations. Additionally, Lisa Stephens has joined us as our
3 training coordinator, bringing invaluable experience in law
4 enforcement training and development.

5 Furthermore, Scott Amos has taken the role of the
6 Captain of Administration, bringing in his strong leadership
7 and organizational skills to this position. Dave Musgrave has
8 been promoted to the Assistant City Manager position,
9 leveraging his extensive background in municipal
10 administration to support our City's strategic initiatives.

11 Additionally, Kelly King has joined us as our new
12 Human Resources Director, bringing her experience in human
13 resource management and organizational development. Each of
14 these individuals bring a vast skill set that will greatly
15 benefit our City and contribute to the progress of the Consent
16 Decree.

17 Moreover, our recruitment efforts are ongoing. We
18 have one officer being sworn in this Friday. Another
19 candidate has successfully passed the background check, moving
20 closer to joining our police department. Additionally, we
21 have one candidate who is currently in the process of
22 completing their final steps to enter the police academy.

23 While we celebrate the filling of the City's
24 department head positions, we are also continuing our
25 recruiting efforts. We need to fill roles such as the police

1 officers, deputy chief of police, and the police dispatcher
2 positions. These positions are critical to maintaining the
3 operational effectiveness of our police department, ensuring
4 the safety and security of our community.

5 In addition to staffing updates, I'm pleased to
6 announce the result of our recent municipal election. We
7 welcome two new council members to our team: David Williams,
8 who is a new councilman for Ward 1; we have Nick Kasoff, who
9 is a new councilman for Ward 2. And, furthermore, Councilman
10 Naquittia Noah has been reelected to serve as a representative
11 for Ward 3. We look forward to working collaboratively with
12 them and continuing servicing our community effectively.

13 **THE COURT:** And congratulations to all of you who
14 won your elections. Go ahead.

15 **CHRIS CRABEL:** Together we are building a stronger,
16 more resilient organization that is well equipped to meet the
17 challenge and opportunities ahead, particularly in our efforts
18 to fulfill the requirements of the Consent Decree.

19 Moving on to the policy development updates. The
20 City of Ferguson is collaborating with the Department of
21 Justice, and we have been diligently going back and forth to
22 finalize the First Amendment protest policy. Over the last
23 month we have made significant progress, and we are almost to
24 the point to agreement on key items within that policy; so we
25 should be sending that off to the Monitor here shortly.

1 This policy has been a long-standing sticking point
2 between the Department of Justice and the City of Ferguson,
3 and we're delighted that we've been able to make some
4 substantial progress in moving this towards resolution.

5 Additionally, I'm pleased to announce that the City
6 has finalized two important policies: the limited English
7 proficiency for courts policy and the court's citation review
8 policy. Both policies have been signed and now are available
9 on the City's website. These policies represent significant
10 achievements and the commitment to ensuring accessibility and
11 fairness within our judicial system. We are proud to have
12 these policies placed and accessible for the community members
13 to see.

14 Next I want to discuss the plan development updates.
15 The City of Ferguson has been actively engaging in developing
16 various plans to enhance our organizational effectiveness and
17 address critical areas of concern. First thing, I want to
18 give a special shout-out to Lisa Stephens, who recently joined
19 our team and has hit the ground running on the training plan
20 and all of its subsections. Under her leadership we have made
21 significant strides in this area.

22 We've submitted a working draft of the training plan
23 to the Department of Justice and we are pleased to report they
24 have provided feedback. Our team is currently working on
25 incorporating these updates and we remain on track to send the

1 revised plan back to the Department of Justice by its target
2 date.

3 The training plan includes critical components, such
4 as the electric control weapons or TASER training, firearm
5 trainings and body-worn camera trainings. We are committed to
6 ensuring that these trainings are comprehensive and effective
7 and we are working diligently to meet target dates for their
8 submission.

9 Additionally, we have been working diligently on
10 finalizing the police training officer or the PTO plan. We
11 are on track to submit that to the Department of Justice by
12 its target date. This plan is essential for ensuring our
13 officers receive comprehensive and effective trainings to
14 uphold the standards set forth in the Consent Decree.

15 Furthermore, the City of Ferguson has identified
16 officers who need to undergo the small group dialogues
17 program. This program is vital for promoting understanding,
18 empathy and effective communication among the officers and
19 community leaders.

20 Lisa Stephens, Pat Washington and myself are
21 actively working on developing a campaign to participate or
22 for participants to get involved and we are working on
23 scheduling the dialogues. Through these efforts we aim to
24 foster constructive dialogue and build trust between law
25 enforcement and the community we serve.

1 In addition to these trainings, we have identified
2 experts to assist with the development of the crisis
3 intervention training, or CIT training, and the use of force
4 training. These initiatives are essential to promoting
5 safety, professionalism within our law enforcement department.
6 So we do have experts identified with those and we are looking
7 at moving forward with them helping us create the trainings.

8 Furthermore, we are in the process of developing a
9 rubric to assess the effectiveness of our trainings. These
10 tools will help us evaluate the impact of our training
11 programs and make necessary adjustments to enhance their
12 efficiency.

13 In parallel, the City has submitted a crime
14 prevention plan to the Department of Justice and we've
15 recently received their feedback. We are now reviewing this
16 feedback internally and we will soon meet to evaluate the
17 target date for resubmission to the Department of Justice.

18 Additionally, we are working on finalizing other
19 plans including the staffing plan and the community
20 engagement/crime prevention plan for submission of the
21 Department of Justice and the Monitor in the near future.

22 In conclusion, our commitment to plan development
23 underscores our dedication to the continuous improvement and
24 adherence to best practices. We are grateful for the
25 collaboration and support of team members and the partners as

1 we work towards achieving the goals of this organization.

2 Now let's discuss the projects and audits that we
3 have underway within this organization that play a crucial
4 role towards accountability, transparency and effectiveness
5 within our operations.

6 In terms of audits, the City of Ferguson is actively
7 working with the Monitoring Team on two key audits: the use of
8 force round two audit and the accountability/civilian review
9 board audit. We have provided the initial requested
10 documentation to the Monitor, and we've been collaborating
11 with the Monitor to address additional items that may arise or
12 other questions that may come up. These audits are essential
13 for evaluating the practices and policies and ensure they
14 align with the best practices and meet the expectations of the
15 community.

16 In addition to the audits, we have several projects
17 in progress. One significant project is a Microsoft 365
18 conversion. We've discussed it previously in other status
19 hearings. It's been a long awaited initiative, and I'm
20 pleased to announce that we've -- the conversion is taking
21 place now.

22 We are in a test environment with 365; so assuming
23 everything runs smoothly, we should be able to transition to a
24 live environment and begin work on updating the City's website
25 and creating a Consent Decree progress dashboard. This

1 dashboard will provide real-time updates on progress and
2 fulfilling the Consent Decree requirements, addressing
3 transparency, accountability and concerns that the citizens
4 may have.

5 The City is also working internally on developing a
6 comprehensive long-term plan that will complete the Consent
7 Decree -- that will complement the Consent Decree progress
8 dashboard. This plan will outline our strategic objectives,
9 timelines and key performance indicators that guide our
10 efforts to fulfilling the requirements of the Consent Decree
11 and achieving our organizational goals. We recognize the
12 importance of long-term planning and sustaining our progress
13 to ensure accountability and transparency within our
14 operations.

15 Furthermore, our Public Information Officer, Pat
16 Washington, has taken the initiatives to develop a plan to
17 address transparency and concerns on the City's website.
18 Leveraging her connections with the community and her
19 professional experience, she is working diligently to
20 incorporate items that address the needs of our citizens.
21 Through efforts, we aim to enhance communication and
22 accessibility, ensuring residence have easy access to
23 important information and resources.

24 Additionally, I'm proud to announce the City of
25 Ferguson has created its first yearly report or the annual

1 report. This report is required by the Consent Decree and
2 represents a significant milestone for our city. By providing
3 this report and making it available on our website, we aim to
4 address concerns of the citizens as we demonstrate our
5 commitment to transparency and accountability.

6 In conclusion, our commitment to this project's
7 audits and creation of the yearly report reflects our
8 transparency, accountability and continuous improvement. By
9 proactively assessing concerns, implementing best practices,
10 we are building a stronger, more resilient organization
11 equipped to serve the needs of our community.

12 Moving on to other matters. The City of Ferguson is
13 currently developing its annual budget. During this budget
14 session, we have been particularly attentive to the outlined
15 initiatives in the Consent Decree and we are actively working
16 on allocating necessary resources to these requirements. City
17 staff will soon present the budget to Council, providing them
18 with an overview of the resources we're requesting. Our
19 budget cycle operates on a fiscal year basis from July 1
20 through June 30th.

21 And then Chief Doyle is asking me to share a few key
22 points during this presentation. Firstly, despite the
23 challenges faced by our department, I'm pleased to report that
24 less than one percent of our 30,000 calls for service received
25 last year resulted in a use of force incident. This statistic

1 reflects our commitment to de-escalation and
2 community-oriented policing.

3 Additionally, our department has undergone
4 significant cultural transformation. We have introduced new
5 badges, updated uniforms, revamped branding on vehicles. And
6 these changes signify a new chapter of our department, one
7 characterized by the increased professionalism and community
8 engagement. As a result we are seeing greater buy-in from our
9 officers who no longer view the Consent Decree as punitive but
10 rather as a supportive framework for improvement. We are
11 confident as we proceed through this Consent Decree that we
12 will emerge with one of the best trained departments in the
13 region.

14 Furthermore, our department is now more diverse than
15 ever, with a significant number of female officers. And this
16 diversity only reflects -- not only reflects our commitment to
17 inclusivity but enhances our ability to serve and connect with
18 our diverse communities we serve.

19 In conclusion, the progress and development of the
20 Ferguson Police Department underscores our unwavering
21 commitment to excellence, community engagement and continuous
22 improvement. We continue to navigate the challenges and
23 opportunities ahead. We remain dedicated to building a safer,
24 more inclusive, more resilient Ferguson for all.

25 Thank you for your time, Your Honor. Do you have

1 any questions for me?

2 **THE COURT:** I don't. I think -- yeah, I do not
3 think we do. Oh, I guess the one thing I had. One of the
4 letters that came in said that the person had trouble finding
5 the annual report on your website, so I think anything you can
6 do to flag that. It's also on the Court's website.

7 But which if anybody -- how you get to the Court's
8 website is moed.uscourts.gov but it's -- I think that's it.
9 Anyway . . . But when you go onto the home page, there's a
10 "quick links" button. And if you go to that, one of the
11 things that's listed on the quick links is something that's
12 called multidistrict litigation and other significant cases or
13 cases of interest. That's the button you click on. And then
14 you can find, like the third one down is this case.

15 And it has, you know, the transcripts of these
16 hearings, the orders setting the hearings, some other
17 significant orders. But none of those are very recent. But
18 it also has things like the status reports of both -- the
19 Monitor status report as well as the, you know, when those go
20 up as well as the City's status report did go up.

21 So I encourage anyone who wishes to, to look at
22 that. And if they, you know, people who don't come to these
23 hearings, the transcripts are put up within a few days of the
24 hearing. So that's something else people could look at if
25 they wanted to.

1 So I think I don't have any other questions for you
2 now, but we will hear from Mr. Castillo. And there may be
3 some from Ms. Tidwell and then probably we'll have perhaps
4 someone will need to respond to those.

5 I will say, Chief Doyle, I listened to your
6 St. Louis on the Air report and it was good. I appreciated
7 that. I very much appreciated the outreach and the comments
8 made and also some of the things that Mr. Crabel just
9 summarized with. So thank you for that.

10 **CHRIS CRABEL:** Thank you, Your Honor.

11 **THE COURT:** All right. Mr. Castillo.

12 **MR. CASTILLO:** Good morning, Your Honor.

13 **THE COURT:** Good morning.

14 **MR. CASTILLO:** I want to start off by thanking the
15 Ferguson community for their continued engagement in this
16 process, with a special appreciation to the three, I guess,
17 groups of folks who submitted letters for the Court for this
18 status conference. Hopefully my comments today touch on
19 several of the topics that they raised in their letters.

20 I will mention that most of the things I was going
21 to talk about Mr. Crabel already mentioned, but I still
22 will -- I will still go over them because I want to
23 contextualize some of the things he said, in the hopes that
24 some of the positive developments that have happened since the
25 last status conference are really highlighted.

1 At the last status conference, DOJ focused its
2 remarks on establishing the collective focus on drafting what
3 we called "foundational plans" which are required by the
4 Consent Decree. In many respects, these plans serve to chart
5 a path to compliance with the Consent Decree, and these plans
6 should have concrete deliverables and appropriately delegated
7 responsibilities which will both ensure progress continues and
8 that that progress won't be stopped if we run into what will
9 be the inevitable change in personnel. It happens everywhere.

10 And there has been significant progress along these
11 lines, especially with a couple of plans that Mr. Crabel
12 highlighted. The first and the biggest is on training. For
13 years the Monitor and the United States have told this Court
14 that implementing an in-service training program should be one
15 of the Department's highest priorities. The officers of the
16 Ferguson Police Department need annual skills training to put
17 into practice the Consent Decree required policies that the
18 Department has adopted.

19 The Consent Decree requires that there be a training
20 coordinator and a plan for this delivery. With Ms. Stephens'
21 hiring at the end of February, we have good news to report.
22 She has worked hard to begin implementing an in-service
23 training program. And there is a draft training plan that
24 articulates an overall strategy on how the Department will
25 implement that training.

1 And simultaneously she is moving forward with
2 multiple projects for individual trainings. In particular, we
3 want to recognize that the City has been setting target dates
4 and have -- these targets have helped in the development and
5 progress of moving forward with getting these projects going
6 forward and to completion.

7 We believe the progress since the last status update
8 is remarkable. And echoing what the Muellers and Ms. Butler's
9 letter to the Court say, we think that Ms. Stephens has been
10 instrumental to that progress. We stand ready to continue
11 working with the Department as they take the next steps, which
12 include hiring trainers, submitting proposed training
13 materials and getting them approved and actually scheduling
14 those trainings.

15 The other plan that Mr. Crabel highlighted was the
16 crime prevention plan. There has been a collaborative
17 exchange with the City to get that moving forward. We are in
18 a much better place with that plan, and we sent some
19 additional comments and feedback just yesterday to them. We
20 have no doubt that they will receive those plans and continue
21 to work collaboratively. And it seems like we are close to
22 completing that plan.

23 So DOJ will be working with the Department and the
24 City on these plans as well as the other ones that are
25 required by the Consent Decree to make sure that we can have

1 those established and be able to rely on those going forward.

2 In addition to these plans that are useful and
3 necessary for getting into implementation, Mr. Crabel also
4 commented on different efforts underway that will be taking
5 stock of where Ferguson already is in terms of compliance with
6 the Consent Decree. That includes the two audits that the
7 Monitor is undertaking, the force and accountability that
8 Mr. Crabel highlighted.

9 And I want to just point out that, as Mr. Noll's
10 letter to the Court highlighted, the way that the police
11 department engages with the Civilian Review Board in response
12 to critical incidents and accountability issues, as well as
13 the Department following through on discipline of sustained
14 misconduct, are important aspects of these processes that are
15 required by the Consent Decree.

16 The United States and the City have also expressed a
17 mutual desire to try to implement a self-assessment for
18 compliance with the Consent Decree provisions that pertain to
19 the municipal court, which is the self-assessments are
20 required as the last paragraph of all of the substantive areas
21 of the Consent Decree; and so we have begun the process of
22 trying to move in that direction.

23 And the last thing I want to touch on is efforts to
24 keep the community informed and engaged in this process. And
25 we recognize the community has made repeated calls for

1 transparency and access to information about the Consent
2 Decree. The letters submitted by the community for this
3 hearing indicate that they have seen increased connections
4 with Chief Hampton, with Chief Doyle and others involved with
5 the Consent Decree. We acknowledge that the City produced
6 their annual report. They filed it with the Court this past
7 March.

8 It is important to understand that the City's
9 technical work to deal with its transition to Microsoft 365 is
10 intended, as Mr. Crabel pointed out, to be how they are going
11 to be able to make their website a more accessible and more
12 real-time opportunity for the City and community members to
13 have a source of a sense of where the Consent Decree is.

14 Also, the Monitor's website has been up since before
15 the last Consent Decree and that is in addition, you know, you
16 mentioned the Court's website. The Monitor also has a website
17 where all of their past reports and some history of the case
18 can also be found.

19 And the community has also expressed interest in
20 better understanding how consent decrees work in general,
21 among other things, and have engaged with the Department of
22 Justice, as well as with the City's PIO, Ms. Washington, to
23 get that done. And so that's hopefully something that we can
24 bring to the City of Ferguson pretty soon.

25 So I want to acknowledge that and also the work

1 that's been done to try to bring that forward and encourage
2 the community that, you know, their engagement is essential to
3 know whether or not this Consent Decree is being successful
4 and to hold those responsible for implementing it accountable;
5 and there's efforts to try to keep them in the know, and we
6 encourage them to keep raising their voices. It's an
7 important part of this process.

8 That's all I have for you, Your Honor, unless you
9 have any questions.

10 **THE COURT:** I do not think so. I think you've
11 covered what's going on. I know -- I know -- and just so the
12 public here knows that, you know, I do talk to the lawyers on
13 a very regular basis, the parties, and talk to them about
14 what's going on. And I think this issue of having target
15 dates, and the real commitment that's been made recently to
16 getting these plans going, has really made a difference. And
17 I'm optimistic about that. So thank you.

18 So, Ms. Tidwell, we will hear anything you wish to
19 report.

20 **MS. TIDWELL:** Thank you, Judge.

21 Good morning, everyone. Thank you, Judge Perry, for
22 permitting me to appear remotely. And thank you to the
23 parties for their flexibility. I also want to echo the
24 appreciation for the written comments from the CRB, from
25 Ms. Butler and from the Muellers.

1 I don't have much to add to what has already been
2 presented. I will add my voice to the chorus of appreciation
3 for the work that Ms. Stephens has been undertaking in her new
4 position as the training coordinator, but I also want to
5 recognize Mr. Crabel for his efforts to keep the trains
6 running on time.

7 You know, for many years when the Monitoring Team
8 and the Department of Justice have talked about the need for a
9 dedicated training coordinator and a Consent Decree
10 Coordinator, they were -- you know, we've had Consent Decree
11 Coordinators, and Mr. Crabel has been in the role for some
12 time, but he can only be as successful as the people working
13 internally to get things done.

14 And so, you know, for some time we've relied on the
15 Consent Decree Coordinator to not only work to, you know, to
16 meet deadlines and to communicate with the Monitor and with
17 the Department of Justice but to also get the work done at the
18 same time. And that wasn't how the role was envisioned.

19 The Consent Decree Coordinator role is one of a
20 project manager; one that isn't in the weeds on any one
21 particular subject but has familiarity with everything and
22 what everyone is doing and is able to coordinate efforts and
23 to communicate externally. And Mr. Crabel -- as evidenced by
24 all of the target dates that have been identified and the
25 various plans that are in the works and who is responsible for

1 what has indicated -- has proven and is showing, sort of, what
2 the role was intended to be. And I wish him every success.
3 And I, you know, am appreciative of his efforts to sort of
4 hang in there while the City got the right folks in place to
5 help him succeed in his role.

6 The parties did mention that we have a couple of
7 audits ongoing from the Monitoring Team. And as evidenced by
8 the City's response to the Monitoring Team's notices and its
9 document requests, Mr. Crabel, you know, once again, is one
10 point in getting responses to our records requests in by the
11 due date, and not after and not seeking extensions but getting
12 things done on time and also responding in a timely manner to
13 our requests for additional information in helping us to
14 coordinate our in-person document review.

15 We've got plot mortification or the most recent
16 critical incident in the city, and I think this all sort of
17 speaks to a level of commitment and coordination by the City
18 from the top down; so I'm really appreciative of the efforts
19 of everyone to get that done.

20 Specifically on the audits that are being undertaken
21 at this point, the use of force audit and the accountability
22 audit, the Monitoring Team sent notices of both to the
23 parties. As I said, our initial requests for documents were
24 responded to. We had some follow-up questions in both areas,
25 particularly related to the Monitoring Team's ability to

1 access documents within Benchmark and other software systems
2 that the City currently utilizes.

3 We will probably need some additional administrative
4 rights to access some of the use of force data we need. It
5 seems as with regards to the accountability audit, that many
6 of the files that we would seek to review are still in paper
7 form; so we will need some coordination and will have to
8 figure out how best to get those -- that information to the
9 Monitoring Team and will likely have to conduct some of that
10 audit in person, including review of the CRB's records that
11 are kept at City Hall.

12 And speaking of the CRB, as Mr. Castillo mentioned,
13 part of the accountability audit will include a review of the
14 CRB's work in conjunction with FPD. And so in identifying the
15 targeted sample of internal investigation and complaint
16 investigations that we'll review, we are going to take into
17 account the CRB submission to the Court. And if those
18 investigations that were specifically mentioned were not
19 included in our planned review of investigations, we will
20 certainly include those -- we will add those to our plan
21 review as well.

22 The CRB's letter also raised a concern about
23 body-worn cameras, and that's another area that is ripe for
24 review by the Monitoring Team. As referenced in our last
25 status report in the last hearing, the Monitoring Team has

1 identified an additional subject matter expert to lead and
2 conduct audits in this area. The Consent Decree requires the
3 parties to approve of any additional members; so I'm hoping to
4 have the name and credentials for that person to the parties
5 in the next week or so, so that we can start auditing in that
6 area.

7 The Monitoring Team is planning a virtual town hall
8 event next Tuesday. In the announcement for that we included
9 the City's annual report. We will now also post that to the
10 Monitoring Team's website, in addition to it being on the
11 Court's website and hopefully on the City's website as well.

12 As always, we invite Mr. Crabel, Ms. Stephens,
13 Ms. Washington or anyone else from FPD or from the City to
14 join us in the town hall if they'd like, where we will have
15 discussion of not only what occurred at today's hearing but
16 also the work in the audits, the ongoing audits that the
17 Monitoring Team is conducting.

18 So that is it for the Monitoring Team, Your Honor,
19 unless you have questions.

20 **THE COURT:** The only thing I have is would you mind
21 stating again, for anyone who might be listening, how someone
22 participates in the virtual town hall. What do they do and
23 where they go.

24 **MS. TIDWELL:** Yeah. So the Monitoring Team sent an
25 invitation with a Zoom link to the folks that are on our

1 Listserv. But I -- I don't know yet whether the City received
2 that notice as well, but we would certainly appreciate if the
3 City would post that information to its website as well. And
4 Mr. Crabel or whomever can coordinate with Ms. Caruso, the
5 Deputy Monitor, to make sure that that Zoom information is
6 circulated and available on the City's website as well.

7 **THE COURT:** That would be great if you would do
8 that. And that would be helpful for anyone else who wasn't on
9 the list that the Consent Decree Coordinator already has.

10 All right. Anything further, Ms. Tidwell?

11 **MS. TIDWELL:** Nothing from the Monitoring Team, Your
12 Honor. Thank you.

13 **THE COURT:** Mr. Carey, from your team.

14 **MR. CAREY:** Your Honor, I'll just say, I don't want
15 it to go understated, and it really hasn't, I think, you know,
16 Mr. Crabel, Mr. Castillo, as well as Ms. Tidwell, have sort of
17 highlighted the feel of having -- of how things are going now
18 and the flow of having the right people in the right place.

19 You know, we've been doing this for a while now,
20 almost eight years, and there have been ups and downs. Right
21 now, in terms of the personnel and people we have in place, is
22 probably the best that I've ever felt in terms of our ability
23 to make substantial progress in terms of our compliance
24 efforts.

25 You know, and I think that starts, you know, at the

1 top. I know we've had some new members to the team, but I
2 think that progress starts at the top. At the top of our city
3 is our City Council. Right? Like, our City Council has given
4 us -- our Mayor and our City Council have given us the
5 resources that we need to allocate, you know, to the various
6 different departments and the various different efforts that
7 we have under -- under compliance for the Consent Decree; so,
8 you know, having that buy-in at the top is really crucial.

9 And then I don't want it to go understated how
10 important John Hampton and Chief Doyle have been, just having
11 those two in place in the public safety realm and their
12 history, their commitment to making sure that the City is
13 moving forward with its compliance efforts. Their buy-in to
14 just the general idea of having the Consent Decree and moving
15 forward under that.

16 While, of course, you know, Ms. Stephens,
17 Ms. Washington, you know, Ms. Richmond, you know, we have a
18 lot of people who are working toward compliance. It's -- it
19 can't go without being stated that John Hampton and Troy Doyle
20 are sort of the really, really key cogs. And having those two
21 in place has just really put us in a position where we can
22 hire people. And we are taking, you know, we took the time to
23 hire the right people versus just hiring someone, a body to
24 fill a space.

25 So it's really a good feeling right now in terms of

1 Consent Decree compliance in the City of Ferguson, from my
2 perspective anyway; so I just wanted to underscore that.

3 **THE COURT:** Well, you know, Mr. Carey, I would agree
4 with you on that in terms of the last, you know, since the
5 last status conference that we had I -- I've been able to see
6 from talking to the lawyers and seeing what's been going on
7 that things have been moving well. And that I think, you
8 know, I think everybody who is here now really does understand
9 that we've got to get this thing done for the City.

10 And I thought -- I especially appreciated Chief
11 Doyle's commitment to training. And when he said on the radio
12 show that I listened to that, you know, and as Mr. Crabel
13 repeated here today, that there's a point where the City of
14 Ferguson, that he believes would have the best trained police
15 force in the region. And I think that's wonderful. That's
16 where we need to be.

17 We've worked on these policies. We have to get
18 everyone trained so that everyone understands exactly what
19 they need to do. And then continuing with the overarching
20 plans, which we discussed at the last hearing, and the real
21 progress that has been made. You know, it's a work in
22 progress, but it's -- it looks like it's -- you know, I am
23 encouraged by the recent activities. And I hope that will
24 continue.

25 I am, as Mr. Castillo said, I'm also encouraged by

1 the continued interest and participation that we have from the
2 public, both by all the people who came here today, those of
3 you who have written letters, those of you who are on the
4 citizen boards and take your time to do this work for your
5 community. This is an important public service that you are
6 doing. And for all of you, obviously the people who are
7 serving on the City Council, that is a big commitment and it's
8 wonderful that you all care enough about Ferguson to do that.

9 So I really want to thank everyone for this progress
10 and to say that I don't think any of us are going to let this
11 slow down, I am going to do my best to keep your feet to the
12 fire and to everybody else to keep moving in the way we have.
13 And so I am encouraged and I want to thank you all for how
14 much work you've done. And then let's keep going.

15 And we -- I will be talking to the lawyers soon in
16 the next couple of weeks and we will pick a date for the next
17 public hearing which will be one where people may give
18 statements. And, like I say, I appreciate those of you who
19 have written the letters and I'm happy to hear from everyone.
20 You know, as many times as you all want to stand up and talk,
21 it's very helpful. And I think -- so we'll do that in
22 approximately three months.

23 Anything further from Mr. Castillo? Mr. Carey?
24 Ms. Tidwell? All right. As we say, hearing nothing, I assume
25 that means we are ready to adjourn.

1 Thank you, citizens, for being here and caring about
2 this. And I thank the lawyers and the employees for doing all
3 the work you are doing.

4 So court is in recess.

5 (The proceedings concluded at 10:43 a.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

I, Reagan A. Fiorino, Registered Merit Reporter and Certified Realtime Reporter, hereby certify that I am a duly appointed Official Court Reporter of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri.

I further certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of the proceedings held in the above-entitled case and that said transcript is a true and correct transcription of my stenographic notes.

I further certify that this transcript contains pages 1 through 31 inclusive and was delivered electronically and that this reporter takes no responsibility for missing or damaged pages of this transcript when same transcript is copied by any party other than this reporter.

Dated at St. Louis, Missouri, this 30th day of April, 2024.

/s/ Reagan A. Fiorino
Reagan A. Fiorino, RDR, CRR, CRC, CCR
Official Court Reporter