

BEFORE THE POLICE BOARD OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO

IN THE MATTER OF CHARGES FILED AGAINST)	
POLICE OFFICER JOHN CATANZARA,)	No. 21 PB 2987
STAR No. 19897, DEPARTMENT OF POLICE,)	
CITY OF CHICAGO,)	
)	(CR Nos. 1086910
)	and 1090359)
RESPONDENT.)	

ORDER

On January 26, 2021, the Superintendent of Police filed with the Police Board of the City of Chicago charges against Police Officer John Catanzara, Star No. 19897 (hereinafter referred to as “Respondent”), recommending that the Respondent be discharged from the Chicago Police Department for violating several Rules of Conduct (a copy of the charges is attached as Exhibit A).

On November 16, 2021, the Superintendent moved to withdraw the charges against the Respondent without prejudice because the Respondent resigned from the Chicago Police Department. The Police Board has considered the Superintendent’s motion.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the Superintendent’s motion is **granted**, and the proceedings before the Police Board are terminated.

This Order is adopted and entered by a majority of the members of the Police Board: Ghian Foreman, Paula Wolff, Nanette Doorley, Michael Eaddy, and Jorge Montes. (Andrea L. Zopp recused herself from this case pursuant to §2-78-130(a)(iii) of the Municipal Code of Chicago.)

DATED AT CHICAGO, COUNTY OF COOK, STATE OF ILLINOIS, THIS 18th DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2021.

Police Board Case No. 21 PB 2987
Police Officer John Catanzara
Order

Attested by:

/s/ GHIAN FOREMAN
President

/s/ MAX A. CAPRONI
Executive Director

Exhibit A

Charges

Attached are the charges filed with the Police Board by the Superintendent of Police. The public is reminded that the filing of charges is not evidence of guilt. The accused officer is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair hearing at which the Superintendent has the burden of proving guilt by a preponderance of the evidence. In this case, the accused officer resigned from the Chicago Police Department prior to a full hearing on the charges.

CHARGES AGAINST POLICE OFFICER JOHN CATANZARA

Police Officer John Catanzara, Star Number 19897, is charged with violating the following rules contained in Article V of the Rules and Regulations of the Chicago Police Department, which were in full force and effect on the date of the alleged violations:

- Rule 2: Any action or conduct which impedes the Department's efforts to achieve its policy and goals or brings discredit upon the Department.
- Rule 3: Any failure to promote the Department's efforts to implement its policy or accomplish its goals.
- Rule 4: Any conduct or action taken to use the official position for personal gain or influence.
- Rule 6: Disobedience of an order or directive, whether written or oral.
- Rule 7: Insubordination or disrespect toward a supervisory member on or off duty.
- Rule 10: Inattention to duty.
- Rule 11: Incompetency or inefficiency in the performance of duty.
- Rule 14: Making a false report, written or oral.
- Rule 32: Engaging in any public statements, interviews, activity, deliberation or discussion pertaining to the Police Department which reasonably can be foreseen to impair the discipline, efficiency, public service, or public confidence in the Department or its personnel by: (a) false statement, or reckless, unsupported accusations or (b) the use of defamatory language, abusive language, invective or epithets.
- Rule 42: Participating in any partisan political campaign or activity.
- Rule 53: Participating in, encouraging the participation of others in, or otherwise supporting any strike, demonstration, slowdown, or other such concerted action against the Department.

SPECIFICATIONS

1. On or about November 22, 2016, Officer John Catanzara made a statement on Facebook that used offensive language and advocated killing people, by stating, "Wtf its (sic) seriously time to kill these motherfuckers," referring to a story about a Wayne State University police officer who had been shot with the suspect still at large. Officer Catanzara thereby violated:

- a. Rule 2, which prohibits any action or conduct which impedes the Department's efforts to achieve its policy and goals or brings discredit upon the Department;
 - b. Rule 3, which prohibits any failure to promote the Department's efforts to implement its policy or accomplish its goals; and
 - c. Rule 6, which prohibits disobedience of an order or directive, whether written or oral, by disobeying G09-01-06, Section V.
2. On or about November 25, 2016, Officer John Catanzara made a statement on Facebook that encouraged other Department members to stop chasing offenders. Officer Catanzara thereby violated:
 - a. Rule 2, which prohibits any action or conduct which impedes the Department's efforts to achieve its policy and goals or brings discredit upon the Department;
 - b. Rule 3, which prohibits any failure to promote the Department's efforts to implement its policy or accomplish its goals;
 - c. Rule 6, which prohibits disobedience of an order or directive, whether written or oral, by disobeying G09-01-06, Section V; and
 - d. Rule 53, which prohibits participating in, encouraging the participation of others in, or otherwise supporting any strike, demonstration, slowdown, or other such concerted action against the Department.
3. On or about December 1, 2016, Officer John Catanzara shared a captioned image on Facebook that was disrespectful to public benefit recipients by linking riots and looting in American cities to "blue" areas that are "full of unemployed social parasites who get free housing, food and health care." Officer Catanzara thereby violated:
 - a. Rule 2, which prohibits any action or conduct which impedes the Department's efforts to achieve its policy and goals or brings discredit upon the Department;
 - b. Rule 3, which prohibits any failure to promote the Department's efforts to implement its policy or accomplish its goals; and
 - c. Rule 6, which prohibits disobedience of an order or directive, whether written or oral, by disobeying G09-01-06, Section V.

4. On or about January 22, 2017, Officer John Catanzara made an obscene statement on Facebook directed to a member of the public, by stating "Is it too late to abort thekla...the stupidity of some humans like her only prove the saying...the best part dripped down her moms (sic) leg." Officer Catanzara thereby violated:
 - a. Rule 2, which prohibits any action or conduct which impedes the Department's efforts to achieve its policy and goals or brings discredit upon the Department;
 - b. Rule 3, which prohibits any failure to promote the Department's efforts to implement its policy or accomplish its goals;
 - c. Rule 6, which prohibits disobedience of an order or directive, whether written or oral, by disobeying G09-01-06, Section V; and
 - d. Rule 8, which prohibits disrespect to or maltreatment of any person, while on or off duty.

 5. On or about January 30, 2017, Officer John Catanzara made a statement on Facebook that was biased against Muslims, by stating "Savages they all deserve a bullet" when discussing a video of a woman being stoned to death, and further stating "This is the reason MANY Americans are leary (sic) of a large segment of Muslim's (sic) especially those who support Sharia law ... This is the life many want to bring to this country." Officer Catanzara thereby violated:
 - a. Rule 2, which prohibits any action or conduct which impedes the Department's efforts to achieve its policy and goals or brings discredit upon the Department;
 - b. Rule 3, which prohibits any failure to promote the Department's efforts to implement its policy or accomplish its goals; and
 - c. Rule 6, which prohibits disobedience of an order or directive, whether written or oral, by disobeying G09-01-06, Section V.

 6. On or about January 30, 2017, Officer John Catanzara attempted to influence others' actions about a non-police matter by referencing his official position as a Chicago Police Officer in an email to Chicago Public School officials in which he characterized the recruitment of African American student-athletes from outside district boundaries as racially motivated and illegal. Officer Catanzara thereby violated:
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- a. Rule 2, which prohibits any action or conduct which impedes the Department's efforts to achieve its policy and goals or brings discredit upon the Department; and
 - b. Rule 4, which prohibits any conduct or action taken to use the official position for personal gain or influence.
 7. On or about October 15, 2017, Officer John Catanzara posted a statement on Facebook that was disrespectful to the Department's management by calling superior officers "spineless." Officer Catanzara thereby violated:
 - a. Rule 2, which prohibits any action or conduct which impedes the Department's efforts to achieve its policy and goals or brings discredit upon the Department;
 - b. Rule 3, which prohibits any failure to promote the Department's efforts to implement its policy or accomplish its goals;
 - c. Rule 6, which prohibits disobedience of an order or directive, whether written or oral, by disobeying G09-01-06, Section V;
 - d. Rule 32, which prohibits engaging in any public statements, interviews, activity, deliberation or discussion pertaining to the Police Department which reasonably can be foreseen to impair the discipline, efficiency, public service, or public confidence in the Department or its personnel by:
 - (a) false statement, or reckless, unsupported accusations or
 - (b) the use of defamatory language, abusive language, invective or epithets.
 8. On or about October 15, 2017, Officer John Catanzara made an obscene statement on Facebook directed to a member of the public by saying "Steve would you like to make a bet that you and your pathetic friends (sic) attempts to get any results will be as useless as the little bit of skin you have in your pants? I'll even give you odds!" Officer Catanzara thereby violated:
 - a. Rule 2, which prohibits any action or conduct which impedes the Department's efforts to achieve its policy and goals or brings discredit upon the Department;
 - b. Rule 3, which prohibits any failure to promote the Department's efforts to implement its policy or accomplish its goals;
 - c. Rule 6, which prohibits disobedience of an order or directive, whether written or oral, by disobeying G09-01-06, Section V; and
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- d. Rule 8, which prohibits disrespect to or maltreatment of any person, while on or off duty.
9. On or about October 15, 2017, Officer John Catanzara made an obscene statement on Facebook directed to a member of the public, by stating "You're making me get pretty thick to (sic) Steve I love you so much." Officer Catanzara thereby violated:
 - a. Rule 2, which prohibits any action or conduct which impedes the Department's efforts to achieve its policy and goals or brings discredit upon the Department;
 - b. Rule 3, which prohibits any failure to promote the Department's efforts to implement its policy or accomplish its goals;
 - c. Rule 6, which prohibits disobedience of an order or directive, whether written or oral, by disobeying G09-01-06, Section V; and
 - d. Rule 8, which prohibits disrespect to or maltreatment of any person, while on or off duty.
10. On or about October 18, 2017, Officer John Catanzara made an obscene statement on Facebook directed to a member of the public, by stating "Lmao... Yeah join it so you can all group spank it together." Officer Catanzara thereby violated:
 - a. Rule 2, which prohibits any action or conduct which impedes the Department's efforts to achieve its policy and goals or brings discredit upon the Department;
 - b. Rule 3, which prohibits any failure to promote the Department's efforts to implement its policy or accomplish its goals;
 - c. Rule 6, which prohibits disobedience of an order or directive, whether written or oral, by disobeying G09-01-06, Section V; and
 - d. Rule 8, which prohibits disrespect to or maltreatment of any person, while on or off duty.
11. On or about November 16, 2017, Officer John Catanzara made an obscene statement on Facebook directed to a member of the public, by stating "Blow me. You know you want to." Officer Catanzara thereby violated:

- a. Rule 2, which prohibits any action or conduct which impedes the Department's efforts to achieve its policy and goals or brings discredit upon the Department;
 - b. Rule 3, which prohibits any failure to promote the Department's efforts to implement its policy or accomplish its goals;
 - c. Rule 6, which prohibits disobedience of an order or directive, whether written or oral, by disobeying G09-01-06, Section V; and
 - d. Rule 8, which prohibits disrespect to or maltreatment of any person, while on or off duty.
 12. On or about November 16, 2017, Officer John Catanzara directed a threat to a member of the public on Facebook, by stating "Ok loser now that you attack people on my page you will be blocked. Keep listening for that knock on the door." Officer Catanzara thereby violated:
 - a. Rule 2, which prohibits any action or conduct which impedes the Department's efforts to achieve its policy and goals or brings discredit upon the Department;
 - b. Rule 3, which prohibits any failure to promote the Department's efforts to implement its policy or accomplish its goals;
 - c. Rule 6, which prohibits disobedience of an order or directive, whether written or oral, by disobeying G09-01-06, Section V; and
 - d. Rule 8, which prohibits disrespect to or maltreatment of any person, while on or off duty.
 13. On or about December 15, 2017, Officer John Catanzara posted a photograph on Facebook that depicted him in Department uniform, standing next to a marked Department vehicle, and holding the American flag, with a caption that reads: "Rahm Free City 2019 Make Chicago Great Again DRAIN THE CITY HALL SWAMP #MAGA." Officer Catanzara thereby violated:
 - a. Rule 2, which prohibits any action or conduct which impedes the Department's efforts to achieve its policy and goals or brings discredit upon the Department;
 - b. Rule 6, which prohibits disobedience of an order or directive, whether written or oral, by disobeying G09-01-06, Section V; and
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- c. Rule 42, which prohibits participating in any partisan political campaign or activity.
14. On or about February 1, 2018, Officer John Catanzara posted a statement on Facebook that was disrespectful to the Department's management, by commenting that a superior officer's actions were "a pathetic attempt to flex his authority." Officer Catanzara thereby violated:
- a. Rule 2, which prohibits any action or conduct which impedes the Department's efforts to achieve its policy and goals or brings discredit upon the Department;
 - b. Rule 3, which prohibits any failure to promote the Department's efforts to implement its policy or accomplish its goals;
 - c. Rule 6, which prohibits disobedience of an order or directive, whether written or oral, by disobeying G09-01-06, Section V; and
 - d. Rule 32, which prohibits engaging in any public statements, interviews, activity, deliberation or discussion pertaining to the Police Department which reasonably can be foreseen to impair the discipline, efficiency, public service, or public confidence in the Department or its personnel by: (a) false statement, or reckless, unsupported accusations or (b) the use of defamatory language, abusive language, invective or epithets.
15. On or about February 3, 2018, Officer John Catanzara posted a statement on Facebook that was disrespectful to the Department's management, by stating there is "almost ZERO accountability in the department." Officer Catanzara thereby violated:
- a. Rule 2, which prohibits any action or conduct which impedes the Department's efforts to achieve its policy and goals or brings discredit upon the Department;
 - b. Rule 3, which prohibits any failure to promote the Department's efforts to implement its policy or accomplish its goals;
 - c. Rule 6, which prohibits disobedience of an order or directive, whether written or oral, by disobeying G09-01-06, Section V; and
 - d. Rule 32, which prohibits engaging in any public statements, interviews, activity, deliberation or discussion pertaining to the Police Department
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which reasonably can be foreseen to impair the discipline, efficiency, public service, or public confidence in the Department or its personnel by: (a) false statement, or reckless, unsupported accusations or (b) the use of defamatory language, abusive language, invective or epithets.

16. On or about February 3, 2018, Officer John Catanzara posted a statement on Facebook that was disrespectful to the Department's management, by stating that his superior officers were "refusing to do their job!" and "DOING NOTHING!" Officer Catanzara thereby violated:
 - a. Rule 2, which prohibits any action or conduct which impedes the Department's efforts to achieve its policy and goals or brings discredit upon the Department;
 - b. Rule 3, which prohibits any failure to promote the Department's efforts to implement its policy or accomplish its goals;
 - c. Rule 6, which prohibits disobedience of an order or directive, whether written or oral, by disobeying G09-01-06, Section V; and
 - d. Rule 32, which prohibits engaging in any public statements, interviews, activity, deliberation or discussion pertaining to the Police Department which reasonably can be foreseen to impair the discipline, efficiency, public service, or public confidence in the Department or its personnel by: (a) false statement, or reckless, unsupported accusations or (b) the use of defamatory language, abusive language, invective or epithets.

17. On or about July 12, 2018, at or near 3420 West 63rd Street (008th District Station), Officer John Catanzara, after failing to conduct an adequate preliminary and/or official investigation, and without being assigned and/or requested, knowingly generated a case incident report under RD number JB346816, falsely and/or misleadingly listing Chicago Police Superintendent Eddie Johnson as an offender for Criminal Trespass to State Supported Land and/or falsely and/or misleadingly listing himself as Beat "0801," which is a designation reserved for a district station supervisor. Officer Catanzara thereby violated:
 - a. Rule 2, which prohibits any action or conduct which impedes the Department's efforts to achieve its policy and goals or brings discredit upon the Department;

- b. Rule 3, which prohibits any failure to promote the Department's efforts to implement its policy or accomplish its goals;
 - c. Rule 6, which prohibits disobedience of an order or directive, whether written or oral, by disobeying G04-01, Section III-B; and/or S04-15, Sections II and III; and/or G08-01-02, Section II-B-1; and/or S08-01-02, Section II-G-1;
 - d. Rule 7, which prohibits insubordination or disrespect toward a supervisory member on or off duty;
 - e. Rule 10, which prohibits inattention to duty;
 - f. Rule 11, which prohibits incompetency or inefficiency in the performance of duty; and
 - g. Rule 14, which prohibits making a false report, written or oral.
18. On or about November 25, 2018, at or near 3151 West Harrison Avenue (011th District Station), Officer John Catanzara, after failing to conduct an adequate preliminary and/or official investigation, and without being assigned and/or requested, knowingly generated a case incident report under RD number JB528634, falsely and/or misleadingly listing Commander Ronald Pontecore Jr. as an offender for "Interference with Public Officer; Obstructing Justice" and falsely and/or misleadingly listing himself as Beat "801," which is a designation reserved for a district station supervisor, and providing personal comments and opinions in such report without a valid police purpose. Officer Catanzara thereby violated:
- a. Rule 2, which prohibits any action or conduct which impedes the Department's efforts to achieve its policy and goals or brings discredit upon the Department;
 - b. Rule 4, which prohibits any conduct or action taken to use the official position for personal gain or influence;
 - c. Rule 6, which prohibits disobedience of an order or directive, whether written or oral, by disobeying G08-01-02, Section II-B-1 and/or S08-01-02, Section II-G-1;
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- d. Rule 7, which prohibits insubordination or disrespect toward a supervisory member on or off duty;
- e. Rule 10, which prohibits inattention to duty;
- f. Rule 11, which prohibits incompetency or inefficiency in the performance of duty; and
- g. Rule 14, which prohibits making a false report, written or oral.

Based on the foregoing charges and specifications, the Superintendent recommends that Police Officer John Catanzara, Star Number 19897, be separated from the Chicago Police Department.



DAVID BROWN
Superintendent of Police

APPROVED AS TO FORM



JAMES M. LYDON
Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP
Special Assistant Corporation Counsel

Filed: January 26, 2021 POLICE BOARD Case No. 21 PB 2987
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