

To: RIOC President, PSD Director, RIOC Board of Directors  
CC: Main Street WIRE, RI Blogs (Rick O'Connor, Eric Schwartzman)  
CC: Council Member Jessica Lappin, Assemblyman Micah Kellner, Senator Jose Serrano  
CC: RIRA, Maple Tree Group

Dear Director Guerra-

Last Saturday, PSD Officer Wilson Torro arrested Mr. Adib Mansour Abu-Faraj (aka Blue Beard), a parent at a Little League game -- an incident escalated by Officer Torro himself. Observers said Officer Torro had a militant attitude, uninterested in resolving/reducing conflict. When Adib was handcuffed to the bar at PSD, he told Officer Torro that he was diabetic and requested a can soda from the vending machine, which Adib had money to pay for. Officer Torro's response was:

"By the way, I'm a diabetic too. But I'll wait until you faint, then I'll call the ambulance to get to the emergency room, and after that I'll take you to prison."

Officer Torro repeated his statement twice. Could you explain the purpose this served? Why does PSD want to \*create\* an emergency medical condition? And what about Adib, peaceful and passive during his arrest, what is he supposed to think when an officer prefers that Adib faint and wait for an ambulance? Abuse? Bordering on torture? And if not, then can you explain why this is not abuse/torture? I'll ask human rights organizations for their opinions on Officer Torro's actions.

Not to mention, in PSD's future facilities it will have private holding rooms ... only to invite more abuse/torture, right? If a PSD officer feels comfortable with abuse/torture in public view, then making private doesn't make it less comfortable. Or maybe it's that officers believe other officers will cover for them (as evidenced by two other PSD officers finding Officer Torro's militant behavior acceptable on the field).

Then Adib attempted to call his attorney on his cell phone. Office Torro grabbed his cell phone and canceled the call. The phone started ringing with a call from Adib's wife. Officer Torro powered down the phone and told Adib "now let her try find you". In case anyone doesn't believe Adib's story, the cell phone company will have a record of the phone deregistration caused by Officer Torro's actions. Could you explain how canceling a call with an attorney (before Adib faints) is consistent with Miranda rights and procedures? Adib was very concerned about what happened to his son, who got separated during the arrest, yet Officer Torro was oblivious to the obvious parental concerns.

Officer Torro's grab of Adib's arm so strongly that Adib still has the red marks on his arm three day's later.

Afterwards other PSD officers told Adib that they weren't happy with Officer Torro. Is this a poor Good Cop Bad Cop routine? Or maybe all of the millions of dollar spent on improving the morale of PSD doesn't really improve the bad officers (or the reporting of them among their own).

For all your efforts, you still misunderstand the nature of trust, i.e., trust is acquired by no specific trusting action, but acquired by a lack of actions that cause distrust. In other words, your trust with the community can be lost in an instant with such distrustful actions. The reports from the event are uniformly, strongly negative on PSD. A sample from one calm parent last Saturday, "if there was any event that confirms that PSD is a bunch of thugs hired by RIOC to serve RIOC and \*not\* the community, then this is it". And their degree of displeasure? "Bury them!", i.e., get rid of Public Safety. I'm just the messenger here, so don't react to me personally. This continues to be an ongoing problem: recently, as reported in a letter to the WIRE, at 9:30 PM a family with a child in a stroller was forcibly removed from a red bus ... so why was the traumatic removal of the family the only possible response by PSD?

The fact that PSD officers are aware of their own bad eggs, yet they continue to be employed really calls into question the sincerity of PSD executive/management that they are actively engaged in positive, professional standards. Or what about the two other PSD officers that accompanied Officer Torro -- they found this all acceptable?

The children were traumatized by PSD's inappropriate actions. So now, as reported by parents, you'll have kids in Little League uniform protesting at Roosevelt Island Day and the kids plan on attending the court appearance for the Adib's summons and rooting for PSD to lose, and for good reason. Parents have told me they are planning on TV coverage. A great civics lesson for the children of Roosevelt Island, unfortunately at the expense of Public Safety. PSD seems to think that they gain respect by a stronger show of force ... in the past century there have been enough examples of failed authoritarian approaches. All of your public relations with kids ... now for naught and brilliantly arranged by your staff and your own inaction.

Officer Torro escalated the event: the Little League and Big Apple Softball teams had agreed to allow the Little League to play the last half inning (about 10-15 minutes) of their second game, but Officer Torro had no use for a collaborative, cooperative resolution and Officer Torro \*rejected\* the friendly, agreed upon solution by both sets of teams. I don't think you want Officer Torro's conflict resolution (non-)skills working for anyone ... anywhere.

RIOC itself greatly contributes to this problem. On the permitting side, there are no adjustments and such for rain, poor fields, and RIOC failures. According to players at Firemen's Field on Saturday, they required about 90-120 minutes of cleanup before they could start their game. Likewise, the Little League was delayed for the same reason. I've heard that RIOC had four staff people working on Saturday, doing nothing other than observing the Southtown commons events. Can someone explain why RIOC staff isn't utilized better, such as clearing the permitted fields \*prior\* to use?

Maybe the solution is for the Little League to return the field to the original condition: if they remove ten gallons of water at first base, then they should be sure to return the ten gallons of water at first base just before the next game so the second set of permittees get to \*appreciate\* all the effort in clearing the fields (a task RIOC could do, but declines).

This needs a full public accounting. I plan on adding an agenda topic to the RIRA Town Hall

meeting on June 17 to discuss PSD and field permitting/policy/use. I really think the community needs to understand this better: why PSD, 18 months and millions of dollars spent, can't get their basic professional practice working; why RIOC continues to be inept at the permit/field process - - hey, this isn't the first spring that rain has occurred on a weekend. RIOC permits this, RIOC groundkeeps this, and RIOC polices this ... yet RIOC is unable to coordinate this. Hopefully, this incident will run through the Citizen's Review Board to get an official commentary.

What is your plan to repair the damage?

Frank Farance  
RIRA President