



Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office

700 East Fourth Street
Charlotte, NC 28202

T (704) 336-2543 • F (704) 336-6118

www.mecksheriff.com

Garry L. McFadden
Sheriff

Rodney M. Collins
Chief Deputy Sheriff

Telisa E. White
Chief of Detention

Jason R. Beebe
Chief Deputy Sheriff

MEDIA ALERT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 10, 2021

CONTACT: Bradley Smith
MCSO Public Information Office

Bradley.Smith@mecknc.gov

O: (980) 314-5008

M: (980) 259-0336

Mecklenburg County Sheriff Garry L. McFadden's Response to December 9, 2021, WCNC (Nate Morabito) Story and FOP (Daniel Redford) Letter

(CHARLOTTE, NC) - In response to yesterday's story by WCNC's Nate Morabito concerning conditions at Mecklenburg County Detention Center-Central, and further in response to the letter of NCFOP Lodge 9 Vice President Daniel Redford to County and State Officials which followed the WCNC story: I understand, appreciate, and share the concerns expressed by MCSO staff regarding their safety when working at the detention center. The increase in violent assaults against officers and in particular the possession and use of homemade weapons by residents at the detention center is intolerable and must be resolved. Furthermore, I accept and acknowledge that the responsibility for seeing to the safety of all MCSO staff ultimately falls to me. This is not a responsibility I take lightly and have issued multiple directives aimed to enhance the safety and security for personnel working in the detention center. We've implemented the Beckham Initiative, increased safety inspections, and alerts to bring about awareness of our most high risk residents while being ever so mindful of the balance between safety and dignity that must always be maintained in a detention facility.

FOP Vice President Redford calls for an independent investigation of MCSO management and operations. I would welcome and cooperate fully with any such effort. Obviously, there is need for significant improvements in our ongoing effort to curtail the violence in the facility. To the extent such investigation might shed light on how to make those improvements, it would be well received indeed. Moreover, I take great issue with Mr. Redford's suggestion that "[t]he Sheriff has enacted directives and policies ... circumventing State statutes and NC Jail Rules and Standards ..." and feel confident that an independent investigation would refute that baseless claim. Since I took office in December of 2018, MCSO has undergone meticulous audits as part of the accreditation process by the American Correctional Association (ACA), the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), the Jail Inspector of the North Carolina Division for Health Service Regulation (DHSR) as required by 10A NCAC 14J .1750, the U.S. Department of Justice pursuant to the Prison Rape

Elimination Act (PREA), and the U.S. Bureau of Prisons pursuant to our agreement with the United States Marshals Service to house federal detainees – each time addressing any concerns and being commended for our policies and procedures designed to protect the safety of detention center residents and staff alike.

Finally, I feel compelled to address the suggestion that I have contributed adversely to the morale of MCSO staff in my efforts to manage the Office and the detention center in particular. It is difficult and humbling to read the criticism of some of the staff – former and even present – I recognize and acknowledge that I may have come across as less supportive and grateful than I truly am. For that unintentional and inaccurate appearance, I sincerely apologize. I have been concerned, upset, frustrated, even angry at times – especially as the instances of violence in the detention center have increased. And while I can give no assurances that those emotions will soon wane, I can and do promise to try harder not to let those emotions come across as unappreciative of the very difficult jobs the detention staff have. It's difficult and emotional for me when I go to the hospital to check on injured staff members, or whenever I receive a call that an officer has been assaulted.

I recognize the importance of open communications and want all employees to have a voice and an opportunity to be heard which is the purpose of my open door policy. I stand willingly to address the issues and concerns of my Office and will continue to support the courageous women and men of MCSO.

#####