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Op-Ed

Topic-Santa Rosa Police Department underscores changes since summer 2020 protests

The Press Democrat reported on how the Santa Rosa Police Department has reached its exposure towards the handling of the BLM protests that was sparked last summer in response to the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis. Upon reading this article, I had no knowledge that the Santa Rosa police department has not had a police auditor since late 2018 and something like that needs to change based off the response that the police department had when protests were happening in the city of Santa Rosa. In the midst of the protest the way Santa Rosa PD handled the situation was found to be unsupervised through the force that was within their policy but was missing parts that should have been there like having enough supervisors to keep order of the officers on the grounds of the protest. Thus, without this supervision many controversial events happened such as unauthorized barricade rounds being authorized for use and was fired upon the protesters causing serious injuries.

This type of action sparked for another type of reform that would include a reevaluation of how the use of tear gas and less lethal munitions should be utilized. This type of concern was raised by the community of Santa Rosa that attended these protests and was to address these issues to Santa Rosa Mayor, Chris Rogers. Thus, addressing the bigger issue of not having a police auditor for 2 years and how during this time the certified instructor, in teaching officers the

professional standards in handling non-lethal control, was out, and this task was assigned to the department's logistics team, with not having no prior knowledge in handling this situation.

Furthermore, these types of problems should not be happening in a police department that reassures its citizens that they are holding themselves to a higher standard for the protection of the people but when these types of actions are happening within a police department there needs to be a reevaluation in to how the department is ran and the standards, they need to uphold themselves to for their citizens. Having found out that they had their logistics team as the approved instructor for their non-lethal munitions and that there hasn't been a police auditor 2 years prior is just unacceptable. Moreover, the release of this info by the two city contracted reports was a good thing to bring aware of. There needs to be a push for a more efficient and reinitialized system that Santa Rosa PD needs to work on to make sure of more proper training and auditing to always improve.

<https://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/news/srpd-undercores-changes-since-summer-protests/>