MEMORANDUM
June 4, 2008

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council
City of Southlake employees

FROM: Shana K. Yelverton, City Manager

SUBJECT: Response to “Conditions within the Southlake Police Department Focusing on Eight Incidents Identified by the Tarrant County District Attorney’s Office,” a report prepared by Timothy McNally and Larry Langberg

Background.

The McNally/Langberg review was commissioned by the City Council following the release of a report produced by the Tarrant County District Attorney’s Office. Although the grand jury concluded its review of issues within Southlake’s DPS/Police Services without issuing criminal charges, it was suggested by the DA that some of the issues needed further study. Timothy McNally and Larry Langberg, noted law enforcement professionals with extensive experience with the Federal Bureau of Investigations, were commissioned to study the matter on behalf of the city. Their analysis is the definitive answer to questions about specific cases and related issues and will provide a roadmap for improvements and change within DPS Police Services.

Review.

The McNally/Langberg review was a comprehensive effort involving file audits, numerous employee interviews, an interview with an investigator from the Tarrant County District Attorney’s Office and a review of other documents detailing issues within the department. A few excerpts from the report are shown below:

- Case Review:
  - “It is our opinion that the facts and evidence pertaining to these cases did not predicate criminal activity, nor warrant the time and attention of the Tarrant County District Attorney.”
  - “The types of issues surfaced during our review involve management performance, leadership style, investigative initiative, supervision and communication matters.”
  - “We did not find an adequate factual basis to conclude there was favoritism or bias in the decisions made by the Chief (Goolsby) or other managers involved with specific cases reviewed.”
• **Criminal Investigations Division:**
  
  o “It is our opinion that CID lacks adequate supervision of personnel and cases assigned to that component.”

• **Communication:**
  
  o “…We discovered concrete examples of one-way communication, a lack of openness in the exchange of ideas, the failure to listen to others, and at times, a lack of fundamental respect from one person to another.”

• **Questions of Confidence in the Chief:**
  
  o “…The Chief does not enjoy loyalty or support from the majority of the police ranks.”

  o “There is a strong degree of resentment towards the Chief because in part, he did not spend sufficient time developing relationships with personnel inside the police department. He did not establish his personal credibility with officer during his first several months as Chief.”

  o “In addition to overcoming first impressions, the Chief was also tasked with implementing a number of unpopular recommendations from the Matrix (2005) study. Several recommendations he was required to implement were initiatives and policy changes that were viewed by most police officers as diminishing resources and negatively impacting operations.”

• **Effectiveness of Senior Management Team:**
  
  o “We did not find visible evidence of a cohesive and well-coordinated senior management group.”

  o "We did not receive any positive assessment regarding teamwork or high-level co-operation among the Department’s top people.”

  o “We did not find a high level of teamwork at the current time and this needs to be a priority…”

• **Going Forward:**
  
  o “To succeed (the Chief) must also develop a cohesive management team that shares his vision for the Department… This will require the selection of capable individuals that can work together on the basis of mutual respect and trust.”

  o “To build a credible management team it will also be necessary to ensure performance evaluations are used effectively across the Department … Similarly he (the Chief) and his team of managers must be prepared to honestly assess deficient performance and be prepared to remove individuals
who fail to perform.”

A full copy of the Report Summary may be found on the City’s website at www.cityofsouthlake.com.

The Future.

Interim Police Chief Robert Finn, DPS Director Jim Blagg and the new Chief of Police will be charged with using this review as well as the report from the Tarrant County District Attorney’s office as a resource for making much needed improvements within Police Services and in our continued pursuit of Southlake’s corporate values of Integrity, Innovation, Accountability, Commitment to Excellence and Teamwork (I2ACT).

Director Blagg appointed a “DPS I2ACTION Team” comprised of firefighters, police officers, public safety officers, and departmental leadership to develop a plan of action for the future which – when combined with a similar planning effort undertaken by the City Manager’s Office – will guide the team toward resolving the issues and strengthening our abilities to effectively meet the needs of the Southlake community. This team will develop a plan and implementation timeline to ensure progress. Periodic reports will be provided to me and City Council will be kept informed.

It will take some time, but I am confident that many of the necessary changes will be made sooner rather than later. We are all committed to continuing our efforts to improve DPS.

It is our goal to be a premier city, with outstanding operational departments. Many improvements have already been made. Our ongoing efforts will use the results of the report, combined with other initiatives such as the agency’s compliance with CALEA (Commission for Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies) accreditation standards, the development of a business plan designed to achieve best practices, and an adherence to the city’s corporate values will lead us in the right direction.

Summary.

We have been through a difficult period, but our resolve to provide for the safety and security of this community has never wavered. I look forward to working with the employees of the Department of Public Safety and City Council to move forward in a positive manner for the benefit of those we serve.