



THE DEPUTY ONLINE

Volume 2012-03

FROM THE SECRETARY

James Boomer - Secretary

In the first two and a half months of this year the public safety community in general (and our Association in particular) has been confronted with some of the most critical and far-reaching challenges that we will likely ever face. Under the guise of governmental reform, Governor Rick Snyder and his fellow Republicans in the House and Senate have launched an all-out frontal assault upon the rights of unionized public sector workers in Michigan. It is their belief that we are the primary reason that cities and counties in Michigan are going under and they want to increase employee contributions to both retirement plans and health care AND they are seeking to reduce wages to bring them more in-line with private sector employees. They have introduced bills to accomplish just these things, HB 4060 and HB 4172.

In addition to these two bills, HB 4205 seeks simply to repeal PA 312. Snyder and his cohorts believe that binding arbitration has been the vehicle by which all of us have gotten fat and happy over the years. They are



trying to convince people that a city or county's ability to pay is not weighed heavily enough in arbitration decisions and that it should be the primary factor taken into consideration.

You should have recently received a packet in the mail that was put together by your Executive Board. In the packet was information on how to determine who your Representative and your Senator are. Also included were sample letters for both you and your family/friends to send to state legislators. If you have not already done so, I strongly encourage you to at the very least sign and mail the sample letter to your legislator. Please do not think that it will not make a difference. Just 4 days after mailing my letter to my representative I received a phone call from his office in which they asked me several questions about the impact this legislation would have on my family.

Your Executive Board is closely following developments in Lansing and around the state, largely due to the hard work and

diligence of President Bill Christensen and Vice-President Rami Abi-Adal. Visit the web site often as we will immediately post developing information on the front page.

Another significant challenge we are facing is the absorption of the Pontiac Police Department. From all accounts, Pontiac is the first (and likely the largest) department we will absorb before the economy turns around. I receive frequent calls from members who have questions about how and when the absorption will take place. There for a while the situation was uncertain and was changing daily, but with the recent signing of an agreement between the Emergency Financial Manager and the Pontiac Police Officer's Association the transition will move forward. The actual plan for the absorption is in the hands of the sheriff's office. To date they have not developed a timeline but certainly we will know more in the coming weeks. Again, once we receive any information we will post it on the web site. We will also provide updates at our monthly



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

meetings which are held at the union hall on the last Tuesday of the month.

Arbitration for Patrol Services and mediation for Corrective/Court Services is moving ahead, although rather slowly. We have been working with the County to come to an agreement on which arbitrator and fact-finder we would use. The Executive Board wanted to explore the possibility of using the same person for both proceedings and to have them run at the same time. For a while it appeared that the County was on board, but they recently moved away from the idea. We believe we may have reached an agreement on both an arbitrator and a mediator. Once that is finalized the information will be posted on the web site and dates will be established for the hearings to begin.

As you can see, 2011 is showing signs of being a very busy year for our Association. If at any time you have questions or you have heard a rumor that you want to confirm, I urge you to contact an Executive Board member directly. Our phone numbers and email addresses are listed on the web site. We also have convenient forms on the site for the submission of questions and agenda items for the general membership meetings.

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

Would you like a copy of “The Deputy” e-mailed to you?

Secretary Boomer, with the help of webmaster Jason Tucker, is in the process of establishing an e-mail address list for those members who wish to receive a digital copy of “The Deputy” sent to their inbox. Currently, the newsletter is available in a printable form on the web site only.

The cost of printing and distributing a newsletter is very high. The Association was spending between \$1200 and \$1400 per month when a copy was mailed to every member’s residence.

In the coming weeks a letter will be sent to your home in which we will ask you to provide an e-mail address where you want the newsletter to be sent. Once the list is established we will begin distributing the newsletter digitally.

**PASSWORD SECURITY**

By Jason Tucker

Not a month goes by without somebody asking me to recover a lost password for them. What always disturbs me is how simple the passwords turn out to be, once recovered.

Have you ever heard of a brute-force tool? It’s a simple piece of software that anyone can download in a few seconds, which can be used to crack a password. With a brute-force tool and enough time, there isn’t a password on the planet that any twelve-year-old with a 486 can’t crack. The only issue they’d have to contend with is the amount of time it will take to break.

Brute-force tools basically try every possible combination of numbers and letters until they discover your password. If given enough time, they *will* break it. The more complicated your password is, the more time it will take to crack, and the less likely the criminal is to devote the time and energy.

None of us are high-value targets, so it’s unlikely that anyone would devote hundreds of hours to crack our passwords, but we might as well make it as difficult as possible.

So use numbers, letters and symbols in your passwords. It could mean the difference between somebody needing only a day to break in, or a year.



Guidelines for the use of Social Media Sites

In recent discussions with Under sheriff McCabe, the Executive Board was asked to remind our members that the use of Oakland County computers is closely monitored and that failure to follow established policies with regard to their use could result in discipline.

Four Ways You Could Be Fired For Using Social Media
Frederick Joyce – policeone.com

By now, you're probably sick of reading about an officer getting fired for posting something incriminating to his or her Facebook wall. Even though there have been [a lot of incidents](#) where officers have been suspended or investigated for both on and off duty social networking misuse, many cops aren't learning from others' mistakes.

Here are some of the top reasons why officers are getting in trouble for social media misuse. Let these tips serve as a reminder to [patrol your social networking pages](#) to help you avoid getting the ax for a social media misstep:

- 1. Visiting inappropriate social networking sites while on duty.** Recently, [28 officers in Nebraska were fired](#) for watching videos or TV shows online while working. If your department's computers restrict certain websites, then it is probably easier for you to avoid visiting inappropriate content online. But with the increased use of smart phones that can play digital media, keep in mind that watching funny YouTube videos, streaming television shows, or playing games on your personal phones is absolutely inappropriate behavior while on duty. Check with your supervisor or department policy if you're ever in doubt about what kinds of websites are considered unsuitable.
- 2. Violating department policies on personal social networking pages.** Let's keep it simple: if you don't think you would email something to your boss, avoid putting it on your Facebook or MySpace pages. On the other hand, if there's confidential content that you'd *only* feel comfortable discussing in an on-duty setting, keep it that way! An officer in Massachusetts [was criticized for posting a picture of a dead person](#) (someone possibly connected to a criminal investigation) on her Facebook page.

Be prudent — don't put any material on your personal pages that you think might be used against you. Posting a video of you and fellow officers burning a dummy in a department uniform off duty might sound like something you'd never do, but some [Wisconsin deputies resigned](#) for doing just that.

- 3. Divulging trade secrets on social networks.** This tip is just common sense. Do you want gang members to get a hold of information sharing how your department interrogates suspects? Didn't think so. On the Internet, everything is searchable. If you're bragging in an online forum about your recent drug interdiction success, make sure that forum is locked for secure, law enforcement officers only beforehand. PoliceOne fosters a secure environment for cops to share information, but not all websites do. Do a little research before telling that so-called "online friend" you have the best way to approach an armed suspect.

- 4. Inappropriate or libelous content/commentary about your department.** In Richard Weinblatt's [10 social networking tips for officers](#), he said:

Avoid bashing the department. Depending on how it's framed, it could open you up to administrative charges and possibly civil liability. More and more bloggers and online posters are being held responsible for their critical speech online, especially if it is later proved that the postings lack a factual basis and are intended to damage the target of the criticism. At the very least, launching such a site or contributing to an existing site that bashes the agency does not endear you to the powers that be or position you as a "team player" ripe for promotion.

He's absolutely right. Proceed with caution when complaining about your supervisor on your Facebook page — even if you aren't "Facebook friends" with anyone at work, you never know what comes up in an online search.

While some of this advice might seem like a no-brainer to some, it's important to be conscious of how you behave online — it's easy to slip-up without realizing it.

