

**PINELLAS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS BUREAU
INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

DATE: **JANUARY 22, 2024**

TO: **DISTRIBUTION**

FROM: **CAPTAIN ROBERT OSTERLAND** *RO*
 Professional Standards Bureau

SUBJECT: **SHERIFF'S FINDING**

Per Sheriff Gualtieri, Deputy Louis Neal III, #60771, received the following as a result of AI-23-020:

1. Policy Review

DISTRIBUTION:

Sheriff Bob Gualtieri
Chief Deputy Paul Halle
Assistant Chief Deputy Dave Danzig
Assistant Chief Deputy Dennis Komar
Colonel Paul Carey
Major Deanna Carey
Major Dennis Garvey
Major Joe Gerretz
Major Nick Lazaris
Major Jennifer Love
Director Jennifer Crockett
Director Susan Krause
Director Tom Lancto
Director Jason Malpass
Director Michelle Posewitz
Shannon Lockheart, General Counsel
Payroll
Purchasing-Uniform Supply
Deputy Louis Neal III

RO/blr

**PINELLAS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

DATE: JANUARY 18, 2024

TO: DEPUTY LOUIS NEAL III, #60771

FROM: SHERIFF BOB GUALTIERI

SUBJECT: CHARGES RE: AI-23-020

An investigation has been conducted by the Administrative Investigation Division, Professional Standards Bureau, of the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office. As a result of this investigation, I have determined you committed the following violation:

On, but not limited to, July 17, 2023, while on duty in Pinellas County, Florida, you violated the Pinellas County Sheriff's Civil Service Act Laws of Florida, 89-404 as amended by Laws of Florida 08-285, Section 6, Subsection 4, by violating the provisions of law or the rules, regulations, and operating procedures of the Office of the Sheriff.

1. You violated Pinellas County Sheriff's Office General Order 3-1.1, Rule and Regulation 5.4, Duties and Responsibilities.

Synopsis: On July 17, 2023, while on duty within the City of St. Pete Beach, you heard the sounds of gunfire on your radio during a Treasure Island Police Officer's transmission. Fearing that the Treasure Island Police Officer was actively involved in a shooting, you began driving towards them. While en route, you learned that the suspect vehicle had fled from the scene and was last seen driving southbound toward St. Pete Beach.

While responding, you encountered the suspect vehicle, a dark-colored Mercedes Benz, driving southbound on Blind Pass Road toward St. Pete Beach. You attempted a traffic stop near Blind Pass Road and 89th Avenue, but the suspect vehicle fled, and a pursuit was initiated. You pursued the suspect vehicle from St. Pete Beach into South Pasadena, and then into St. Petersburg, where you were involved in a head-on crash with an uninvolved civilian vehicle. As a result of the crash, your vehicle was disabled, preventing you from having further involvement in the pursuit.

Before your crash, you pursued the suspect vehicle, at times in congested traffic conditions, through several intersections against solid-red traffic signals without slowing or using due care. These intersections were 75th Avenue and Boca Ciega Drive at 37 miles per hour; Pasadena Avenue and Shore Drive South at 37 miles per hour; Pasadena Avenue and Gulfport

Boulevard at 37 miles per hour, and Pasadena Avenue and Central Avenue at 60 miles per hour.

At one point during the incident, you pursued the suspect vehicle on the wrong side of Pasadena Avenue near 14th Avenue South at 70 miles per hour; this section of Pasadena Avenue has a raised median separating opposing travel lanes. After roughly six seconds, and at the first possible opportunity after the median ended, you pulled back into the proper travel lanes.

On three separate occasions during the pursuit before your disabling crash, your vehicle made contact with the suspect vehicle and another agency vehicle. The Board determined that the contact with the suspect vehicle was unintentional, and not an attempt to end the pursuit. Rather, the contact was a direct result of you not having control of your vehicle and failing to maintain adequate space between vehicles.

Although the pursuit was authorized, your driving actions and failure to use due care during this pursuit violated Pinellas County Sheriff's Office policy.

During your Administrative Interview, you testified that you did not drive with due care, or how you were trained, and were not in total control of your emotions or patrol vehicle during this pursuit.


During the Administrative Review Board, you acknowledged that on the date of the incident, you were familiar with General Order 15-02 Pursuit Operations of Sheriff's Office Vehicles, but that you were caught up in the incident and that you had tunnel vision.

You admitted to the violation.

Disciplinary Points and Recommended Discipline Range:

You were found to be in violation of one (1) Level Five Rules and Regulation violation totaling fifty points. These points, which were affected by no modified points from previous discipline, resulted in fifty (50) progressive discipline points. At this point level, the recommended discipline range is a forty (40) hour suspension to Termination.

Disciplinary action shall be consistent with progressive discipline for cause in accordance with the provisions of the Pinellas County Civil Service Act.


MAJOR NICK LAZARIS
PATROL OPERATIONS BUREAU

FOR BOB GUALTIERI, SHERIFF

I have received a copy:

Date 1/19/24

Time 0821

Lensell

SIGNATURE

BG:RO