The Ethical Society of Police (ESOP) hasn’t agreed with some of the decisions of the St. Louis City Circuit Attorney, Kimberly Gardner, or any other elected or appointed official in the City of St. Louis; however, we will not dismiss the Circuit Attorney’s lawsuit as being unsubstantiated when it comes to the racial climate in the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department (SLMPD).

Whether the City of St. Louis or the St. Louis Police Officer’s Association (SLPOA) agrees with the Circuit Attorney’s lawsuit or not, denying racial biases are rampant is a slap in the face to minority and non-minority officers with whom we are proud to serve. The City of St. Louis and the SLPOA had another opportunity to address the racial climate in SLMPD, but once again, they have chosen to deny that racial biases are a part of the culture of SLMPD.

The statement released by the City of St. Louis about the Circuit Attorney’s lawsuit states it’s “meritless” when we all know there is a long history of racial discrimination in SLMPD that has never been adequately addressed by the City of St. Louis, the SLPOA, and leadership in SLMPD. Furthermore, the City of St. Louis is aware ESOP was founded as a separate police association from the SLPOA because of racial discrimination in SLMPD and a lack of equal representation by the SLPOA for their black officers. We have repeatedly highlighted the disparities along racial lines with discipline, promotions, and job placement; therefore, the Circuit Attorney stating she has experienced racial bias at the hands of some SLMPD officers is far from “meritless.”

We ask the City of St. Louis to explain why Captain Ryan Cousins was awarded 1.1 million dollars in a racial discrimination lawsuit in June. We ask the City of St. Louis to explain the cover-up and treatment of Detective Luther Hall, who stated he was beaten like “Rodney King” by numerous white SLMPD/SLPOA Officers, while his partner who is white was untouched. We ask the City of St. Louis to explain the rampant corruption involved in the investigation of Retired/Disabled Police Officer Milton Green, who was shot in June of 2017, months before the brutal beating of Det. Hall by a white SLMPD/SLPOA Officer. We ask the City of St. Louis to explain why there are at least thirty pending lawsuits from the Jason Stockley protest. We also ask the City of St. Louis to explain why SLMPD has made few substantial steps to address why sixty percent of black officers leave SLMPD within seven years and why there is no cultural competency training in place post-Ferguson and the Plain View Project which again exposed a racial divide in SLMPD.
Before and after the Ferguson unrest, we repeatedly suggested SLMPD leadership and the City of St. Louis provide yearly in-house diversity training, address the hiring and background practices that adversely harm black candidates with hiring and promotions, begin the process of working with outside organizations like the Center for Policing Equity to dismantle racism, to employ social workers in SLMPD, and provide all officers with yearly Equal Employment Opportunity Training.

Most of our suggestions have not been implemented or have been ignored.

Unfortunately, until the City of St. Louis and SLMPD recognizes the racial divide in SLMPD and implement our suggestions, we will continue to be national news for allegations of racial discrimination.

Respectfully,

The Ethical Society of Police - ESOP