

Norman Police Department officers under investigation after allegedly releasing city councilmember's address

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Two Norman Police Department officers divulged the personal information of Norman City Councilmember Alex Scott and are now under review by the department's internal affairs department, the City of Norman said Wednesday.

At 12:45 a.m. June 27, according to an NPD release, Norman police officers responded to a reported sexual assault. Scott said that same day in a since-deleted Facebook post, with the victim's permission, that the victim was her neighbor.

Following the publication of a Norman Citizens for Racial Justice [press release](#), the department [enlisted](#) the help of the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation June 29 to review the incident. The racial justice group said in the release outside investigators were required, as they believed the life of Scott was in danger.

“All of the women on council and the mayor are also being threatened and harassed, particularly from the ‘Reopen Norman’ Facebook group,” the organization said in the release. “This culture of intimidation, violent threats, and complete disregard for public safety must

end immediately.”

The justice group said in the release the reason behind its call for an external investigation is its lack of confidence in the NPD to do the right thing. These concerns were clear in the focus of the release — calling out two Norman police officers for “endangering councilmember Scott.”

Screenshots of the Norman Ward 8 Facebook group in the Norman Citizens for Racial Justice release indicate a Facebook account called “Tired Ofthehate” shared the NPD incident report and location of Scott’s 2015 sexual assault.

The account “Tired Ofthehate” provides contact information which, based on screenshots from the release, can be linked to NPD Master Police Officer Michael Lauderback.

Further information was shared by Norman Police Detective John Barbour, who posted footage of the front of Scott’s residence from May during an NPD meeting with her, as first reported by the [Norman Transcript](#).

According to the Norman Transcript, additional screenshots of the Norman Ward 8 Facebook group indicate that Barbour shared Scott’s arrest records and a YouTube video of the Norman Police Department responding to one of her calls. Barbour shared the video after another Facebook user posted it, commenting on the Ward 8 page that he “got this video from another person that got the video with open records request.”

While the NPD continues to review and investigate allegations that its officers shared Scott’s address on social media, the department said in a statement Monday the information shared by the officers was obtained legally, as they were public records, according to the Norman Transcript.

Under Norman's 2018 Personnel [Manual](#), the actions of Barbour and Lauderback are technically lawful, as it says employees are free to express themselves as private citizens on social media sites to the degree their speech does not impair working relationships of the city, impede the performance of duties, impair discipline and harmony among coworkers, or negatively affect the public's perception of the city.

The manual does, however, say for safety and security reasons, employees are cautioned not to post information pertaining to any other member of the city without their permission.

Scott told the Norman Transcript she did not give either officer her permission.

Despite the legality of their actions, NPD Captain Brett Barbour said to The Daily both officers are under review by the department’s internal affairs department. He said NPD is aware of the public’s concerns regarding both officers’ social media activity, and investigations will determine if action needs to be taken.

“Any time we have concerns or violations posed to us in reference to our employees or the actions of the department ... we always make sure to review them,” Capt. Barbour said. “We always look into (them) just to make sure we're doing the best we can do, and our employees are following our policies and procedures the best (they) can. So it's not abnormal that we would look into (this).”

John Barbour and Lauderback’s social media posts, Brett Barbour said, have created a broader issue that cannot be addressed simply — their actions require a diligent review. As the investigation continues, he said it is difficult to comment on what future disciplinary action will look like.

“(Action) could vary on anything — if there's even a violation,” Brett Barbour said. “Our disciplinary options consist of counseling ... remedial training ... they can have letters of reprimand placed in their file, they can be put on probation ... demoted ... suspended ... and they can be terminated. We have a wide range of necessary actions depending on the nature and severity of the offense.”

Brett Barbour said the examination of this specific incident will take time as the department works to gather every piece of relevant information concerning the case and to effectively fulfill its duty to Norman citizens.