

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 26, 2025

Lawrence Township Clarifies Facts Regarding Recent Settlement Involving Police Department

Lawrence Township (Mercer County, NJ) is issuing this statement to correct certain inaccuracies reported in a recent NJ.com article regarding the settlement of a lawsuit filed by six (five former and one current) Lawrence Township police officers against former Police Chief Brian Caloiaro and the Township.

No Evidence of Ticket Quotas or Revenue Scheme

Contrary to claims repeated in the lawsuit and recent reporting, the Lawrence Township Police Department was thoroughly investigated by the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office. After reviewing ticket data, internal documentation, and conducting interviews with numerous police officers, the Prosecutor's Office concluded the allegations of an "illegal ticket quota" or "revenue-generating scheme" were unfounded and closed the investigation. There has never been any Township policy requiring officers to issue tickets to generate revenue for the municipal budget.

Court Dismissal of Quota Allegations and Most Claims

Despite this conclusion, the six officers pursued a civil lawsuit following what they may have viewed as failed PBA-led labor negotiations with the Township. After six years of discovery, the Township moved to dismiss the case, and the Superior Court dismissed three of the four counts—including the quota allegation. The only remaining count alleged retaliation based on the same unfounded quota and revenue-generating claims, which the Township and Chief Caloiaro firmly denied.

Why the Case Was Settled

Lawrence Township and Chief Caloiaro were fully prepared to defend the case before a jury, believing the remaining claims lacked merit. However, as the trial date approached, the Township's insurer, the Garden State Municipal Joint Insurance Fund, determined that settlement was the prudent course due to the complexity of the case and a general lack of confidence in a jury, along with the unavailability of some key witnesses after more than six years of litigation. The insurer exercised its authority under the insurance contract by reducing its coverage limits to the township if the matter went to trial, leading to the settlement of the case for \$3.2 million to avoid the risk of a potentially costly jury verdict. It is the Township's policy to vigorously defend all civil actions it determines to be without merit after a thorough review of the facts and circumstances.

No Cost to Taxpayers, No Back Pay to Plaintiffs

Importantly, no Township funds were used to pay this settlement. Additionally, none of the plaintiffs received back pay for any period during which they were disciplined for violations of police department policies or for criminal charges brought by the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office for alleged misconduct committed while on duty. Importantly, the insurer has informed the township that there should be no premium increase as a result of this settlement.

Commitment to Accountability

While disappointed by the necessity and amount of the settlement, Lawrence Township remains steadfast in its commitment to upholding the highest standards of accountability within the Police Department. Officers who violate departmental policies or state and federal laws will continue to be held responsible for their actions.

For further inquiries, please contact:

Kevin Nerwinski, Esq.
Municipal Manager, Lawrence Township
(609) 844-7005
knerwinski@lawrencetwp.com