Twitter Thread by Jonathan Larsen



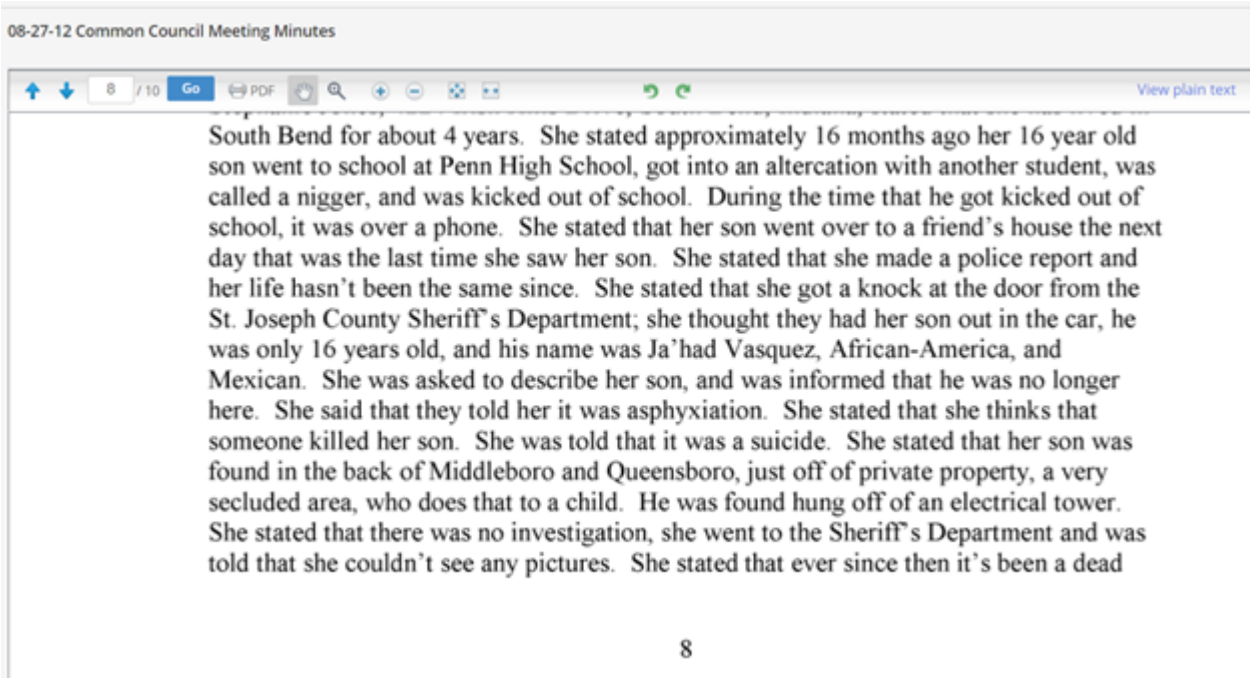
Jonathan Larsen
@jtlarsen

Pete Buttigieg testifies today on his nomination to run the Dept. of Transportation.

I spent almost a year covering Buttigieg. He refused to speak with me, so I'm going to thread some of the things senators could ask him about today.

In 2011, Jiha'd Vasquez, 16, was found dead, hanged, on a utility tower.

In 2012, Buttigieg became mayor and Jiha'd's mother asked him for help with the case. Common Council records show Buttigieg was at the meetings where she spoke about her son.


08-27-12 Common Council Meeting Minutes

South Bend for about 4 years. She stated approximately 16 months ago her 16 year old son went to school at Penn High School, got into an altercation with another student, was called a nigger, and was kicked out of school. During the time that he got kicked out of school, it was over a phone. She stated that her son went over to a friend's house the next day that was the last time she saw her son. She stated that she made a police report and her life hasn't been the same since. She stated that she got a knock at the door from the St. Joseph County Sheriff's Department; she thought they had her son out in the car, he was only 16 years old, and his name was Ja'had Vasquez, African-America, and Mexican. She was asked to describe her son, and was informed that he was no longer here. She said that they told her it was asphyxiation. She stated that she thinks that someone killed her son. She was told that it was a suicide. She stated that her son was found in the back of Middleboro and Queensboro, just off of private property, a very secluded area, who does that to a child. He was found hung off of an electrical tower. She stated that there was no investigation, she went to the Sheriff's Department and was told that she couldn't see any pictures. She stated that ever since then it's been a dead

8

Jones and a local NAACP official wanted help because her son's death had been ruled a suicide…with no autopsy and no investigation.

Items were missing from his backpack.


Cause Of Death (See Instructions And Examples)

28. Part I. Enter The Chain Of Events - Diseases, Injuries, Or Complications - That Directly Caused The Death. Do Not Enter Terminal Events Such As Cardiac Arrest, Respiratory Arrest, Or Ventricular Fibrillation Without Showing The Etiology. Do Not Abbreviate. Enter Only One Cause On A Line. Add Additinal Lines If Necessary.

Approximate Interval: Onset To Death

Immediate Cause (Final Disease Or Condition Resulting In Death) A. ASPHYXIATION BY HANGING — SECONDS

Due to (Or As A Consequence Of):

Sequentially List Conditions, If Any, Leading To The Cause Listed On Line A. Enter The Underlying Cause (Disease Or Injury That Initiated The Events Resulting In Death) Last

B.

Due to (Or As A Consequence Of):

C.

Due to (Or As A Consequence Of):

D.

Part II. Enter Other Significant Conditions Contributing to Death But Not Resulting In The Underlying Cause Givin In Part I

29. Was An Autopsy Performed? ☐ Yes ☒ No

30. Were Autopsy Finding Available To Complete The Cause Of Death? ☐ Yes ☐ No

31. Did Tobacco Use Contribute To Death? ☐ Yes ☐ Probably ☒ No ☐ Unknown

32. If Female:
☐ Not Pregnant Within Past Year ☐ Pregnant At Time Of Death ☐ Not Pregnant, But Pregnant Within 42 Days Of Death
☐ Not Pregnant, But Pregnant 43 Days To 1 year Before Death ☐ Unknown If Pregnant Within The Past Year

33. Manner Of Death:
☐ Homicide ☐ Accident ☐ Pending Investigation
☒ Suicide ☐ Could Not Be Determined

Jones told reporter @jharrell6468 that she asked Buttigieg to help get the case re-opened. She says he gave her his card and told her to call.

But when she did, she never got through to him, and no one ever returned her call.
https://t.co/ZKGH7kNc6E

When we looked into it in 2019, the county coroner told me it would be “prudent” to reopen the case. And also told us the file on the case was missing.

Buttigieg never responded to Jones or to our questions about the case. It remains closed today.
https://t.co/Aze432oCI6

In 2013, Buttigieg replaced South Bend's first black police chief with a white chief with a history of civil-rights complaints.

Then the new chief was accused of failing to back up a black lieutenant, David Newton, responding to a report of an altercation involving a gun.



Buttigieg suggested that a secret state police report he had read exonerated his new chief, referring to the “varying recollections of the interviewees”--those who were there.

https://t.co/ne3nuQtgg3

But we obtained an excerpt of the secret report Buttigieg was citing, which said that the only recollection varying from those of other witnesses was that of Buttigieg’s chief.

https://t.co/T6Cvounpl2

And Buttigieg covered up what the ISP found that happened AFTER the incident.

Specifically, the ISP suggested that Buttigieg's chief tried to get Newton to change his story.

Newton told me he suffered retaliation for refusing to lie and ultimately left the SBPD.

Newton, now chief investigator for the county prosecutor, told TYT that, “In my opinion Buttigieg killed the report because it made Teachman look bad.”

Newton confirmed the report’s implication that he felt pressured to change his story. “Teachman tried to steer me to frame what happened,” he told TYT. “I was ruined... just because I wouldn’t lie and play ball.”

Members of the city's Public Safety board WERE allowed to see the report.

I asked the board's then-president, an ex-cop and former Buttigieg supporter, about Buttigieg's public account of it. He called it "a lie…plain and simple."

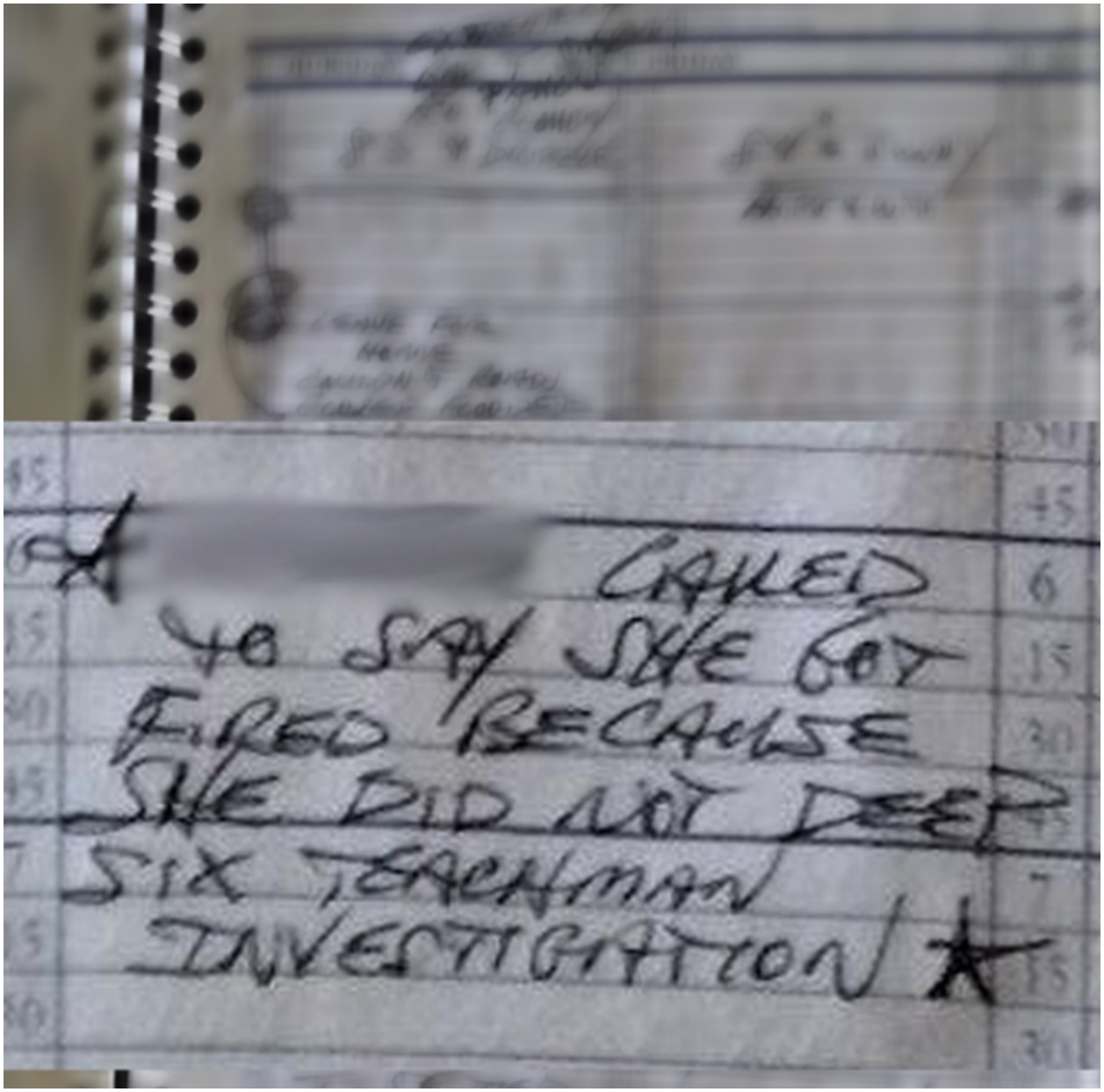
> Despite the ISP finding that Teachman was "the only person" who said he was present when the fight was first reported, Buttigieg reportedly told the South Bend Tribune that witnesses differed on this point. The Tribune wrote, "According to Buttgieg, witnesses said Teachman was notified of the fight either before or after using the restroom."
>
> TYT asked Pat Cottrell, who was allowed to read the report as president of the city's Board of Public Safety, about Buttigieg's claim. "That's a lie," Cottrell told TYT. "Plain and simple."

Buttigieg's campaign refused to answer specific questions about his statements and handling of the incident, referring back to the letter he had issued before we reported that the ISP report contradicted his letter.

> Asked about the secret report's findings, Buttigieg campaign Press Secretary Chris Meagher told TYT that the letter Buttigieg sent to city officials "adequately covers the mayor's position on this issue." (Teachman no longer works for the city. Messages left for him by phone and email were not returned.)
>
> Newton, now chief investigator for the county prosecutor, told TYT that, "In my opinion Buttigieg killed the report because it made Teachman look bad."

The Public Safety board ex-pres. also told us that Buttigieg fired a city attorney for failing to stop the state police investigation into his new chief.

He shared with us what he said was his journal entry at the time:



It turned out that the incident only went to the state police because Buttigieg didn't deal with it himself.

Council minutes show that a black South Bend reverend said he went public with it because Buttigieg refused to listen to him.

https://t.co/aYKyPKVBos

One story Buttigieg DID get asked about was his removal of Darryl Boykins, South Bend's first black police chief, and his refusal to release secret police tapes, the existence of which first came to light just a few months into Buttigieg's mayoralty.
https://t.co/BhyXeb0NeF

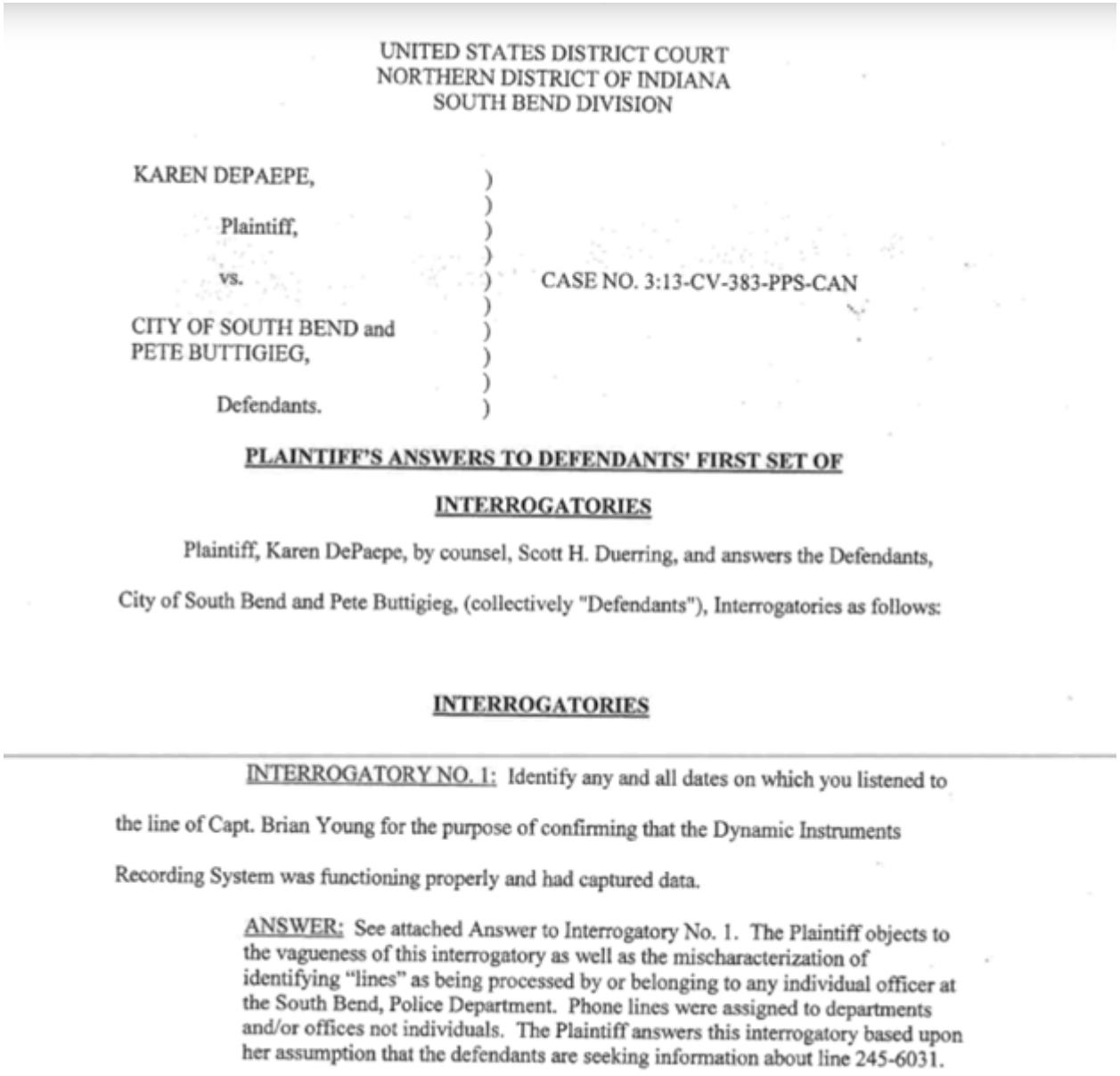
Almost immediately, the police staffer who heard the tapes said there was racist rhetoric on it.

But Buttigieg said legal issues tied his hands on releasing them.

As I reported, though, there was lots he could've found out without listening to the tapes.
https://t.co/mSPaEK8b06

Buttigieg has said for years that he didn't know whether he could even ask what was on the tapes.

But I obtained documents showing that, in fact, Buttigieg's lawyers had done exactly that, secretly, in 2013.



UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF INDIANA
SOUTH BEND DIVISION

KAREN DEPAEPE,

Plaintiff,

vs.

CITY OF SOUTH BEND and PETE BUTTIGIEG,

Defendants.

CASE NO. 3:13-CV-383-PPS-CAN

PLAINTIFF'S ANSWERS TO DEFENDANTS' FIRST SET OF INTERROGATORIES

Plaintiff, Karen DePaepe, by counsel, Scott H. Duerring, and answers the Defendants, City of South Bend and Pete Buttigieg, (collectively "Defendants"), Interrogatories as follows:

INTERROGATORIES

INTERROGATORY NO. 1: Identify any and all dates on which you listened to the line of Capt. Brian Young for the purpose of confirming that the Dynamic Instruments Recording System was functioning properly and had captured data.

ANSWER: See attached Answer to Interrogatory No. 1. The Plaintiff objects to the vagueness of this interrogatory as well as the mischaracterization of identifying "lines" as being processed by or belonging to any individual officer at the South Bend, Police Department. Phone lines were assigned to departments and/or offices not individuals. The Plaintiff answers this interrogatory based upon her assumption that the defendants are seeking information about line 245-6031.

Buttigieg's campaign told me he kept a firewall between him and the litigation, but multiple lawyers told me there was no conceivable legal reason for doing so.

And no explanation for why Buttigieg's lawyers wouldn't have told him that he COULD ask.
https://t.co/CLOKlPMbsB

The documents detailed accounts of conversations one of the cops allegedly had with Buttigieg donors about replacing Boykins, the city's black chief, once Buttigieg became mayor.

speaking of black individuals. They were discussing problems with a local gang known as the Cashout boys when Lt. Wells started speaking in what is termed as ebonics, when a person mocks or mimics the way a black person speaks. Lt. Wells in ebonics stated to the effect "ain't nothin gonna get done with the Cashout boys cuz Boykins, he take care of his home boys." The implication was that Chief Boykins was protecting gang members. Both Wells and Young began to ridicule Boykins and mock him, when Wells stated that Corbett had a plan to get rid of him. Young inquired what was the plan, and Wells stated it

One cop reportedly spoke with Buttigieg directly and came back with the assessment that Buttigieg would remove Boykins once he became mayor.

07/07/11 at 08:11:34 Young/J.T. JT meeting with Buttiegieg to discuss putting Richmond in as Chief.

The cop who said he spoke with Buttigieg told me he doesn't remember saying Boykins was done, but does recall Buttigieg saying during his mayoral campaign that he was open to alternatives to Boykins.

But heading into the general election, Buttigieg and Taylor are still talking. One month after the primary, in June 2011, Taylor is quoted in the documents saying he spoke with Buttigieg and that "Boykins is done."

Taylor doesn't recall that, but told TYT, "Before the general [election] I can remember telling him at the gym one time, when he asked me who the chief should be, and I said, well, if you're gonna become the mayor then I told him Steve Richmond should be the chief of police."

In July 2011, Buttigieg was "open" to Richmond. "It was literally, 'I'm open to making changes; if you had your choice, who would you make the chief?' He literally asked me and I told him this is who I thought it should be."

Taylor said Buttigieg asked him why. "I gave him all the positives about Steve. Yes, Steve was my partner at one point in time, but Steve taught me how to basically be a detective."

Buttigieg has never confirmed or denied any of this, but his campaign cited the fact that the two donors deny it. Except they only kinda deny it.

One hung up on me. The other denied ever holding a fundraiser for Buttigieg. Then stopped responding once I sent him this flyer:



PLEASE JOIN US
IN SUPPORT OF

PETE BUTTIGIEG FOR MAYOR

At the Residence of
Bob & Debbie Urbanski
[redacted]

Wednesday, April 13, 2011
5:30 - 7:30 PM
Donation: $125.00 per person
Hosted by: Bob & Debbie Urbanski, John & Joan Stancati,
Sam & Myra Hensley, and Mary Downes

Authorized by Pete for South Bend - Labor and Materials Donated

Buttigieg has said publicly that he wanted to keep Boykins on, but his current explanations of why don't hold up.

In fact, he knew the politics of removing Boykins were tricky, and says in his own book that he planned to make changes eventually.

Boykins was the last black man standing in the upper ranks of a city that's one quarter black. And Buttigieg, one source said, "Was smart enough to know that he couldn't fire the first black police chief."

Buttigieg praised Boykins in his book for "youth mentorship" and "other community work," but also alluded to Boykins' importance to the black community. Boykins was "well liked in the community. As the first African-American chief in our city's history, he had been uniquely able to build confidence between communities of color and the department as a whole..."

More recently, Buttigieg has played down Boykins' political significance. Instead, he says, the reason he kept Boykins at first "was largely because of his expertise and strength when it came to community policing."

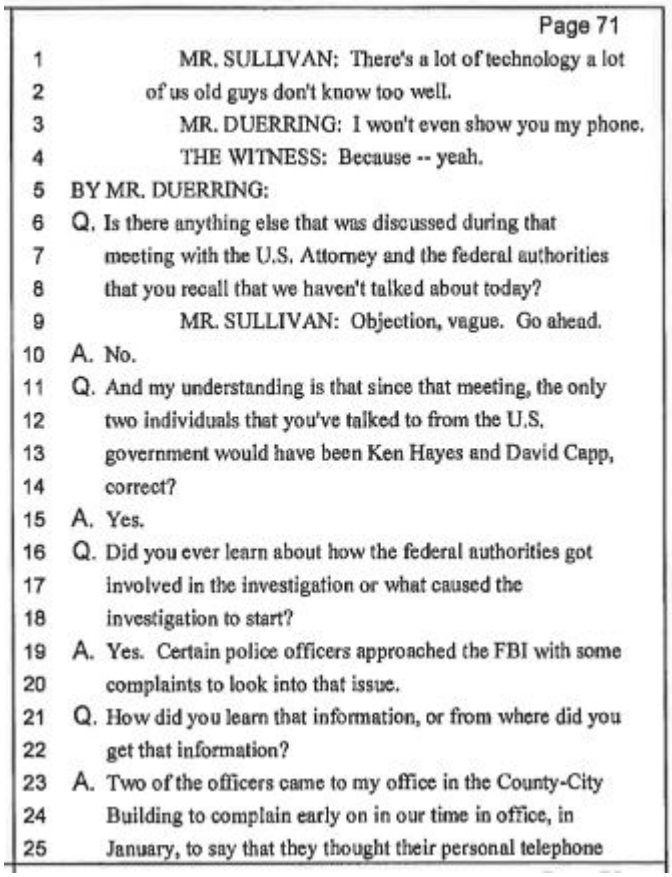
"I chose him," Buttigieg told Jeff Fard of the Free Think Zone, "for a lot of reasons, including his ability to navigate racial issues in our community and community policing."

But two sources — one political and one police, both sympathetic to Boykins — said Boykins did nothing unusual regarding community policing. And a google search turned up no instance of Buttigieg praising Boykins for community policing prior to 2019. (Buttigieg lauded another chief for "deepen[ing]" the SBPD's commitment to community policing; a city survey later called for increasing it.)

In 2019, Buttigieg said he removed Boykins because he lost trust in the chief after finding out about the feds' investigation from the feds, and not from Boykins.

I found secret testimony by Buttigieg's chief of staff that showed they knew about it before Boykins did.

July 30, 2013



Page 71

MR. SULLIVAN: There's a lot of technology a lot of us old guys don't know too well.
MR. DUERRING: I won't even show you my phone.
THE WITNESS: Because -- yeah.
BY MR. DUERRING:
Q. Is there anything else that was discussed during that meeting with the U.S. Attorney and the federal authorities that you recall that we haven't talked about today?
MR. SULLIVAN: Objection, vague. Go ahead.
A. No.
Q. And my understanding is that since that meeting, the only two individuals that you've talked to from the U.S. government would have been Ken Hayes and David Capp, correct?
A. Yes.
Q. Did you ever learn about how the federal authorities got involved in the investigation or what caused the investigation to start?
A. Yes. Certain police officers approached the FBI with some complaints to look into that issue.
Q. How did you learn that information, or from where did you get that information?
A. Two of the officers came to my office in the County-City Building to complain early on in our time in office, in January, to say that they thought their personal telephone

The cops themselves later told me they specifically told Buttigieg's chief of staff they wanted the new mayor to handle the tapes.

Didn't want to give South Bend or SBPD a black eye.

Didn't care if he removed Boykins.

Buttigieg refused to do anything.

https://t.co/HX0ihiG4Zd

The cops also told me things Buttigieg had heard and said related to Boykins, before and after becoming mayor.

For instance, Buttigieg asked if he could go to one top cop for help and told another they planned to help Boykins with "strategic planning."

https://t.co/uAtkvaBjdI

One Buttigieg insider told me they knew he always planned to get rid of Boykins, because Buttigieg said so in private.

> *I get a lot of questions about why I removed a black police chief. Almost never do I get a question about why I appointed a black police chief in the first place. It was largely because of his expertise and strength when it came to community policing. But when federal investigators came to South Bend and were investigating practices in the department, and I did not find out from him, that changed our relationship. It changed my ability to have him in the role that he was in.*

That has been Buttigieg's narrative about this turning point in the city's history, suggesting that he first wanted Boykins as his permanent chief, and that Boykins found out about the investigation before he did. But according to documents obtained by The Young Turks, and sources close to the major players, almost everything about this narrative is false.

As one insider put it, the federal investigation "gave Pete the green light to fire the police chief, but he had wanted to fire the police chief since the beginning." Asked how they knew Buttigieg felt this way, the insider said, "He told me."

I almost forgot -- Buttigieg has said the feds signaled that they'd prosecute if he didn't remove Boykins and another staffer.

Their lawyers for years have said that's not true.

In the secret 2013 testimony, Buttigieg's chief of staff confirmed it.

When pressed, Schmuhl testified that Capp never recommended termination or threatened indictments.

> *Q: Did they suggest any particular individual or individuals should be terminated as a result of what they say they found?*
>
> *Schmuhl: No.*
>
> *...*
>
> *Q: Was there any discussion during the meeting of the federal authorities [of] charging anyone with a federal crime as a result of what they found?*
>
> *Schmuhl: The U.S. Attorney for Northern Indiana, David Capp, said that they would take a timeout from the case to allow the city to address these issues for 60 days.*
>
> *Q: Anything else? Was anything said with respect to this?*
>
> *Schmuhl: As it relates to indictments or--*
>
> *Q: Yes.*
>
> *A: No.*

On another story, I collaborated with @michaelharriot of The Root.

Black SBPD officers sought Buttigieg's help re systemic racism.

He never responded.

https://t.co/77tdDzfPP2

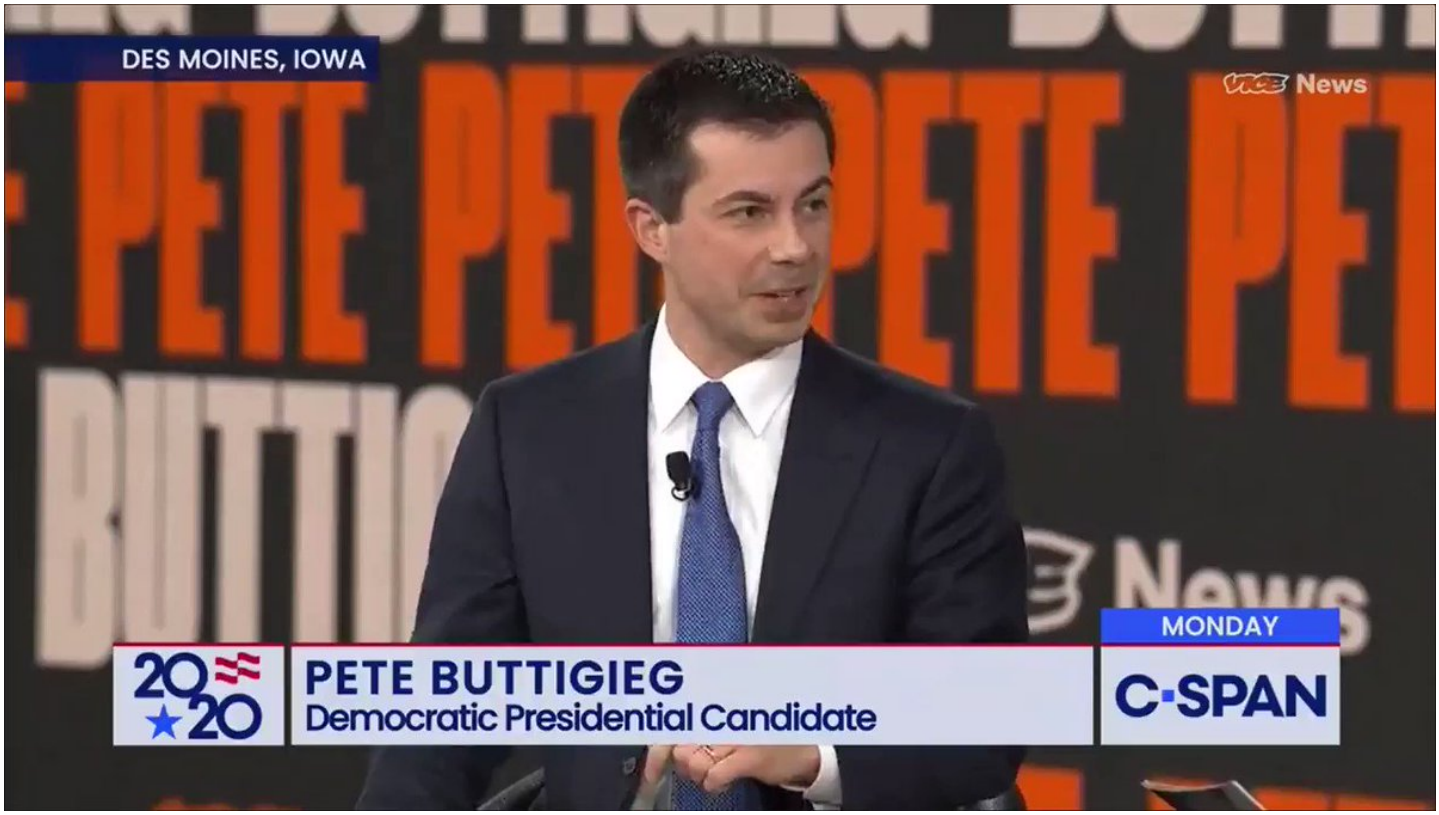
Buttigieg told Vice's @ahylton26 that he was letting the system handle it, and that he couldn't address each officer's situation because of legal proceedings and investigations into the officers.

It wasn't true.

https://t.co/LRkiLPLw3I

Hylton pressed Buttigieg, pointing out that some of the officers had good records, but Buttigieg wouldn't respond. (Watch the exchange, he ain't happy.)

Another issue is that those charges against the black officers were some of the systemic problems they were alleging.



I have no idea whether Buttigieg will do a good job at Transportation.

But anyone seeking to run a federal agency ought to be held accountable for their record -- especially on questions they've refused to answer publicly.

Oh, and Buttigieg to this day has yet to release his campaign-finance filings from his first mayoral run.

https://t.co/3D7f0qrgaU

I obtained one batch of them independently and TYT teamed up with @publicintegrity and @lateshiabeachum to look into who Buttigieg's earliest donors were:

https://t.co/0tVw286bSv

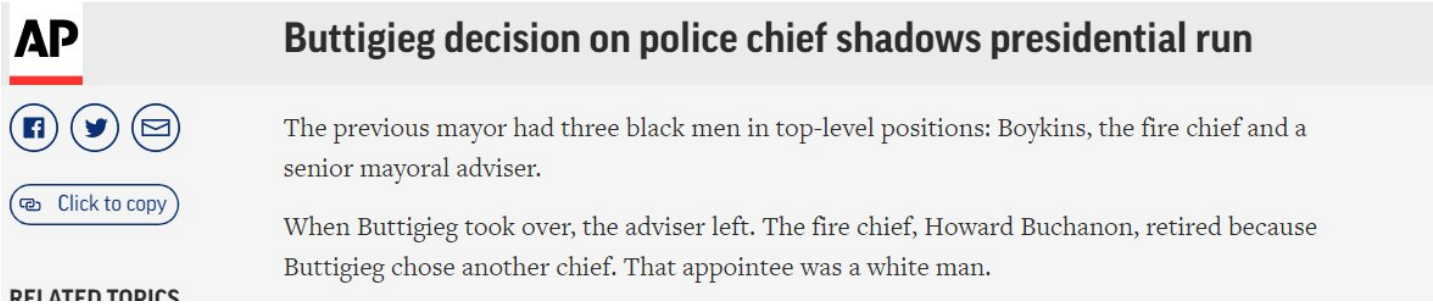
One thing I discovered later was that the white FIRE chief Buttigieg appointed to replace Howard Buchanon, the black chief...

...was the stepson of Buttigieg's GOP fundraiser and donor.

https://t.co/dhXR6b1hob

For years, Buttigieg had claimed he appointed the new white fire chief because Buchanon was retiring.

As the AP revealed, it was the other way around. Buchanon retired because Buttigieg chose to replace him.



I've tried to hit the most important points, but I've left out a lot, so thank you to anyone who goes to the trouble of reading the articles themselves.

FWIW my black sources kind of laugh at me for coming back to this stuff. They're that used to no one giving a shit.

Whoa, cool!

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Jonathan Larsen @jtlarsen · 2h

Pete Buttigieg testifies today on his nomination to run the Dept. of Transportation.

I spent almost a year covering Buttigieg. He refused to speak with me, so I'm going to thread some of the things senators could ask him about today.

22 742 1.6K

Show this thread



DJ Judd @DJJudd · 10m

Amy Klobuchar, who sits on the Senate Commerce Committee, greets her old campaign rival, **Pete Buttigieg**, says, "I think you know I'm excited about your nomination....I know you well, and I can attest to my colleagues what a forward thinking and thoughtful secretary you will be."



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Trending with Defense Production Act

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Pete Buttigieg

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