

Mooresville Town Council,

After much consideration I have decided to resign from the Mooresville Police Commission. While it has been my honor and pleasure to serve the good people of the Mooresville Metropolitan Police Department and the people of Mooresville, I feel I cannot be effective with Jeff Cook and Shane Williams on the council.

The commission worked very hard for 5 months to put in place the most fair, unbiased, and professional hiring process this town has ever used, per the request of our officers, only to have Mr. Cook and Mr. Williams manipulate, countermand, and undermine our efforts.

Because of their very public demands to insert themselves into this process we had several candidates express concerns that the process, despite the commission's efforts, was not going to be fair or unbiased. At our November meeting Jeff Cook made several statements that should not have been shared publicly while the process was still underway. It was clear to anyone watching he had been leveraging his long-time friendship with Fred Settle to gain insider knowledge and was intent on using that knowledge to influence the process. It worked.

We had one external candidate express severe concerns about the fairness of the process, complaining it was "rigged". He officially withdrew from the process after reading the news coverage of our meeting. Another external candidate was recruited by the City of Martinsville. It is very difficult to recruit quality talent when a soon-to-be town council member hamstring us by very publicly stating "Well, understand, whoever you guys hire, make sure they're perfectly clear that they could be a regular patrolman January 1, versus a police chief." What qualified person in their right mind would take a chance on Mooresville with such hostility being thrown towards an as-yet unnamed candidate?

Both Jeff Cook and Shane Williams, by their actions and statements at meetings and online, directly affected the integrity of our hiring process – before they even took office. At best their actions were ignorant and incompetent. At worst it was a flagrant display of corrupt cronyism. Either way, I cannot work under such conditions and I shudder to think of the challenges Mooresville will face at the hands of these two should they continue to govern in the same manner.

This is not to say Kevin Julian is not qualified for the chief's position. He earned his spot at the top of our candidate list. He is capable, qualified, and experienced. It is still my belief that he will do a fine job for the Mooresville Police Department. What I take issue with is the intentional, brazen, and ultimately successful attempt by two not-yet-serving town council members to be in control of a process specifically meant to be unbiased and free from the kind of good old boy system our citizens have resoundingly been speaking out against.

I would also like to thank the 2019 Town Council for the opportunity to serve and for their support. I have enjoyed working with you. I have learned a lot from you. While we did not always see eye-to-eye, you have all been respectful and courteous to me and the commission in general. Most importantly, I appreciate that you did not try and interfere in the hiring process. I know some of you did not like that we asked you to remain out of the loop, but you respected what we were trying to do enough to let the process run its course without interference. Thank you. It has been a pleasure working with you.

Leaving the commission is not a decision I take lightly. There is much work still to be done. I simply will not waste my time, talent, and energy in a fruitless and never-ending battle against a town council clearly bent on micro-managing and controlling everything in town. If I am not free to do my job, then what am I supposed to accomplish? At this time, I feel I can best serve the people of Mooresville in a much better capacity from outside such a government.