

The Quartzsite, Arizona Police Corruption Scandal

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Governor Jan Brewer continues to ignore the international attention paid to Quartzsite, Arizona over [\\$5 million in corruption charges](#), while the Chief of Police suspended nine of the city's 14 police officers with pay, ordering them not to leave their homes between the hours of 8 am and 5 pm.

All of the suspended officers blew the whistle on the chief, calling for an independent investigation into [several serious charges](#), including false arrests and violating federal medical privacy laws.

Freedom Watch [reported](#):

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4RfgESmqeVM>

In response to citizen demands for action, Brewer's office [wrote](#):

"As you may know, the Governor does not have the authority to intervene in local law enforcement matters. Nor does this office have the authority to investigate misconduct by the police, county jails, federal prisons, and/or judges."

Well, she may not have the "authority," but she certainly has the power to pressure Chief of Police Jeff Gilbert into a leave of absence while he is being investigated.

The [Quartzsite Arizona blogspot](#) posted a copy of the Notice of Investigation served on the officers for possibly violating "Personnel Policy" by reporting crimes allegedly committed by Chief Gilbert. Hardly a crime worth being suspended over, especially when compared to the charges leveled against Gilbert, who has not been suspended.

Assistant Town Manager Al Jognson is conducting the investigation. Jognson is part of the gang holding secret City Council meetings, and refusing to explain the \$5 million in secret payments, in violation of state laws. But they don't care, according to statements made to [Arizona Republic](#):

"In interviews, [Councilmen Jose] Lizarraga and [Jerry] Lukkasson said they do not care if some council meetings are deemed unlawful or if public-records laws are broken."

These people swore an oath to uphold the laws and don't care they're breaking them? That's ground for recall. Ironically, Lizarraga resigned last month to run for office in the upcoming Mayoral recall election.

[Hemet Productions](#) is currently making a documentary about Quartzsite and seeks interviewees. That's because the current controversy stems from political battles going back years. Arizona Republic reports:

"In the past three years alone, Quartzsite has been through five mayors and a trio of recall elections. (Foster, who has been mayor since 2010, is facing a recall vote next month.) The municipal government is buried in costly lawsuits."

Voicing disagreement with the Police Chief or City Council results in arrest and criminal charges. City Attorney Matt Newman, who refused to abuse the law in this way and dismissed all charges against several people, was fired "without explanation."

In his place, Martin Brannan was appointed, though he was recently [reprimanded](#) by the State Bar Association for [prosecutorial misconduct](#) in a murder case. Brannan ordered officers to contact the defendant without giving prior notice to his attorney. The detectives made several threats if he did not waive his legal rights. Their actions resulted in a dismissal of all charges against the defendant, though that dismissal is being appealed.

How's that for abuse of process? But it parallels Chief Gilbert's false arrest of anyone who criticizes him or the City Council. Though state and federal laws are being openly violated, the state has yet to stop any of it.

Of course, this is the state where its Chief Federal Judge, John Roll, was killed (along with five others) and Member of Congress Gabriel Giffords was shot in the head this past January when a "lone gunman" staged a shooting spree, hitting 19 people. Giffords was [released from the hospital](#) last month, though she will undergo daily physical therapy, possibly for years.

Incidentally, the shooting occurred after President Obama claimed the power to [order extra-judicial killings](#).

After discussing the shooting spree, Chief Gilbert [warned](#) the Council in an open meeting on January 11 that the same level of anti-government rhetoric exists in Quartzsite (starting at about 6:24), which he characterized as warning signs similar to those exhibited by Jared Lee Loughner, Roll's assassin:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1zHOlbYWHdo>

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