

Lee police union says it's not target of FBI investigation

By Dick Lindsay, Berkshire Eagle Staff Berkshire Eagle

Posted:

BerkshireEagle.com

LEE -- Ten out of the 11 full-time members of the Lee Police Department say they aren't the targets of an ongoing FBI investigation.

On Thursday, the Lee Patrol Officers Union No. 396, which includes nine patrolmen and one sergeant, issued a response to the FBI's court-ordered search of the department's office late last month.

"Due to recent inquiries following an investigation led by the FBI and members of the state police, the union members of the Lee Police Department would like to inform the public, especially the Lee community, that the investigation has nothing to do with any department patrol officer," the union's statement said. "We continue in our commitment and effort to serve and protect our community."

All 10 members of the union support the statement, according to union officials.

Police Chief Joseph Buffis isn't a union member. He has a separate contract with the town.

Since federal, state and local law enforcement agencies involved in the investigation aren't revealing the purpose of the probe, the patrol officers felt the need to quell some of the suspicion surrounding the local police force, according to the union's lawyer.

"The feeling among union members is there's a suggestion they are part of the investigation and it's not fair to them," said Terry Coles, a Boston attorney.

Buffis confirmed two weeks ago that he had retained an attorney, but hasn't commented further on the case.

On Tuesday night, the Lee Board of Selectmen said they have no immediate reason to take action against the chief during the investigation. The board noted no charges have been filed against Buffis.

The FBI won't say why it searched the Lee Police Department and a Pittsfield home on Nov. 19. Federal agents also have declined to disclose what -- if anything -- was seized.

The FBI also won't confirm if the Pittsfield home it searched belongs to an employee of the Lee Police Department. Buffis, a Lee native and 33-year veteran of Lee law enforcement, has lived in Pittsfield for eight years. He has risen through the ranks, becoming a sergeant before he was named the town's police chief in September 2011.



FBI searches Lee Police Department

Search carried out at department, Pittsfield home

LEE, Mass. -

The FBI has carried out a search of the Lee Police Department headquarters, but exactly what they were looking for and what, if anything, they seized, has not been disclosed.

An FBI spokesman confirmed to The Berkshire Eagle the agency carried out a court-authorized search at the Lee Police Department on Monday and at a home in Pittsfield.

Police Chief Joseph Buffis says he has retained a lawyer, but did not say why.

He was at work Tuesday, the day after the search.

The head of the FBI's Springfield office says no one has been arrested.

The FBI, as well as state and local law enforcement agencies said they do not comment on active inquiries.

Copyright 2012 by The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

LIVE STREAMING VIDEO from NewsChannel 13

Department

Scanned
Lee Police FBI Search

Posted at: 11/19/2012 6:08 PM | Updated at: 11/19/2012 11:19 PM

By: Staff

		SHARE	
--	--	-------	--

BERKSHIRE COUNTY - NewsChannel13 has developing news out of Berkshire County, where the FBI was involved in a search of the Lee Police Department on Monday.

FBI agents confirm a number of special agents, and the Berkshire District Attorney's office spent five to six hours in the police station.

Some people in Lee said they thought it looked like a raid.

The FBI will not tell us why they're investigating the police department.

So far, no one has been arrested.

The FBI confirms that they also investigated a home in Pittsfield, as part of the investigation.

We went to the Lee Police Chief's home on Monday evening, but he wouldn't comment.

No other information is being released at this time.



You might like:

- [Freak accident kills owner of popular Schenectady restaurant](#)(this site)
- [Cruise ship returns to Florida after child fall](#)(this site)
- [2 Iranian men hanged after assault video hits YouTube](#) (The Daily Dot)
- [Boy, 12, charged with first-degree rape](#) (this site)
- [Two high school students arrested, accused of writing on bathroom wall](#)(this site)

(Selected for you by our sponsor)

Mail: 715 North Pearl Street, Albany, NY 12204
Phone: 1-800-999-WNYT Email: comments@wnyt.com
© Copyright 2013 WNYT-TV, LLC
WNYT is an Equal Opportunity Employer

ADVERTISE YOUR REPORTS ABOUT US ARCHIVES CONTACT US

FBI search of Lee Police Department centers on Chief Buffis

LEE – An FBI investigation, leading to the search of the Lee Police Department, appears to be zeroing in on Police Chief Joseph Buffis.

Agents of the FBI, assisted by State Troopers assigned to the Berkshire County District Attorney's office, investigated the offices of the Lee Police Department and the home of Chief Buffis on Monday, Nov. 19.

Witnesses of the investigation at the police station have described it as being akin to a raid.

"Special agents of the FBI from the Springfield office and state troopers assigned to the Berkshire County District Attorney's office conducted an investigation at the Lee police Department on November 19," said Mark Karangekis, supervisor at the FBI Offices in Springfield, in comments to *The Beacon*.

"The investigation was the result of a court ordered action. There were no arrests. The investigation is ongoing and we will not comment on specifics," said Supervisor Karangekis.

"State troopers assigned to our office assisted the FBI with their investigation yesterday in Lee," said Fred Lantz, spokesman for the Berkshire County District Attorney's Office, confirming their assistance.

The FBI was able to confirm they also searched 131 Elaine Dr. in Pittsfield, the home of Chief Buffis. Agents of the FBI were reported at that address on Nov. 19 as well.

"We can confirm that agents of the FBI were involved in court-authorized activity at 131 Elaine Dr.," said Supervisor Karangekis.

The U.S. Attorney's Office in Boston had no comment on the matter other than, "The warrant is under seal."

The chief also confirmed he has retained an attorney.

The Lee Board of Selectmen and Lee Town Administrator Bob Nason are refusing to comment on the matter at this time.

"Have a great day," said Chief Buffis when asked by *The Beacon* about FBI agents coming to his house.

Chief Buffis chose to give no comment on the FBI's investigation at the Lee Police Department's offices.

The Berkshire Beacon is continuing to investigate this story and will update it as new information is found.



Share This Post

1 11 0
Tweet Like



Posted by [Kameron Z. Spaulding](#) on November 20, 2012. Filed under [Featured News](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#). You can leave a response or [trackback](#) to this entry