

NAME & TITLE	James L. Shea, Baltimore City Solicitor	CITY OF BALTIMORE	
AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of Law, Suite 101, City Hall		
SUBJECT	Plaintiff: former Officer Jeffry Taylor <i>Jeffry E. Taylor v. Baltimore Police Department, et al.</i> U.S. District Court Case No.: 1:18-cv-03999		

MEMO

TO: Honorable President and Members
of the Board of Estimates

Date: February 4, 2022

ACTION REQUESTED OF BOARD OF ESTIMATES

The Department of Law respectfully requests authorization to approve the settlement of a federal lawsuit brought by now-former Officer Jeffry Taylor. The lawsuit was filed against Sgt. Kurt Roepcke, former Major Frederick Gilbert, and former Police Commissioners Kevin Davis, Darryl De Sousa and Gary Tuggle. Plaintiff alleged claims of Retaliation for exercising his First Amendment Rights in relation to an OIG investigation into the BPD Marine Unit.

AMOUNT OF MONEY AND SOURCE OF FUNDS

The total amount of the proposed settlement is \$160,000.00.
Funds are available in account number 1001-000000-2041-716700-603070.

BACKGROUND/EXPLANATION

In December 2016, the BPD Marine Unit engaged in an operation to remove a boat from the Inner Harbor. Plaintiff, a member of the Marine Unit, informed his chain of command, including his direct supervisor, Sgt. Roepcke, and the commander of the Special Operations Unit, Major Milton Corbett, that he believed the operation was outside the scope and capabilities of the Marine Unit. Despite Plaintiff's concerns, the Marine Unit continued with the operation and removed the boat in February 2017. Plaintiff alleges that following the removal of the boat, he was retaliated against through involuntary transfers, unfounded disciplinary complaints, and a hostile work environment.

Plaintiff filed a timely LGTCA notice, and a Complaint with BPD's Internal Affairs Division ("IAD"), alleging his immediate supervisors retaliated against him for exercising his First Amendment Rights. Plaintiff also filed a complaint with the Baltimore City Office of Inspector General ("OIG") alleging both First Amendment retaliation and additionally that the Marine Unit's removal of the boat was unsafe and wasted City funds. While the IAD investigation found no evidence of retaliation or violation of departmental policies, the OIG issued a report stating the Marine Unit's removal operation had been improper and wasted BPD resources and City funds.

Plaintiff subsequently filed the current lawsuit, alleging violations of his First Amendment Rights and violations of the Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights. He alleged that Sgt. Roepcke and Major Gilbert retaliated against him for speaking to the OIG and that the former Police



SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT AND RELEASE

THIS SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT AND RELEASE (the "Agreement") is made and entered into this ___ day of _____, 2022, by, between, and among Jeffrey E. Taylor (the "Releasing Party"), and the undersigned, Baltimore Police Department ("BPD") and the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore (collectively, BPD and the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore will be referred to as the "Settling Parties"). The Settling Parties, in addition to all current and former officers and employees of the BPD and Mayor and City Council of Baltimore are hereafter referred to as the "Released Parties." The Released Parties together with the Releasing Party are referred to herein as the "Parties."

RECITALS

WHEREAS, Releasing Party filed a Complaint in the United States District Court for the District of Maryland, substantially or similarly styled as *Jeffry Taylor v. Kurt Roepcke, et al.*, Case No. 18-cv-03999-SAG (the "Litigation"), arising out of a series of alleged actions and incidents beginning in the fall of 2016 and that are outlined in the Releasing Party's Litigation, stemming from Jeffrey Taylor's employment with the Baltimore Police Department, in Baltimore City, Maryland (the "Occurrences"); and

WHEREAS, the Releasing Party alleges that he sustained civil rights violations, personal injuries, economic damages, emotional distress and/or other damages, whether presently known or unknown, related to the Occurrences (hereinafter "Releasing Party's Losses"); and

WHEREAS, the Released Parties deny and dispute the allegations asserted in the Litigation; and

WHEREAS, the Settling Parties now desire to fully compromise and settle finally and forever any now existing claims or disputes asserted or which could have been asserted of whatever nature, including without limitation, any and all claims, causes of action, costs and demands of whatever name or nature, in any manner by the Releasing Party arising, growing out of, or on account of any Releasing Party's Losses, the Litigation, or the Occurrences, against the Released Parties.

AGREEMENT

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises and agreements set forth herein, and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, the Releasing Party and Settling Parties hereby covenant and agree as follows:

1. **Recitals:** The foregoing recitals are incorporated into and made part of this Agreement.

2. **Payment:** In consideration of the Releasing Party's entry into this Agreement, and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is acknowledged by the Settling Parties, the City shall make the sum total payment to the Releasing Party of One Hundred and Sixty Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents (\$160,000.00), on behalf of the Released Parties, payable to "Jeffrey Taylor & Schmidt, Dailey, & O'Neill, L.L.C.", as full and final payment for making the Release and abiding by the terms set forth in this Agreement (the "Settlement Sum").

3. **Dismissal:** In accordance with the Rule 111 Settlement Order to be entered by the Court, the Parties shall reserve and maintain all rights to seek reopening of the Litigation, as allotted under D. Md. L.R. 111.

4. **Approval by City's Board of Estimates:** The Parties understand that payment of the Settlement Sum as set forth in this Agreement is subject to, and contingent upon, the prior approval by Baltimore City's Board of Estimates. In the event that the Board of Estimates rejects the settlement, this Agreement will become void and of no legal effect, whereupon the parties could continue to seek relief through the Litigation regarding the Occurrences. The Released Parties and their counsel agree to present this settlement to the Board of Estimates, together with their recommendation that this settlement be approved.

5. **Warranty of Capacity to Enter Into Release:** The Releasing Party represents and warrants that no other person or entity has any interest in the claims, demands, allegations or causes of action referred to in this Agreement except as otherwise set forth herein and that he has the sole right and exclusive authority to execute this Agreement, to receive the sum specified in it and to release all claims on his behalf, and that he has not sold, assigned, transferred, conveyed or otherwise disposed of any claim, demand, obligation or causes of action referred to in this Agreement. If any person should assert a claim on behalf of the Releasing Party for damages against any of the Released Parties claiming that the Releasing Party did not have the right or authority to enter into this Agreement or receive the monies hereunder, the Releasing Party agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Released Parties from any and all claims or contentions, damages, costs, liability and attorneys' fees as a consequence or result of such claim or lawsuit.

6. **General Release and Covenant not to Sue:** In consideration of the payment of the Settlement Sum and other good and valuable consideration, the Releasing Party, his heirs, assigns, agents, representatives, attorneys and successors in interest hereby unconditionally releases and forever discharges and covenants not to sue the Released Parties, their officials, agents, employees, employers, agencies, departments, directors, officers, members, representatives, assigns, attorneys, successors in interest, and all other persons, firms, entities, governmental entities, and corporations from any and all Claims which the Releasing Party may now or hereafter have or claim to have, arising out of, or in any way related to, the Occurrences, Releasing Party's Losses, and/or the allegations or claims asserted, or that could have been asserted, in the Litigation, provided, however, the obligations of the Releasing Party and the Settling Parties under this Agreement shall continue in full force and effect.

As referred to herein, the term "Claims" shall mean and include, but is not limited to, any and all losses, costs, expenses, debts, actions (constitutional or statutory, in law, or in equity), causes of action, suits, damages, claims, demands and all other claims, liabilities and obligations of any nature whatsoever including but not limited to any and all claims under § 1983 ("*Monell* claims") and any comparative state law claims, whether presently known or unknown, including attorneys' and consultant's fees.

Notwithstanding the terms of the Settlement Agreement and Release and covenant not to sue as outlined in Paragraph 6, the Releasing Party does not waive any right or claim that may arise following the execution of this Settlement Agreement.

7. **Confidentiality.** The Parties understand that the terms and conditions of the Stipulated Confidentiality Order in this matter (ECF No. 43) ("the Order") shall remain in

effect, despite the dismissal of the litigation. The Parties agree that all documents and information obtained through discovery in this matter shall be designated as “CONFIDENTIAL” and treated in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Order. The Parties agree that all documents produced in this matter shall either be returned to the originating party or be destroyed in accordance with the Order.

8. **Costs and Expenses.** The Releasing Party and the Settling Parties will be responsible for their own respective costs and expenses incurred in connection with the prosecution, defense and settlement of the claims asserted by the Releasing Party in the Litigation.

9. **No Admission of Liability:** It is understood and agreed by the Releasing Party and the Settling Parties that this Agreement and the Releases contained herein shall not be construed as an admission of liability on the part of any of the Parties, any such liability being expressly denied, and that rather, the purpose of this Agreement is to fully and finally resolve all differences amongst the Parties and to allow the Parties to avoid the time, expense and uncertainties of protracted litigation.

10. **Medicare/Medicaid Liens:** The Releasing Party understands that Section 111 of the Medicare, Medicaid and SCHIP Extension Act of 2007 (“MMSEA”) imposes a lien (the “Medicare Lien”) for reimbursement of certain payments made by Medicare. The Settling Parties understand and believe that there are no outstanding Medicare Liens. Notwithstanding this, in the event that payment of the claims results in an obligation to reimburse Medicare, the Releasing Party agrees to make such reimbursement and agrees that his attorneys may retain sufficient funds in the attorneys' escrow account to satisfy the

Medicare Lien. If the Releasing Party or his attorneys fail to satisfy a Medicare Lien, and that failure causes the Released Parties to pay or reimburse any person or entity any amount MMSEA specifies, the Releasing Party agrees to reimburse the Released Parties' payment or reimbursement to such person or entity. Upon receipt of documentation from Medicare that any Medicare Lien is satisfied, the Releasing Party will send a copy of such documentation to the Released Parties.

11. **No Evidence of Need to Indemnify:** It is understood and agreed by the Parties that this Agreement and/or corresponding settlement or payment of the Settlement Sum is not to be construed as evidence of an obligation on behalf of the Settling Parties to indemnify any person who may be covered under this Agreement for claims of intentional conduct, as such contention is expressly denied.

12. **Entire Agreement of the Parties:** It is understood and agreed by the Releasing Party and Settling Parties that this Agreement constitutes the entire Agreement among the Parties with respect to the subject matter hereof and supersedes all other prior and contemporaneous written or oral agreements and discussions. This Agreement may only be amended by a writing signed by all parties hereto.

13. **Drafting of the Agreement.** The Releasing Party and Settling Parties acknowledge and agree that this Agreement represents the product of negotiations by the Releasing Party and Settling Parties and shall not be deemed to have been drafted exclusively by any one party. In the event of a dispute regarding the meaning of any language contained in this Agreement, the Releasing Party and Settling Parties agree that the same shall be

accorded a reasonable construction and shall not be construed more strongly against one party than the other.

14. **Severability:** In the event that any covenant, condition, or other provision contained in this Agreement is held to be invalid, void, or illegal by any court of competent jurisdiction, the same shall be deemed severable from the remainder of this Agreement and shall in no way affect, impair or invalidate any other covenant, condition or other provision contained herein. If such condition, covenant or other provision shall be deemed invalid due to its scope of breadth, such covenant, condition or other provision shall be deemed valid to the extent of the scope of breadth permitted by law.

15. **Knowing and Voluntary Act:** The Releasing Party and Settling Parties represent that each read this Agreement and acknowledge that each has been represented or had the opportunity to be represented by legal counsel of their own choice throughout all of the negotiations which preceded the execution of this Agreement and that the Releasing Party and Settling Parties voluntarily and knowingly executed this Agreement of their own free will and/or with the consent and/or on the advice of such legal counsel. Each of the Parties further acknowledge that each and/or such party's counsel have had adequate opportunity to make whatever investigation or inquiry they may deem necessary or desirable in connection with the subject matter of this Agreement prior to the execution hereof and the delivery and acceptance of the considerations specified herein.

16. **Survival of Terms:** The Releasing Party and Settling Parties agree that this Agreement shall upon approval inure to the benefit of the Parties and their respective agents, assigns, partners, heirs, executors, administrators, and personal or legal representatives. The

Releasing Party and Settling Parties understand and agree that the terms, covenants, and conditions set forth in this Agreement shall survive the closing of the Agreement.

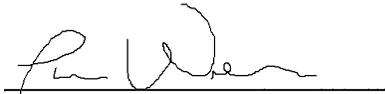
17. **Governing Law:** This Agreement shall be governed by and construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of Maryland, without giving effect to its conflicts of law provisions.

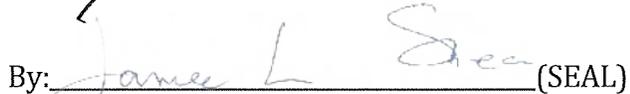
18. **Counterparts:** This Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, but all of which together shall be deemed to be one and the same instrument. An emailed, facsimile or copy signature will be binding and legal in all respects as if it were an original signature to this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have executed this Agreement by the duly authorized representatives as of the date first written above:

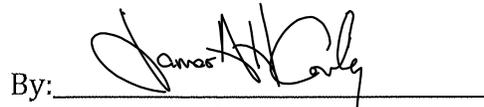

WITNESS

 (SEAL)
Jeffrey E. Taylor


WITNESS

By:  (SEAL)
James L. Shea, Baltimore City Solicitor

Approved as to Form and Legal Sufficiency **APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF ESTIMATES**

By: 
Assistant Solicitor
Department of Law

By: _____
Clerk Date