



REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

ALLEGATIONS OF NEGLIGENCE OF DUTY, MISUSE OF CITY PROPERTY AND ABUSE OF OFFICE BY KYSHUN WEBSTER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JUVENILE JUSTICE INTERVENTION CENTER

OCTOBER 31, 2022

Edward Michel, CIG
Inspector General



REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

22-0001-I

TITLE: Allegations of neglect of duty, misuse of City of New Orleans (City) property and abuse of office by Kyshun Webster, Executive Director, Juvenile Justice Intervention Center (JJIC). It is alleged that Kyshun Webster consistently failed to report for work at the JJIC facility while still being paid by the City. It is also alleged that Kyshun Webster used JJIC facilities and personnel to care for his dog.

LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE: Juvenile Justice Intervention Center
1100-A Milton Street, New Orleans, LA 70122

DATE OF OCCURRENCE: November 2020 through March 2022

INVESTIGATED BY: Investigator Terence Barrett

VIOLATIONS: CAO Policy Memorandum No. 83(R), effective June 17, 2020 - Standards of Behavior for City Employees, Section II, General Standards, Paragraph (f).¹

CAO Policy Memorandum No. 83(R), effective June 17, 2020 - Standards of Behavior for City Employees, Section II, General Standards, Paragraph (o).²

Louisiana Code of Governmental Ethics, La R.S. 42:1116 - Abuse of Office, Paragraph (A).

ACTION TAKEN: Referred to the City of New Orleans Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) for administrative action.

BASIS FOR INVESTIGATION

The investigation into this matter was predicated on complaints received in February 2021 from the Metropolitan Crime Commission and two former JJIC employees who wished to remain anonymous. The complainants all allege that Kyshun Webster, Executive Director, JJIC, does not report to work on a regular basis, and that his absenteeism is affecting the operation of the JJIC. Current JJIC employees also reported that Kyshun Webster housed his dog at the JJIC facility and compelled JJIC employees to care for it.

¹ See Exhibit 1, page 2, CAO Policy Memorandum No. 83(R), effective June 17, 2020

² *Ibid*

Kyshun Webster was hired as the Executive Director of the JJIC on July 15, 2019 and resigned from the position effective April 29, 2022.³ He had earlier been replaced by JJIC Assistant Superintendent Dichelle Williams who was named acting Interim Director for the JJIC on March 18, 2022.⁴

EXTENT AND RESULTS OF INVESTIGATION

Allegations of Neglect of Duty

Pursuant to two (2) Requests for Documents dated May 18, 2021 and December 22, 2021, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) obtained card access system records showing the date and time of employees' card swipes at the JJIC facility from November 1, 2020 through October 31, 2021.⁵ The OIG also obtained copies of the log book documenting the signatures of employees and visitors entering or leaving the JJIC from November 1, 2020 through October 31, 2021.

JJIC employees (all shifts) are only allowed to enter the facility through the main entrance on Milton Street. Once inside, security protocols are followed; individuals and their belongings are scanned for weapons and contraband. Employees and visitors are required to sign a log book at the security desk.

According to JJIC card access system records, Kyshun Webster accessed areas and locations inside the JJIC facility using his access control card on the following 13 dates during the one-year period of November 1, 2020 through October 31, 2021:⁶

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. November 11, 2020 Wednesday | 8. March 9, 2021 Tuesday |
| 2. November 26, 2020 Thursday | 9. April 14, 2021 Wednesday |
| 3. December 9, 2020 Wednesday | 10. May 3, 2021 Monday |
| 4. December 24, 2020 Thursday | 11. June 17, 2021 Thursday |
| 5. January 19, 2021 Tuesday | 12. July 27, 2021 Tuesday |
| 6. January 29, 2021 Friday | 13. August 10, 2021 Tuesday |
| 7. February 24, 2021 Wednesday | |

³ See Exhibit 2, Kyshun Webster's Notice of Resignation sent via email and effective on April 29, 2022

⁴ See Exhibit 3, Mayor's Office news article dated March 18, 2022 appearing on <https://www.nola.gov/mayor/news/>

⁵ See Exhibits 4 and 5, Requests for Documents dated May 18, 2021 and December 22, 2021

⁶ See Exhibit 6, JJIC card access system records for Dr. Webster from November 1, 2020 through October 31, 2021

A review of the employee and visitor log book showed that Kyshun Webster, PhD. (Dr. Webster's) name appeared only once on November 11, 2020 in the Temperature Log, which was implemented as part of the JJIC's COVID protocols. (OIG Note: JJIC employees commonly referred to Kyshun Webster as Dr. Webster.)

Dr. Webster's name was crossed out in the single instance it appeared on November 11, 2020 and his name does not appear anywhere else in the log book from November 1, 2020 through October 31, 2021.⁷

According to review of annual and sick leave records, Kyshun Webster was absent from the JJIC facility on 51 days from January 1, 2020 through April 29, 2022 as shown in the table below:

Year	Annual leave taken	Sick leave taken	Total leave taken
2020	10 days	0 days	10 days
2021	9 days	8 days	17 days
2022 (January through April)	7 days	17 days	24 days
Total Leave	26 days	25 days	51 days

On April 21, 2022, a City employee assigned to the JJIC was interviewed at the JJIC facility by OIG Investigator Terence Barrett.

The employee was asked to discuss how often Dr. Webster would report to work during the year which ended December 31, 2021. (OIG Note: By January 1, 2021, essential City employees, such as JJIC executive management, had returned to the office fulltime and were no longer working remotely due to the ongoing pandemic.) The employee advised that Dr. Webster was not in the office every day and acknowledged that Dr. Webster was not in the office as often as he should be. The employee stated that Dr. Webster would work half a day when he did come in. The employee said he would come to the office in the morning and stay half the day or sometimes come into the office after 4:00 PM. The employee recalled that Dr. Webster would occasionally call a staff member from his office after 4:00 PM.

The employee stated that the staff was always able to reach Dr. Webster when he was not in the office. The employee advised that Dr. Webster would let the staff know when he would not be in the office. The employee said Dr. Webster stayed in contact with his staff either through email or by cell phone. The employee advised that Dr. Webster would inform the staff where he was or where he would be. The employee was not aware of any concerns or complaints from the staff concerning Dr. Webster's absences.

⁷ See Exhibit 7, JJIC Temperature Log page for November 11, 2020

On April 21, 2022, a City employee assigned to the JJIC was interviewed at the JJIC facility by OIG Investigator Terence Barrett.

The employee was asked to discuss how often Dr. Webster would report to work. The employee stated that Dr. Webster would come to work 3 to 4 days a week. The employee advised that when Dr. Webster came in, he would not stay long. The employee stated that Dr. Webster drove a blue Mercedes-Benz and would always park in the reserved parking area in the first spot nearest the front door. The employee said Dr. Webster would occasionally drive his City-owned gray Dodge Durango, but usually someone else would drive him in the Durango.

The employee stated that Dr. Webster would not sign the employee or visitor log book at the front desk when he entered the JJIC facility. The employee noted that Dr. Webster seldom used his electronic access card to enter the JJIC facility.

The employee said that sometimes people in the security control room would recognize Dr. Webster and let him in remotely. According to the employee, Dr. Webster was arrogant and did not treat his employees well.

On April 21, 2022, a City employee assigned to the JJIC was interviewed at the JJIC facility by OIG Investigator Terence Barrett.

The employee was asked to discuss how often Dr. Webster would report to work during the year which ended December 31, 2021. The employee stated that Dr. Webster was not at the JJIC much and that he was “gone more than you saw him”. The employee said he would come in sporadically. The employee advised that sometimes Dr. Webster would come in but would not stay long. The employee said Dr. Webster would come at different times of the day, stay for a few hours, and then leave.

The employee noted that Dr. Webster drove a blue Mercedes-Benz and would always park in the reserved parking area in front of the JJIC facility in the first spot nearest the door. The employee mentioned that Dr. Webster did not drive his City-owned gray Dodge Durango unless he was going to City Hall. The employee said many times someone else would drive him in the Durango.

According to the employee, Dr. Webster was very arrogant and had a “huge ego”. He would not sign the employee or visitor log book at the front desk when he entered the JJIC facility. The employee commented that Dr. Webster would walk through the magnetometer and activate the alarm, but would continue walking and not stop. The employee stated that to their knowledge, no one scanned an access card for Dr. Webster to gain access into the JJIC facility. The employee said sometimes the control desk would let Dr. Webster in remotely, or that someone would recognize him and let him in through the security checkpoint at the front door.

The employee believes Dr. Webster ran most of the staff off and that it was miserable for the employees when Dr. Webster was there.

On May 6, 2022, a former City employee assigned to the JJIC was interviewed over the telephone by OIG Investigator Terence Barrett.

The former employee was asked to discuss how often Dr. Webster would report to work during their time of employment with the JJIC. The former employee advised that Dr. Webster was not in the office every day.

The former employee felt that Dr. Webster was not in the office as often as he should have been. The former employee stated that initially, Dr. Webster would be in the office between 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

The former employee advised that beginning after the cyber-attack and continuing through the COVID pandemic, Dr. Webster would be in and out of the office, but mostly worked from home. (OIG Note: On December 13, 2019, there was a cyber-attack on the City's computer infrastructure.) The former employee said that Dr. Webster's pattern of being in and out of the office continued for the remainder of their employment with the JJIC.

The former employee stated that Dr. Webster required his executive staff, who were working from home, to prepare a work schedule and email a copy to him. They were also required to attach a copy to their office door. The former employee said Dr. Webster did not provide anyone with his work schedule or attach a work schedule to his office door. The former employee stated that Dr. Webster also required a list from each staff member of what they did when they worked from home each week. This list was to be sent to Dr. Webster by email the following Monday morning. The former employee said Dr. Webster did not provide a list to his staff of what he did. The former employee advised that Dr. Webster had a City issued cell phone and a personal cell phone. The former employee said Dr. Webster would call members of the executive staff several times throughout the day.

The former employee said that Dr. Webster's absenteeism impacted the operation of the JJIC. The former employee advised that deadlines were not met as a result of Dr. Webster's sporadic attendance. Reports were not reviewed or approved because Dr. Webster was not in the office. The staff was unable to hire new people in Dr. Webster's absence because he wanted to review and sign the offer letters himself. The former employee stated that the employment packets which would be sent to new employees required Dr. Webster's signature. The former employee advised that the staff would use a proxy stamp on documents that required Dr. Webster's signature when he was not in the office.

The former employee frequently heard Dr. Webster in his office, yelling and screaming at JJIC employees. The former employee felt that Dr. Webster acted unprofessionally when he berated other employees. The former employee advised that in March of 2019, Battco Construction and Maintenance, Inc. was hired to soundproof Dr. Webster's office. An OIG review of the City's Budget, Requisition & Accounting Services System (BRASS) found that in 2019 Battco Construction and Maintenance, Inc. provided soundproofing upgrades at the JJIC facility, which included installing sound control measures in the director's office (Work Order #19-5182-BC-JJIC, contract #K16-559, invoice #9550, at a cost of \$11,307.93).⁸

Allegations of Misuse of City Property and Abuse of Office

On April 21, 2022, Willie J. Miles, Jr., JJIC Plant Attendant, was interviewed at the JJIC facility by OIG Investigator Terence Barrett concerning an allegation that a dog was being transported to and from the JJIC facility in City-owned vehicles assigned to the JJIC.⁹ Mr. Miles has been working as a Plant Attendant at the JJIC since May 2009 when it was formally known as the Youth Study Center.

Mr. Miles advised that sometime in late 2021 he was instructed by JJIC Assistant Superintendent Dichelle Williams to drive her to Dr. Webster's house to pick up a dog. Mr. Miles said he drove the City-owned blue Ford F-250 crew cab pick-up truck assigned to the JJIC. He stated that Dr. Webster's wife met them at the house and gave him the dog. He said Dr. Webster drove up to the house a little while later. According to the 2022 1st Quarter City Vehicle Inventory List, the vehicle described is a 2008 Ford F-250, Asset #DW3023, assigned to Human Services-JJIC.

Mr. Miles advised that not too long after that, he was instructed by Lee Reisman, JJIC Superintendent of Supportive Services, to drive her and the dog to an animal hospital located somewhere on the Westbank, but he could not recall the specific location. Mr. Miles said he again drove the City-owned blue Ford F-250 crew cab pick-up truck.

Mr. Miles recalled that sometime this year (2022), he and two co-workers, Alquia Allison and Carlotta Banks, took the dog to the Louisiana Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (LSPCA). He said Alquia Allison drove them in one of the City-owned white passenger vans assigned to the JJIC.

On April 22, 2022, Dichelle L. Williams, interim Director, JJIC was interviewed over the telephone by OIG Investigator Terence Barrett.¹⁰ Ms. Williams has been the interim Director of the JJIC since March 2022.

⁸ See Exhibit 8, Work Order #19-5182-BC-JJIC, contract #K16-559, invoice #9550, at a cost of \$11,307.93

⁹ See Exhibit 9, MOI of Willie J. Miles, Jr. dated April 21, 2022

¹⁰ See Exhibit 10, MOI of Dichelle L. Williams dated April 22, 2022

Ms. Williams reported that in 2021, shortly after Hurricane Ida, she was contacted by Dr. Webster and instructed to go to his residence, pick up his dog, and bring it to the JJIC facility. She said Dr. Webster told her it was a service dog for the JJIC's juvenile residents. Ms. Williams recalled that she and Mr. Willie Miles from the JJIC Maintenance Department drove to Dr. Webster's residence in a City-owned blue Ford F-250 crew cab pick-up truck assigned to the JJIC. She remembered it being on a Friday afternoon between 5:00 PM and 6:00 PM.

Ms. Williams said the dog's name was Lacy. She thought it might be a Labrador Retriever but she was not sure. According to Ms. Williams, the dog was a former drug sniffing K-9 dog which had been retired from the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD). She said Dr. Webster's wife, Taralyn Webster, was a former NOPD Officer and had been the dog's handler. She believes that Taralyn Webster kept the dog as a pet after it retired from the NOPD.

Ms. Williams advised that, despite Dr. Webster referring to it as a service dog, she never saw any paperwork or documentation showing that the dog received any training as a service or therapy dog. She noted that the dog did not look like it was in the best of health and appeared "sickly". She also noted that the dog could not hold its urine.

Ms. Williams stated that once the dog was in the JJIC facility, Dr. Webster did not want anything to do with it. She advised that JJIC staff members were uncomfortable with the dog being in the facility and the juvenile residents did not like the dog. Ms. Williams stated that Lee Reisman, JJIC Supportive Services Superintendent, and her staff of social workers were coming to her (Williams) for help because they were being compelled to care for the dog. She stated that Dr. Webster instructed Ms. Reisman to prepare a written plan on how the dog would be cared for by her staff. According to Ms. Williams, Dr. Webster felt that since the dog was a service dog, it should be the responsibility of JJIC social workers to care for it.

Ms. Williams advised that she told Dr. Webster about the dog's deteriorating medical condition on behalf of Ms. Reisman. Ms. Williams stated that Dr. Webster told her to have Ms. Reisman plan to take the dog to the Aurora Animal Hospital on the Westbank for treatment. The Aurora Animal Hospital is located at 565 Holmes Blvd., Terrytown, LA 70056. She commented that after Ms. Reisman advised that she was not going to pay for the dog's medical treatment, Dr. Webster instructed them to have the cost billed to the JJIC. She advised that the dog was transported to and from the animal hospital by JJIC employees using a City-owned vehicle assigned to the JJIC. Ms. Williams learned that the dog was known at the animal hospital and was registered there on previous visits as Officer Lacy Webster.

Ms. Williams stated that earlier this year (2022) a number of complaints were made to Emily Wolff, Director of the Office of Youth & Families, from JJIC employees about the dog being at the facility. She advised that Emily Wolff notified her (Williams) that she wanted Dr. Webster to get

the dog out of the JJIC facility. Ms. Williams said she informed Dr. Webster, who instructed her to have JJIC employees take the dog to the LSPCA. Ms. Williams advised that JJIC employees Willie Miles, Alquia Allison and Carlotta Banks drove the dog to the LSPCA. She believes they took the dog in the City-owned blue Ford F-250 crew cab pick-up truck assigned to the JJIC.

On April 26, 2022, Lee J. Reisman, Supportive Services Superintendent, JJIC was interviewed in the JJIC conference room by OIG Investigator Terence Barrett.¹¹ Ms. Reisman said that she has been the Supportive Services Superintendent at the JJIC since June 2021. She was asked to discuss the circumstances surrounding a dog allegedly being housed and cared for at the JJIC facility.

Ms. Reisman stated that sometime after Hurricane Ida, in September 2021, Dr. Webster instructed Dichelle Williams, JJIC Assistant Superintendent, and a maintenance worker she only knew as “Mr. Willie” to drive to his house and pick up the dog. “Mr. Willie” was later identified as Willie J. Miles, Jr., JJIC Plant Attendant.

Ms. Reisman stated that the JJIC staff and juvenile residents were distraught when the dog arrived because of its appearance and condition. She said the dog appeared to be malnourished and neglected. Ms. Reisman described the dog as a 12-year-old black & white female Labrador Retriever named “Lacy”. She said that although Dr. Webster told her it was his family’s dog, he referred to it as a therapy dog. She commented that the dog had trouble climbing and needed a walking ramp to get in and out of the truck. Ms. Reisman provided the OIG with three photographic images of the dog.¹²

Ms. Reisman learned that the dog was formally a drug sniffing K-9 dog which had been retired from the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD). She said Dr. Webster’s wife, Taralyn Webster, was a former NOPD Officer and had been the dog’s handler. She apparently adopted the dog after it left the NOPD.

Ms. Reisman said Dr. Webster told them that the dog did not need any medication, although medicine was brought with the dog when it arrived at the JJIC facility. Dr. Webster provided a small bed, the walking ramp and an open bag of dog food. Mr. Reisman noted that there were ants on the bed. She said the dog bed had to be cleaned because it smelled bad and because of the ants.

Ms. Reisman stated that after two or three weeks the dog developed an inner ear problem. The dog was suffering from a skin condition, possibly dandruff or eczema. She said special shampoo was purchased and used to bathe the dog. The dog also had bladder problems and had difficulty

¹¹ See Exhibit 11, MOI of Lee J. Reisman dated April 26, 2022

¹² See Exhibits 12-14, Photographic images of Lacy the Dog

holding its urine. She and other concerned JJIC staff members would use their own money to buy toys and supplies for the dog. She advised that the dog required constant attention due to its medical issues.

Ms. Reisman stated that later in September 2021, shortly after the dog arrived, she expressed her concern about the dog's condition to Dr. Webster. She said Dr. Webster instructed her to arrange to have the dog taken to the Aurora Animal Hospital for treatment. She said Dr. Webster told her to have the animal hospital direct their payment request to JJIC Fiscal. Ms. Reisman advised that she and Willie Miles drove the dog to the Aurora Animal Hospital in a City-owned blue crew cab pick-up truck assigned to the JJIC. She said the animal hospital staff knew the dog and said they had not seen her for several years. Ms. Reisman said she learned from the vet that the dog had not received any heartworm medication or flea treatments in three years. She advised that she did not pay the animal hospital, but received a paper invoice to give to the JJIC. To her knowledge, the animal hospital billed the JJIC for the dog's medical treatment in an email sent to Estelle Speech, JJIC Fiscal Officer. The dog was then driven back to the JJIC facility in the same City-owned blue crew cab pick-up truck.

Ms. Reisman recalled that initially the dog would spend time in the medical unit of the JJIC facility, but it would whine and cry when it saw people. The dog was then moved to a classroom in the old school part of the JJIC facility, where the space was not being used. She said the dog would urinate and defecate inside the JJIC facility several times a day, creating health and safety concerns. The entire area would smell of urine. Ms. Reisman said she would go to the JJIC facility on weekends to check on the dog and to let it go outside in the recreation area. She advised that the juvenile residents complained about the dog feces in the recreation area.

Ms. Reisman advised that JJIC staff members were uncomfortable with the dog being in the facility. She stated that Dr. Webster did not check on the dog and was not responsive to the staff's concerns about the dog. Ms. Reisman stated that in February 2022, multiple complaints were made by JJIC employees to Emily Wolff, Director of the Office of Youth & Families, about the dog being there. According to Ms. Reisman, Emily Wolff directed Dr. Webster to get rid of the dog. Two days later, Willie Miles drove the dog to the LSPCA. Ms. Reisman did not know if anyone accompanied him. She does not know what happened to the dog after it left the JJIC facility.

An OIG review of BRASS did not show Aurora Animal Hospital as a vendor or having received any payment from the JJIC or the City. An inquiry was made to the JJIC Fiscal Department concerning the expense. It was learned that the JJIC Fiscal Department was aware of the invoice from the Aurora Animal Hospital, but did not pay the invoice because it was considered an unauthorized

expense. The JJIC Fiscal Department provided the OIG with a copy of the Aurora Animal Hospital invoice.¹³

On May 11, 2022, Emily F. Wolff, Director, Office of Youth and Families was interviewed by OIG Investigator Terence Barrett and William Bonney, OIG Deputy Inspector General for Investigations, in the OIG conference room, located at 525 St. Charles Avenue New Orleans, LA 70130.¹⁴ Ms. Wolff said that she has been the Director of Youth and Families since 2018. Prior to that Ms. Wolff was the Executive Director of the Broadmoor Improvement Association.

Ms. Wolff stated she first met Dr. Webster in 2015 during Parent Leadership Training Institute sessions. She advised that she directly reports to Gilbert Montano, CAO. She said Dr. Webster, in his capacity as Executive Director of the JJIC, has always reported to her as a direct report. Ms. Wolff said Dr. Webster's 2020 and 2021 performance evaluations were conducted by her, CAO Gilbert Moñtano, and Mayor LaToya Cantrell. She noted that during these evaluations, Dr. Webster's strengths and weaknesses were assessed and discussed but no ratings were issued.

Ms. Wolff was asked if she had received complaints about Dr. Webster's alleged absenteeism. She stated that she was first made aware of Dr. Webster's absenteeism in November 2021, when Tenisha Stevens, Commissioner, Office of Criminal Justice Coordination, and Dichelle Williams, JJIC Assistant Superintendent, raised the issue of Dr. Webster not coming into work. They were concerned that he was not at the JJIC facility as often as he should be. Ms. Wolff stated that she addressed the issue with Dr. Webster in a December 2021 meeting. She said Dr. Webster explained his absence by saying that he was working remotely due to health issues. Ms. Wolff stated that in January 2022, during a formal performance evaluation, she addressed the absenteeism issue again with Dr. Webster. She said Dr. Webster explained that he was not in the office on a regular basis, but he was working remotely because he had suffered from COVID and other health issues. She said CAO Gilbert Moñtano, City Attorney Donesia Turner and Mayor LaToya Cantrell were also present. She reported that Dr. Webster received a [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for 2021.

Ms. Wolff was asked about the existence of a termination letter that was prepared, but not issued to Dr. Webster. Ms. Wolff confirmed that a termination letter was prepared for Dr. Webster in January 2022. Ms. Wolff said she had recommended to CAO Gilbert Moñtano and Mayor LaToya Cantrell that Dr. Webster be terminated. She recalled that the letter was prepared by the City Human Resources Department, just before the January 2022 escape happened. (OIG Note: Four juvenile residents escaped from the JJIC facility on January 13, 2022. All four were recaptured by

¹³ See Exhibit 15, Aurora Animal Hospital billing invoice #308410 in the amount of \$514.19, dated October 14, 2021

¹⁴ See Exhibit 16, MOI of Emily F. Wolff dated May 11, 2022

January 16, 2022.) According to Ms. Wolff, it was determined that due to “major disruptions”, which included the escape of the four juveniles from the JJIC facility, the issuance of the termination letter would be postponed until a later date. (OIG Note: Ms. Wolff later provided the OIG a copy of the termination letter that was prepared, but not issued to Dr. Webster.)¹⁵ Ms. Wolff believes that Dr. Webster suspected that he might be terminated due to the four juveniles escaping from the JJIC facility and because of his [REDACTED] [REDACTED] evaluation.

Ms. Wolff was asked if she was aware of allegations that Dr. Webster was housing his dog at the JJIC facility. Ms. Wolff said she first became aware of the dog in February 2022 when Dichelle Williams, JJIC Assistant Superintendent, called her. Ms. Wolff said she also spoke with Lee Reisman, JJIC Supportive Services Superintendent, about the dog. She contacted Dr. Webster and asked him about the dog. She said Dr. Webster told her that the dog was a therapy dog that belonged to, and was trained by his wife. He explained that the dog was formerly a New Orleans Police (NOPD) dog and his wife was the dog’s handler when she was an NOPD Officer. Dr. Webster told Ms. Wolff that he thought the dog would be a good therapy dog for the JJIC’s juvenile residents. Ms. Wolff stated she told Dr. Webster to have the dog out of the JJIC facility within 48 hours.

On July 12, 2022, Kyshun A. Webster, PhD, former Executive Director, JJIC was interviewed by OIG Investigator Terence Barrett and William Bonney, Deputy Inspector General of Investigations, in the Office of Inspector General conference room, located at 525 St. Charles Avenue New Orleans, LA 70130.¹⁶ Also present during the interview was Kyshun Webster’s attorney, Dayal Reddy, Esq. Dr. Webster and Mr. Reddy were both advised of the identity of the interviewing personnel. Dr. Webster then provided the following information:

When asked whether he was still employed by the City of New Orleans or Orleans Parish, Dr. Webster answered no. Dr. Webster also stated that he had no other employment, paid or unpaid, while on [REDACTED] in 2022.

Dr. Webster was asked what he knew about a dog being housed at the JJIC. Dr. Webster stated that he had donated his family dog to the JJIC. He said the dog’s name was Lacy and that Lacy had been his family dog for 4 or 5 years. He advised that the dog was originally a trained Louisiana Office of Alcohol and Tobacco Control (ATC) dog, but had been retired. He said his wife had been the dog’s handler and they adopted the dog after it was retired from the ATC. Dr. Webster initially said the dog was trained to work with kids, but later said he wasn’t sure if the dog was

¹⁵ See Exhibit 17, January 13, 2022 Notice of Termination that was prepared, but not issued to Dr. Webster

¹⁶ See Exhibit 18, MOI of Kyshun A. Webster dated July 12, 2022

trained to work with kids. Dr. Webster did not know if there was any documentation to show what training the dog had received to work with kids.

Dr. Webster stated that during Hurricane Ida, he could not find anywhere to take the dog to be cared for. He said that he was unable to adequately care for the dog during the storm. He advised that because of the JJIC's public safety responsibilities, he and other essential personnel had to be present at the JJIC during emergencies, and he could not be home to care for the dog. (OIG Note: Hurricane Ida made landfall in Louisiana on August 29, 2021. The dog arrived at the JJIC after Hurricane Ida in September 2021.) Dr. Webster felt that in order for the dog to be adequately cared for, and for youth engagement programs, he decided to donate his family dog, Lacy, to the JJIC. He recalled that one "troubled" resident had responded well to a therapy dog, so he thought Lacy would be a good therapy dog for the JJIC residents.

Dr. Webster said that his senior leadership team, which included Dichelle Williams, JJIC Assistant Superintendent and Lee Reisman, JJIC Supportive Services Superintendent, were supportive of having a dog at the JJIC. Dr. Webster stated that his staff requested the dog. Dr. Webster said he spoke with Sunni LeBeouf, former City Attorney, and Candice Henderson, former Deputy Director, Office of Youth and Families, about the dog. He stated that both of them approved the dog residing at the JJIC. (OIG Note: In the fall of 2021, Deputy Director Candice Henderson was in charge of the Office of Youth and Families while Director Emily Wolff was out on maternity leave. Sunni LeBeouf and Candice Henderson are no longer employed by the City of New Orleans.)

Dr. Webster was adamant that Lacy the dog was healthy when he donated her to the JJIC. Dr. Webster stated that he instructed his staff to put together a care plan for the dog and placed Lee Reisman, JJIC Supportive Services Superintendent, in charge of caring for the dog. Dr. Webster stated that when it was suspected that the dog was sick, he did not directly instruct JJIC employees to take the dog to the veterinarian, but told them to follow the care plan and take appropriate measures to ensure the dog's care. When Dr. Webster was asked who paid for the dog's medical treatment, he said the JJIC paid for the dog's treatment. Dr. Webster believed that because he had donated the dog, the JJIC would pay for the dog's treatment. When asked who owned the dog, Dr. Webster said he didn't know for sure who owned the dog, but since he donated the dog to the JJIC, he believed the City of New Orleans owned it.

When asked what happened to the dog, Dr. Webster stated that Emily Wolff, Director, Office of Youth and Families, told him to get rid of the dog. He said JJIC employees, who were responsible for Lacy the dog, drove it to the LSPCA. Dr. Webster advised that he did not know what happened to the dog after that.

Dr. Webster stated that when he took leave or paid time off (PTO), he would notify Mayor LaToya Cantrell, CAO Gilbert Montañño, Director Emily Wolff and the JJIC HR Manager via email. He said they would usually not question why he was taking leave.

Dr. Webster was told that his name was not found in any of the JJIC employee entry logs that employees are required to sign upon entering the JJIC. Dr. Webster stated that he did not sign any of the entry logs upon entering the JJIC because, as the administrator of the facility, he felt that he did not have to sign in. When asked about his electronic access card use, he advised that sometimes he would use his key (metal) to enter the building. He said sometimes a JJIC staff member or security officer would also let him in the building.

When asked if his office had been soundproofed, Dr. Webster stated that he authorized his office to be soundproofed because he has a loud voice and confidential information discussed in his office would get out before it could be acted upon.¹⁷

On July 15, 2022, the OIG submitted a Request for Documents to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) asking for any and all Leave Request Forms submitted by former employee Kyshun A. Webster from July 15, 2019 through April 30, 2022. On July 19, 2022, the OIG received a letter from the CAO stating, "The Chief Administrative Officer does not have any Leave Request Forms on file for Kyshun A. Webster."¹⁸

The OIG also requested and received email records from the City IT department showing that Webster notified City officials via email on five occasions from March 1, 2021 to February 14, 2022, via email, that he would be out of the office or unavailable. The OIG compared the dates referenced by Dr. Webster in the emails to his annual and sick leave records during the same period as detailed in the tables below:¹⁹

Date of email	Date(s) of absence referenced in email	Length of absence referenced in email	Annual and sick leave taken by Webster in 2021
March 1, 2021	March 5 and 8, 2022	2 days	
April 2, 2021	April 5, 2021	1 day	
July 15, 2021	July 15, 16, and 19, 2021	3 days	
Total:		6 days	

¹⁷ See Exhibit 8, Work Order #19-5182-BC-JJIC, contract #K16-559, invoice #9550, at a cost of \$11,307.93

¹⁸ See Exhibit 19, Letter from CAO dated July 19, 2022

¹⁹ See Exhibits 20 - 24, emails from Webster

²⁰ See table of annual and sick leave taken by Webster on page 3

Date of email	Date(s) of absence referenced in email	Length of absence referenced in email	Annual and sick leave taken by Webster in 2022 up to March 18, 2022 ²¹
January 26, 2022	January 27 and 28, 2022	2 days	
February 14, 2022	February 14, 2022	1 day	
Total:		3 days	8 days

Although Webster contends that when he took leave or paid time off (PTO), he would notify Mayor LaToya Cantrell, CAO Gilbert Montañó, Director Emily Wolff and the JJIC HR Manager, via email, no emails were found that referenced 11 of the 17 days of leave taken in 2021 and 5 of the 8 days of leave taken in 2022. Webster took 16 days of leave after March 18, 2022 when JJIC Assistant Superintendent Dichelle Williams was named acting Interim Director for the JJIC.²²

On July 29, 2022, Magdiel Belette, Special Agent in Charge Region 1, ATC, confirmed that he formally employed a dog named Lacy, who was trained to locate drugs. The dog was not a trained therapy or rescue dog. He said the dog was retired due to its age and was adopted by its handler, Taralyn Webster. She signed an agreement to adopt Lacy, which specified that she was to assume full responsibility and care for Lacy until the dog's death. In addition, Webster was required to provide proper diet, veterinary services, shelter and appropriate care for Lacy at her own cost.²³

On August 8, 2022, Candice Henderson-Chandler, former New Orleans Office of Youth and Families Deputy Director, was contacted and interviewed by telephone by Investigator Terence Barrett, City of New Orleans Office of Inspector General, concerning approval given for a dog to be housed at the JJIC.²⁴

Candice Henderson-Chandler stated that she remembered Kyshun Webster, former Executive Director, JJIC wanting to introduce a program involving the "Wellness of Young People" at the JJIC, which involved dog therapy. She said Kyshun Webster called her by telephone to discuss the program and to ask about bringing a dog into the JJIC. Ms. Henderson stated that although she could not specifically recall giving Kyshun Webster approval to bring the dog into the facility, she is sure that she would have. Ms. Henderson said she is familiar with dog therapy and that it represents one of her core values, so she is sure that if it were presented, she would have approved his plan. She said Kyshun Webster called her only once to discuss bringing a dog into

²¹ JJIC Assistant Superintendent Dichelle Williams was named acting Interim Director for the JJIC on March 18, 2022 as referenced in Exhibit 3

²² *Ibid*

²³ See Exhibit 25, Agreement To Adopt Retired K-9 dated July 29, 2020

²⁴ See Exhibit 26, MOI of Candice Henderson-Chandler dated August 8, 2022

the JJIC. She advised that during their conversation, Kyshun Webster mentioned that he had brought the matter up with Sunni LeBeouf also. (OIG Note: Sunni LeBeouf is the former New Orleans City Attorney.)

Ms. Henderson did not recall if Kyshun Webster told her the dog was his family dog. Nor did she recall whether Kyshun Webster told her what, if any, training the dog had to work as a therapy dog at the JJIC.

JJIC staff members recalled that a professionally trained service dog, named Suzie provided supportive services to children, victims and witnesses in the Orleans Parish Juvenile Court System. In addition, the dog worked as a service dog two or three times a week at JJIC.

On August 18, 2022, Kimberly Beshears, Manager of Transitional Services, Travis Hill Schools, was interviewed by telephone by OIG Investigator Terence Barrett concerning the use of her service dog “Suzie” at the JJIC.²⁵ Ms. Beshears was advised of the identity of the interviewing investigator and provided the following information:

Ms. Beshears stated that her dog, Suzie, is a professionally trained courthouse facilities dog. She said Suzie holds state (Louisiana) and national certifications as a service dog.

Ms. Beshears stated that Suzie was originally purchased by the Orleans Parish Juvenile Court (OPJC) in 2016 from NEADS World Class Service Dogs. (OIG Note: NEADS is a non-profit service dog training company, located in Princeton, MA.) Ms. Beshears said she was an OPJC employee at that time and was trained as Suzie’s handler. She said in 2018 her employment with OPJC ended and Suzie was returned to NEADS. She advised that she purchased Suzie from NEADS herself and was hired by Travis Hill School as Manager of Transitional Services. Ms. Beshears advised that Suzie continues to work as a courthouse facilities dog within the OPJC system.

Ms. Beshears stated that Suzie works, wherever she is needed, within the OPJC system. According to Ms. Beshears, Suzie provides emotional and trauma support services to children, victims, witnesses, defendants and all their families. She said Suzie works at the OPJC, Travis Hill School and the JJIC. She said Suzie is well known at the JJIC. She estimates that she and Suzie spent a few days a week at the JJIC in 2021. Ms. Beshears also estimated that from January to May of 2022, she and Suzie spent about 50% of their work hours at the JJIC.

Ms. Beshears advised that she had heard about a dog named Lacy being brought in to the JJIC, and had seen Lacy on some of her visits to the JJIC. She observed that Lacy was an older dog who appeared to have medical problems. She stated that Kyshun Webster, former JJIC Executive Director, did not say anything to her about the JJIC getting their own service dog. She stated that

²⁵ See Exhibit 27, MOI of Kimberly Beshears dated August 18, 2022

she and Suzie were at JJIC on a regular basis and were always available to the JJIC to provide support services.

The OIG also sought and obtained records from the LSPCA concerning Webster's dog. LSPCA records show that a Labrador Retriever named "Lacey" [sic] was brought in on February 4, 2022. The contact information listed was "Keyshawn Webster, (504) 301-5905, 1100 Milton St. New Orleans".²⁶ (OIG Note: 1100 Milton Street is the address of the JJIC and (504) 301-5905 was the City issued cell phone number of Kyshun Webster.) LSPCA records also show that Lacy was euthanized on February 28, 2022. Upon further inquiry, it was learned that the dog had been humanely euthanized at the Avenue Animal Wellness and Emergency Clinic, 1401 St. Charles Ave. New Orleans, LA 70130, as a result of a medical condition.

²⁶ See Exhibit 28, LSPCA treatment records

CONCLUSIONS

The information derived from JJIC employee interviews, as well as annual and sick leave records along with the JJIC card access records show that Kyshun Webster was frequently absent from work and, consequently, may have neglected his responsibilities as Executive Director of the JJIC.

Based upon the above described finding, the OIG has determined that Kyshun Webster may have violated CAO Policy Memorandum No. 83(R), effective June 17, 2020 - Standards of Behavior for City Employees, Section II, General Standards, Paragraph (f), which states:²⁷

*Each employee, because of the job assignment, has certain required duties and must assume certain responsibilities. Each employee has a job to do and must do that job. Failure to perform these duties or take these responsibilities is **neglect of duty**.*

Kyshun Webster also may have misused City property by transporting his dog in City-owned vehicles, and housing his dog at the JJIC facility. Kyshun Webster also misspent City funds by compelling JJIC employees to care for his dog, while they were on duty.

Webster's assertion that Sunni LeBeouf, former City Attorney, approved the dog being at the JJIC was incorrect. On August 12, 2022, Sunni LeBeouf, former New Orleans City Attorney, was contacted and interviewed by telephone by Deputy Inspector General for Investigations William Bonney, New Orleans Office of Inspector General, concerning approval given for a dog to be housed at the JJIC.²⁸

Sunni LeBeouf stated that she has no knowledge or recollection of being asked by Kyshun Webster, former Executive Director, JJIC, about keeping a dog at the JJIC. Ms. LeBeouf said that although she did represent the JJIC in her capacity as City Attorney, she had no knowledge of a dog being at the facility.

Webster also claimed that one "troubled" resident had responded well to a therapy dog, so he thought Lacy would be a good therapy dog for the JJIC residents.²⁹ However, as noted in the information provide by Ms. Beshears, JJIC residents already had access to Suzie, a professionally trained courthouse facilities dog. Suzie also holds state (Louisiana) and national certifications as a service dog. Ms. Beshears and Suzie were at JJIC on a regular basis and were always available to the JJIC to provide support services.³⁰

²⁷ See Exhibit 1, page 2, CAO Policy Memorandum No. 83(R), effective June 17, 2020

²⁸ See Exhibit 29, MOI of Sunni LeBeouf dated August 12, 2022

²⁹ See Exhibit 18, MOI of Kyshun A. Webster dated July 12, 2022

³⁰ See Exhibit 27, MOI of Kimberly Beshears dated August 18, 2022

Based upon the above-described finding, the OIG also has determined that Kyshun Webster may have violated CAO Policy Memorandum No. 83(R), Section II, General Standards, Paragraph (o), which states:³¹

City property shall be used only for the purpose for which it was intended. Employees shall exercise care in the use of any city property and equipment, including vehicles and technology devices, and promptly report to the immediate supervisor any damages, loss or theft. Use of City property is for work related purposes and not for personal benefit. Employees shall not use City supplies or office machines for personal business.

Because Kyshun Webster compelled JJIC employees to care for his dog while they were on duty, he may have also violated the Louisiana Code of Governmental Ethics, La R.S. 42:1116 - Abuse of Office, Paragraph (A), which states:

No public servant shall use the authority of his office or position, directly or indirectly, in a manner intended to compel or coerce any person or other public servant to provide himself, any other public servant, or other person with any thing of economic value. This Subsection shall not be construed to limit that authority authorized by law, statute, ordinance, or legislative rule in carrying out official duties.

³¹ See Exhibit 1, page 2, CAO Policy Memorandum No. 83(R), effective June 17, 2020

RECOMMENDATIONS

All JJIC employees, regardless of position, should adhere to JJIC security protocols, including using their access card to enter the facility, signing the log book and complying with procedures subsequent to entering the facility. In addition, all JJIC employees, regardless of position, should adhere to CAO Policy Memorandum No. 83(R), effective June 17, 2020 - Standards of Behavior for City Employees, Section II, General Standards, Paragraph (f), which states:³²

*Each employee, because of the job assignment, has certain required duties and must assume certain responsibilities. Each employee has a job to do and must do that job. Failure to perform these duties or take these responsibilities is **neglect of duty**.*

A draft copy of this report was issued to the CAO on September 15, 2022. His response to this report appears on page twenty-three (23).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Edward Michel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "E".

Edward Michel, CIG
Inspector General
City of New Orleans

³² See Exhibit 1, page 2, CAO Policy Memorandum No. 83(R), effective June 17, 2020

EXHIBITS ATTACHED

Exhibit 1:	CAO Policy Memorandum No. 83(R), effective June 17, 2020 (7 Pages)
Exhibit 2:	Kyshun Webster's Notice of Resignation sent via email and effective on April 29, 2022 (1 page)
Exhibit 3:	Mayor's Office news article dated March 18, 2022 appearing on https://www.nola.gov/mayor/news/ (1 page)
Exhibit 4:	Request for Documents dated May 18, 2021 (1 page)
Exhibit 5:	Request for Documents dated December 22, 2021 (1 page)
Exhibit 6:	JJIC card access system records for Dr. Webster from November 1, 2020 through October 31, 2021 (19 pages)
Exhibit 7:	JJIC Temperature Log page for November 11, 2020 (1 page)
Exhibit 8:	Work Order #19-5182-BC-JJIC, contract #K16-559, invoice #9550, at a cost of \$11,307.93(7 pages)
Exhibit 9:	MOI of Willie J. Miles, Jr. dated April 21, 2022 (1 page)
Exhibit 10:	MOI of Dichelle Williams, dated April 22, 2022 (2 pages)
Exhibit 11:	MOI of Lee J. Reisman dated April 26, 2022 (2 pages)
Exhibit 12:	Lacy the Dog 1 (1 page)
Exhibit 13:	Lacy the Dog 2 (1 page)
Exhibit 14:	Lacy the Dog 3 (1 page)
Exhibit 15:	Aurora Animal Hospital billing invoice #308410 in the amount of \$514.19, dated October 14, 2021 (1 page)
Exhibit 16:	MOI of Emily F. Wolff dated May 11, 2022 (2 pages)
Exhibit 17:	January 13, 2022 Notice of Termination that was prepared, but not issued to Dr. Webster (1 page)
Exhibit 18:	MOI of Kyshun A. Webster dated July 12, 2022 (1 page)
Exhibit 19:	Exhibit 19, Letter from CAO dated July 19, 2022 (1 page)
Exhibit 20:	Webster email dated March 1, 2021 (1 page)
Exhibit 21:	Webster email dated April 2, 2021 (1 page)

Exhibit 22:	Webster email dated July 15, 2021 (1 page)
Exhibit 23:	Webster email dated January 26, 2022 (1 page)
Exhibit 24:	Webster email dated February 14, 2022 (1 page)
Exhibit 25:	Agreement To Adopt Retired K-9 dated July 29, 2020 (1 page)
Exhibit 26:	MOI of Candice Henderson-Chandler dated August 8, 2022 (1 page)
Exhibit 27:	MOI of Kimberly Beshears dated August 18, 2022 (1 page)
Exhibit 28:	LSPCA treatment records (7 pages)
Exhibit 29:	MOI of Sunni LeBeouf dated August 12, 2022 (1 page)

OFFICIAL COMMENTS FROM THE CAO

City Code Section 2-1120(8)(b) provides that a person or entity who is the subject of a report shall have 30 days to submit a written explanation or rebuttal of the findings before the report is finalized, and that such timely submitted written explanation or rebuttal shall be attached to the finalized report. On September 15, 2022, the OIG distributed a draft Report of Investigation (ROI) to the CAO so that they would have an opportunity to comment on the ROI prior to its public release. On October 7, 2022, the CAO, Gilbert Montaña, provided a response via email in which he stated, "I have no further input from my office and I am happy to reaffirm that employees must follow CAO Policy 83(R) and support the recommendation that ALL employees (including the Director) should follow the security guidelines at the JJIC."