



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
ONE ASHBURTON PLACE
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02108

MAURA HEALEY
ATTORNEY GENERAL

(617) 727-2200
617-573-5375 TTY
www.mass.gov/ago

February 11, 2021

Monica Brookman, Esq.
Chief, Enforcement Division
State Ethics Commission
One Ashburton Place, 6th Floor
Boston, MA 02108

Re: **South Bay Plaza/Rachael Rollins**

Dear Ms. Brookman:

The Office of the Attorney General (AGO) has conducted a thorough and independent review of a complaint filed by Katie Lawson regarding an interaction with Suffolk County District Attorney Rachael Rollins that took place on December 24, 2020, at the South Bay Plaza.

After conducting interviews and reviewing the available documentation and videos, we find no civil rights violations or violations of criminal statutes. We are closing our review and referring the matter for such action as the State Ethics Commission may deem appropriate.

During our review, we interviewed Lawson and DA Rollins provided a written statement to our office. We have spoken with Lawson and with DA Rollins's counsel about the closure of our review and intent to refer this matter to the State Ethics Commission. In response, each party provided additional written statements. Set forth below is a summary of our review and the facts we have found related to the complaint.

Summary of Review

On December 30, 2020, Katie Lawson filed a written complaint with the AGO. Many of the facts surrounding the events that occurred between Lawson and DA Rollins on December 24, 2020 at approximately 1:00 PM, are undisputed, with a few key exceptions. Both parties admit

to being present and involved in trying to exit the South Bay Plaza parking lot in their respective vehicles. DA Rollins—driving a black Chevy Tahoe registered to the Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office—was in the lane of outgoing traffic in front of the Stop and Shop, near the exit from South Bay Plaza, and Lawson—driving a gray Toyota Corolla—attempted to merge into that lane.

In summary, Lawson admits that although DA Rollins had the right of way, she attempted to merge into the outgoing lane of slow-moving parking lot traffic. According to Lawson, DA Rollins used her Chevy Tahoe to block Lawson’s vehicle, said, “Don’t try me today lady, today is not the day,” threatened to issue her a ticket, and used her emergency lights and siren. DA Rollins denies making any statement about a ticket but does acknowledge briefly using her emergency alerts to try to avoid a collision. Lawson states that DA Rollins exited the parking lot onto Massachusetts Avenue and drove straight through a red light in a right turn only lane. During our January 12, 2021 interview with Lawson, she noted that a report written by a Boston Police Detective contained an inaccuracy and that she never told him that DA Rollins had her blue lights on while driving through the intersection.

We have reviewed video footage from security cameras in and around the South Bay Plaza. While we identified some footage showing the interaction between the two vehicles, we did not find footage showing the exact moment at which Lawson’s and DA Rollins’s vehicles converged. Nor does the video footage show whether or not blue lights or strobe lights were used at that time. The cameras focused on the area where this incident occurred were either poor quality, far away, or were not functioning. The footage does show a black Chevy Tahoe, with the same distinct wheel rims as DA Rollins’s vehicle, enter the South Bay Plaza, at approximately 12:49pm. At 1:02pm, Lawson took a photograph of DA Rollins’s license plate and shortly thereafter, the vehicles turned onto Massachusetts Avenue. The footage also shows the Chevy Tahoe, with Lawson’s vehicle behind it, drive straight through an intersection at Massachusetts Avenue and Newmarket Square from the right turn only lane. However, the footage does not show conclusively whether the traffic light was red at the time. As DA Rollins and Lawson confirmed, we did not observe any use of blue lights at that intersection.

For your convenience, please find enclosed copies of the written reports, audio recordings, interview summaries, and associated video we have collecting during this review. If, in the future, you receive any additional evidence or information which you believe would merit further examination by this Office, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Mary Strother

Mary Strother
First Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General
One Ashburton Place
Boston, MA 02108

Enclosures