MAN ARRESTED FOR MAKING FALSE POLICE REPORT

PORTSMOUTH, Va. – On Friday evening, September 13, 2019 the Portsmouth Police Department was alerted to a news story that made several allegations in reference to the quality of service a citizen received when requesting assistance. As a result of this story, an internal review of the alleged incident was initiated.

According to the citizen in the news story, he watched a group of individuals assault and rob a man on the street. The citizen claimed that it took officers over an hour to respond to a robbery and that the man who was assaulted could barely walk. The citizen also claimed that the officers advised him that the agency had staffing issues and that if he wanted to live in the area that he should carry a gun with him.

After a thorough review of this incident, to include review of the body worn camera footage of the officers on scene, it was determined that the allegations made by the citizen in the news story were false. The investigation yielded that the citizen did call police, but never mentioned that someone was robbed or injured. The call was classified as a suspicious situation, based on the information provided, and not a robbery. As a result, higher priority calls such as a robbery in progress, were answered first. Officers did respond to the scene, approximately 47 minutes after the call was received and at no time did they discuss staffing levels or advise the citizen to carry a firearm if he wanted to live in the area. Additionally, it was also determined that the man who the citizen claimed was assaulted and robbed, was merely intoxicated and had fallen. He was not assaulted or robbed by a group of individuals.

The citizen in the news story also indicated that the group of individuals who assaulted and robbed the man came back and smashed his phone. Investigators also found this allegation to be untrue, based on independent eyewitness accounts of the incident at a nearby establishment. As a result of this investigation, detectives arrested the 39-year-old Portsmouth man for making a
false report to police. The man was released on a summons with a promise to appear in court.

The Portsmouth Police Department encourages citizens to call police when they are in need of service, see something suspicious in the community or find that someone else is in need of assistance. It is important to be as detailed as possible about what is happening when you call so that the proper assistance can be dispatched to you or another. However, we would also remind citizens that you should never file a false police report because it is against the law.

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