

BEN THERRIAULT IS NOT A PROGRESSIVE ALTERNATIVE FOR CONTRA COSTA SHERIFF

Benjamin Therriault is currently a Richmond, CA police officer & the head of the Richmond Police Officers Association, the so-called "union" for cops. He has decided to challenge the incumbent Contra Costa Country sheriff David Livingston in the 2022 election. <https://www.ben4sheriff.com/>

He is trying to position himself as a progressive alternative to the old guard, reducing bias & bridging the gap between the community & the police but is that actually true?

Consider:

1. As head of the RPOA Ben Therriault resisted the implementation of the 2018 SB 1421 Peace Officers Release of Records bill that would release records of police abuse to the investigations of public.



2. Ben Therriault has directly participated in cover ups of unlawful police killings of citizens.

3. Therriault has opposed dropping abusive charges in cases even the DA says that doing so would be in the interests of justice.

4. Ben Therriault has not seen fit to condemn problematic police shootings in local jurisdictions other than Richmond (where as head of the RPOA he claims to have a duty to represent even guilty cops).

5. Therriault has repurposing some funds Police Department for police responses to



consistently opposed from the Richmond social services & non-mental health crises.

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Please see the flip side for details

DAVID LIVINGSTON IS A LOUSY SHERIFF, BUT BEN THERRIAULT WILL NOT BE BETTER.

1. As head of the RPOA Ben Therriault resisted the implementation of the 2018 SB 1421 Peace Officers Release of Records bill. That law required police records relating to officer use-of-force, sexual assault & acts of dishonesty be released to the public under the Public Records Act. Therriault & his organization went to court to prevent releasing records from the period before SB1421 went into effect of 1/1/2019. Nancy Skinner, the bill's author, states that the SB 1421 was meant to be retroactive. Therriault continued to oppose releasing these records even after CC Superior Court Judge Charles Treat ruled against the RPOA suit, saying it made little sense.

2. On September, 14 2014 Benjamin Therriault was part of an investigation of a Richmond Police fatal shooting of an unarmed intoxicated young man named Pedie Perez. The shooting officer, Wallace Jensen, claimed that Mr. Perez had tried to grab his service pistol and he was forced to shoot him to death to save his own life. But multiple direct witnesses claim that though they were interviewed, their accounts of the incident were distorted by the police, & that they did not see Pedie Perez try to grab the cop's gun or charge the policeman. Officer Jensen was not charged, and in fact, in 2016 was given a "disability" retirement at age 33 on on tax-free inflation adjusted \$70,700 a year plus benefits, and continues to work as a private security guard.

<https://eastbayexpress.com/two-eyewitnesses-contradict-cop-in-police-killing-2-1/>

Therriault continues to maintain that community efforts to get more facts about this homicide are simply politics, part of a biased agenda, etc., & he implies we should just trust the RPD.

https://www.radiofreerichmond.com/ben_therriault_on_the_role_of_the_police_officers_association

3. Therriault criticized the Contra Costa District Attorney for caving to political pressure for dropping felony charges against 3 Richmond men accused of interfering with police after body cam footage was released casting doubt on the police narrative of the event, including arresting one man for a "face mask violation" even though 2 of the arresting officers were not wearing masks. The police initiated the incident by doing a marijuana storage search of the car with the 3 men.

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2020/06/20/days-after-officer-body-cam-video-was-publicized-contra-costa-da-drops-charges-against-richmond-men-accused-of-resisting-arrest/>

4. Therriault supports the RPOA defending all police officers accused of abusing their authority, arguing, in effect, that in the interests of due process even a werewolf deserves a good attorney. But in the case of a Danville cop who has recently shot 2 mentally ill people and is accused of a brutal attack on a jail inmate the current sheriff Livingston supported the officer & when asked Therriault declined to comment. As sheriff Therriault would likely be part of the "blue wall of silence."

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/crime/article/Danville-officer-who-killed-mentally-ill-man-in-16024193.php>

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/local/article/Richmond-Police-union-boss-aims-to-unseat-sheriff-16028068.php>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blue_wall_of_silence

5. Therriault has been trying to soften his image, even joining the Richmond Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force which is examining reallocating some money from the RPD (40% of the budget) to fund a non-police response team for mental health & other non-violent crises. But Therriault's Police Officers' Association has been consistently hostile to these reforms, & Therriault voted against them.

<https://jacobinmag.com/2021/08/richmond-california-police-rpd-defund-budget-social-services-progressive-alliance-city-council>

<https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/4014/Reimagining-Public-Safety-Community-Task>

https://richmond.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=38

<https://contracostaherald.com/task-force-recommends-defunding-richmond-police-department-by-6-3-million/>