

August 10, 2023

Via e-mail

Frank J. Koprcina
City Attorney
City of Lake Station, Indiana
fjklaw@frontier.com

James Richardson
Police Chief
Lake Station Police Dept.
jrichardson@lakestation-in.gov

RE: Lake Station Police Department's restriction of critical comments on its Facebook page, and public records request

Dear Mr. Koprcina and Chief Richardson,

I am counsel to People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, Inc. ("PETA"), and write on behalf of the organization. On July 27, at least eight K-9 dogs died of heat exhaustion while being transported in an unventilated cargo box truck.¹ When representatives from the Humane Society of Hobart, the city's contracted animal control agency, arrived to the scene, the Lake Station Police Department ("LSPD") reportedly blocked their efforts to assist or conduct an investigation, and failed to ensure appropriate emergency aid for the animals.² In the following days, community members and others commented on [the LSPD's Facebook page](#) to voice their opinions and concerns related to the needless suffering and deaths of these dogs in accordance with their constitutional right of freedom of speech.

In response, the department deleted a post discussing the incident, limited the users who could comment on its recent posts, and deleted or hid many comments critical of the LSPD.

Specifically, on July 28, the department posted on Facebook to address the deaths, calling it a "freak event" and informing the public of its conclusion "after speaking with the person(s) involved that this was not an act of animal cruelty or neglect." The post accumulated several hundred responsive comments critical of the LSPD and its handling of the incident, including LSPD's responses to certain comments, before LSPD deleted or hid the post entirely.³ Examples of comments that have been deleted or hidden with this post include:

- "Dogs should have been checked on in intervals .someone should have ridden in with the dogs.Extreme heat was predicted for yesterday with warnings. This is unacceptable those poor pups.suffered terribly.such a shame for no reason."
- "[A]nd yet you allowed them to leave with remaining sick dogs in a non a/c truck? Wth is wrong with you? That alone spells corruption! Who's lining your pockets? Get out of here with this trying to say it wasn't his fault or ESPECIALLY your fault!!! Shame on you!!!"

¹ John O'Connor, *8 Dogs Died from Extreme Heat in the Midwest During Unairconditioned Drive*, Associated Press (Jul. 29, 2023), <https://apnews.com/article/heat-dogs-k9-shepherd-humane-society-dead-045dce9087ad838aeae5ecd2926039cf>.

² *Id.*

³ Compare Exhibit 1, Screenshot of July 28 post addressing K-9 deaths (Aug. 1, 2023) with Exhibit 2, Screenshot showing July 28 post deleted from Facebook timeline (Aug. 8, 2023).

PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS
FOUNDATION

Washington
1536 16th St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
202-483-PETA

Los Angeles
2154 W. Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90026
323-644-PETA

Norfolk
501 Front St.
Norfolk, VA 23510
757-622-PETA

PETA FOUNDATION IS AN OPERATING
NAME OF THE FOUNDATION TO
SUPPORT ANIMAL PROTECTION.

ENTITIES:

- PETA U.S.
- PETA Asia
- PETA India
- PETA France
- PETA Australia
- PETA Germany
- PETA Switzerland
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)

- “I will also be asking that the State Police to investigate this incident, because your agency considers this case closed. A small town police agency does not have the ability to rule. Get your paperwork ready.”
- “The humane society had immediate care on the premises but you would not allow them to help!!!! This is what you aren’t telling people. You let those dogs needlessly die and suffer.”⁴

Before deleting the July 28 post, the LSPD limited who could comment on it.⁵

The LSPD also limited who could comment on an August 4 post,⁶ on which users previously left critical comments related to the deaths. The LSPD further deleted or hid critical comments on that post, including, for example: “At least 8 dogs bound for K-9 training DID from heat stroke in a box truck! Local humane agents tried to help, but Lake Station Police Department BLOCKED their efforts. THIS MUST BE INVESTIGATED!”⁷ Other non-critical comments to the post remain.

Similarly, the LSPD deleted or hid critical comments on a July 21 post soliciting donations for its K-9 program.⁸ On Wednesday, August 9, the LSPD removed at least two more comments to the post related to the deaths of the dogs.⁹ The comments, in response to the LSPD’s solicitation, read, “[W]as this the dogs in the hot truck???” and, separately to correct a spelling error, “truck.”¹⁰ Within three hours after they were posted, both comments had been deleted or hidden, while the others to the post remain.¹¹

This conduct violates the First Amendment. It is clearly established that government authorities, including law enforcement, commit unconstitutional viewpoint discrimination when they delete comments on or otherwise restrict access to an official social media page because they do not like posted content. *See, e.g., Popp v. Monroe Cnty. Sheriff*, No. 1:19-CV-03664-JPH-DML, 2020 WL 8872811, at *1 (S.D. Ind. Mar. 31, 2020), *citing Robinson v. Hunt Cnty., Texas*, 921 F.3d 440, 447–48 (5th Cir. 2019). *See also Davison v. Randall*, 912 F.3d 666, 688 (4th Cir. 2019) (affirming that a county official engaged in unconstitutional viewpoint discrimination when she banned a critic from a government Facebook page).

For example, in *Robinson*, the Fifth Circuit found that a sheriff’s office violated the First Amendment by deleting a comment critical of the law enforcement agency, because “[o]fficial censorship based on a state actor’s subjective judgment that the content of protected speech is offensive or inappropriate is viewpoint discrimination.” 921 F.3d at 447. Given the weight of authority on this point, courts routinely order law enforcement agencies engaged in materially similar conduct to, e.g., unban critics and take no further action restricting critics’ participation on social media pages. *See Faison v. Jones*, 440 F. Supp. 3d 1123, 1136-39 (E.D. Cal. 2020).

⁴ Exhibit 1.

⁵ Exhibit 3, Screenshot showing “Lake Station Police Department limited who can comment on this post,” on July 28 Facebook post (Aug. 7, 2023).

⁶ Exhibit 4, Screenshot showing “Lake Station Police Department limited who can comment on this post,” on August 4 Facebook post with comment critical of LSPD (Aug. 7, 2023).

⁷ *Compare* Ex. 4 (August 4 post with critical comment) *with* Exhibit 5, Screenshot of August 4 post with critical comment deleted (August 9, 2023).

⁸ *Compare* Exhibit 6, Screenshot of July 21 post with comment mentioning the dogs (Aug. 9, 2023) *with* Exhibit 7, Screenshot of July 21 post after comment mentioning the dogs was deleted (Aug. 9, 2023)

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ Exhibit 6.

¹¹ Exhibit 7.

Here, the LSPD engaged, and appears to continue to engage, in illegal viewpoint discrimination by deleting or hiding critical comments and restricting critics' ability to comment on the department's official Facebook page, apparently based solely on the fact that the LSPD dislikes or disapproves of the comments drawing attention to, or criticizing the police's role in, these tragic deaths.

For these reasons, PETA demands the LSPD immediately cease deleting, hiding, or restricting comments on its Facebook page critical to the department, restore any related "hidden" comments on posts, and restore users' ability to comment on the page and the LSPD's posts. **Please provide your assurance that the LSPD will do so no later than August 17, 2023.** Absent the LSPD's assurance that it will stop infringing on the First Amendment protections for social media users, PETA will evaluate further legal action to enforce its and its members' constitutional rights.

Please also consider this letter a public records request, pursuant to the Indiana Access to Public Records Act, Ind. Code § 5-14-3-1 et seq. I request the following records:

- All documents and correspondence concerning the LSPD's social media policies, procedures, and practices, including but not limited to policies concerning: permitted and disallowed content on the LSPD Facebook page, deleting or hiding comments, blocking users, and restricting the ability for certain users to comment on LSPD posts.
- All documents and correspondence concerning the deletion or hiding of Facebook comments referencing the July 27 incident, in which K-9 dogs died in transport, and its aftermath; the deletion or hiding of the July 28 Facebook post by the LSPD referencing the July 27 incident; deletion or hiding of comments critical of the LSPD; the blocking of users from the LSPD Facebook page; and restricting users' ability to comment on LSPD posts.

If all or any part of this request is denied, please provide a written statement of the grounds for any such denial, and release all documents or parts of documents subject to disclosure. *See* Ind. Code § 5-14-3-6 (a). In accordance with § 5-14-3-8 (k)(2), we respectfully request that the production of the responsive documents be fulfilled without charge because the request relates to PETA's non-profit activities, and releasing the requested records benefits the public interest. To conserve public resources, please provide the requested records, to the extent possible, via email.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Mary Maerz

Counsel, PETA Foundation

marym@petaf.org | (417) 619-4829

Exhibit 1



1



Lake Station Police Department

July 28 at 2:10 AM · 🌐



On July 27, an incident occurred involving canines that were being transported to a K9 training facility from O'Hare Airport to Michigan City, In. During the transport, the driver of the vehicle was caught in a 2-hour traffic delay, the AC unit that was being used to keep the canines cool failed. Upon failure, the temperature rose inside and some of the canines, due to the extreme heat from today's high temperature began rising inside the cargo area. Since the cargo area was separated, the driver wasn't aware at the time that the AC unit failed which caused some of the canines to go into heat related medical distress. The driver's attention as to what was going on inside the cargo area was alerted to him by some of the canines barking.

The driver stopped the vehicle at the Road Ranger on Ripley Street and entered the cargo area. Once inside the the cargo area, he observed the canines in distress and began to remove the canines who were crated. This prompted 911 calls to the Lake Station Fire Department and EMS along with the Lake Station Police Department. There was an overwhelming response from both agencies so much so that civilians and so many others stopped to help where they could. The scene was chaotic and took an emotional toll on all that were involved in trying to save as many canines as possible. Any loss of life is tragic and thoughts and prayers are with all those that were affected by this "freak event". The Lake Station Police Department believes after speaking with the person (s) involved that this was not an act of animal cruelty or neglect but a mechanical failure of the AC unit that was being used in the cargo area.

[Lake Station Police Department](#) wants to thank all of the [Lake Station Fire & Rescue / EMS](#) that arrived on and off duty to assist and transport the canines to local vet hospitals such as [Crossroads Animal Hospital](#) and [Hobart Animal Clinic](#). We also wanted to thank Road Ranger for the use of their business for cooling and triage area for the canines and the donation of all the bottled water they gave.

We can't express enough our heartfelt condolences for the loss of some of the canines.

Any information as to the identities of all those involved is being withheld at this time.

😞😡😭 376

686 170

Like

Comment

Share



Most relevant





1



Lisa Davis

It sounds like the officer complied with a male belligerent owner who did not know what he was doing and put all these animals at severe risk versus listening to the female Humane Society ^{OB} representative. Honestly, if these cops cannot get their act to... [See more](#)

Like Reply 3d



14 Replies



Dexter Lee

There's a lot of information here to unpack. I commend **Hobart Humane Society** and their leadership. I sincerely hope that justice is found and served.

Like Reply 3d



13 Replies



Jennifer Webber

Under section 6-30.3 f,h, and i Impoundment Procedures and Sec. 6-17 Animals in Motor Vehicles of the Lake Station Municipal Code I am officially taking possession of those pets hospitalized. The owner must provide all required health certificates and v... [See more](#)

Like Reply 4d



58 Replies



Tina Fearnow

Terrible neglect of these dogs and whoever is responsible for the safe transport of these canines should be held accountable for the animals' extreme suffering and deaths. Why the Lake Station Police were so uncooperative with the rep from the Humane S... [See more](#)

Like Reply 1d Edited



1 Reply



Ozne Robarris

Check to see if this training facility had the proper paperwork to begin with. Another example of why we need to stop using animals as our own property to do with as we please. This is another tragic example of "dominion". Had it been humans who died o... [See more](#)

Like Reply 2d





1



Donna Orange Saylor Shanks

So no one will be held responsible for this? Coulda shoulda woulda??? I hear ex-police was involved. 😞. Maybe it didn't start as animal cruelty but it sure ended up that way through neglect. My family had to clean up that mess and I can say they are... **See more**

Like Reply 3d



13 Replies



Kathy Smith Scott

Those who killed the dogs need to be stuck in there today for a few hours.

Like Reply 3d



3 Replies



Vicky Nikolich

Dogs should have been checked on in intervals .someone should have ridden in with the dogs.Extreme heat was predicted for yesterday with warnings. This is unacceptable those poor pups.suffered terribly.such a shame for no reason. Animals depend on hum... **See more**

Like Reply 4d Edited



Eli Peco

I bet u the AC never worked in the back

Like Reply 4d



6 Replies



Sandy Garvey

Thank you Lake Station fire dept. and police department.

Like Reply 1d



12 Replies



Phoenix Ann

your silence speaks for itself lspd , may the innocent rest peacefully .

Like Reply 3d



Anushka Gaglani

This is horrendous you and the owners need to take responsibility.

Like Reply 3d



Phoenix Ann

STILL NOTHING LAKE STATION POLICE?





1



Jayme Schymanoske

In 2023 there was no temp sensor installed that could alert the driver or a back up cooling system? You would think whoever ordered (for lack of better term) these dogs would of checked out what they were being transported in and made sure it was safe ... **See more**

Like Reply 4d



7 Replies



Ryan NanoneonGiraffe

Ahhh thoughts and prayers, the ultimate bandaid on every boo boo 🙏

Like Reply 3d



Phoenix Ann

Lake Station Police don't have anything else to say ? you jus expect people to brush this off ?

Like Reply 3d Edited



13 Replies



Jennifer White

This is why a temperature monitor is so important, it could of alerted him to excessive heat and prevented this from happening. How incredibly sad that the dogs had to suffer like this.

Like Reply 4d



2 Replies



Karen Hite

AC fails!!! Canines are at risk always, as are all animals in human custody.

Like Reply 12h



Shay Sims Cooper

Come on internet, let's all figure out what police dog training business this was, I have two in mind so far, it is not in Michigan City, the police are lying to throw off the sent!

Like Reply 12h



Trina Rodriguez Dow

All lives matter! DOGS LIVES MATTER!

Like Reply 3d



Elena Zombii

Shame on everyone involved. This could have been avoided in many different ways. Now dogs are dead





1



Wayne Swanson

Thank you all involved for helping out With the K9's for Lake Station, you probably saved their lives!

Like Reply 4d

Most Relevant is selected, so some replies may have been filtered out.



Author

Lake Station Police Department

Wayne Swanson those k9 were not for lake station police department.

We were called on scene to help the Lake Station Fire department and animal control

Like Reply 3d

30 Replies

View 3 more replies



Juliana Cardona

It s incredible that happen in America, that country is fallen apart

Like Reply 2d

1 Reply



Christy Bez

Fox 32 Chicago

Like Reply 3d



Kendra Wil on

THANK YOU FOR THE PARAMEDICS AND FIREFIGHTERS FOR DOING THEIR JOBS.!

Like Reply 3d Edited



Maryse Bousso Bloom

Mechanical failure is neglect and negligence. The transport owner should be charged. Had it been human beings instead of dogs, the individual(s) would have been arrested. The police need to learn the legal code.

Like Reply 12h



Cathi Ann

UNREAL. I WAS OUT IN THIS heat. I hope people learned some lessons.

RIP. YOUR LIFE DID MATTER!!! ... [See more](#)

Like Reply 4d

2 Replies





1

Like Reply 3d



Sandy Garvey
So sad.

Like Reply 2d



Lorraine Guillen-Wentz
Elle Guillen

Like Reply 3d



1 Reply



Sarah Anne Stiles



Like Reply 3d



Li a Fera
Prayers angels 🙏😭❤️

Like Reply 4d



David Hall
ABC 7 Chicago

Like Reply 3d



Emily Tupper
Alesso Tovar

Like Reply 3d



Brian Silverthorn
My wife and i seen this and that was our first thought ac failure they were all moving and getting cooled and water but one was not moving but was getting worked on by ems and fire we hope that animal is ok now

Like Reply 4d



3 Replies



Haley Nicole Garza
Brett

Like Reply 3d



Brittney Rivett
Blake Rivett

Like Reply 3d



Anna Grace
Sandra Rose

Like Reply 3d



Jennifer Given





1



Karsen Pych
Alyssa Winterhaler Ashley Lenart

Like Reply 4d



Anna E coe
Tara Blystone Lankford

Like Reply 3d



Anna Escoe
Courtney Bell):

Like Reply 4d



Phoenix Ann
Danielle GaytonNayeli Castillo

Like Reply 3d



Richy Mendoza
Sad

Like Reply 4d



Lorri England
The "owner" needs to be arrested. I realize accidents happen, but he had no desire to aid the suffering animals. Same with the police officers. Knowledgable people were there to help the dying animals, but were not allowed to assist. That's 🐮💩. Wh... **See more**

Like Reply 3d

5 Replies



Victoria Jones
PATHETICALLY Sad sad and sad!! Get it TOGETHER
Folks...For future proper handling of this situation
ANIMALS LIVES MATTER!!! Too

Like Reply 2d Edited



Phoenix Ann
who transfers that many dogs stacked up like that , &
come to find out those are supposed to be your k9s ?
went 2+ hours in the back of a truck with out being
checked on , we're they even given any water during the
ride back from ohare? and nobody's re... **See more**

Like Reply 4d Edited

Most Relevant | Selected | Some replies may have been filtered out



Author

Lake Station Police Department
Phoenix Ann yes they had water in the crates and
again the AC unit malfunctioned and failed. This





Like Reply 4d

12 Replies

View 10 more replies



Ana Smith

Now Im concerned about how Lake Station Police are handling their own K9s? 💔🐾

Like Reply 3d

49 Replies



Jackie Hamrick Finnegan

Just awful. How the police could not comply with the rules and regulations governing the transport of animals and work as partners with the Humane Society is just shocking and so upsetting. Shame on everyone who did not allow every single one of these ... [See more](#)

Like Reply 3d

2 Replies



Jennifer Christine

I'm just perplexed at how these poor babies died and the driver was allowed to just continue on his way like it was no big deal - and with the back of the truck open?!?!

Like Reply 3d

1 Reply

[View more comments](#)

50 of 111



Exhibit 2

Posts

Filters



Lake Station Police Department

3d · 🌐

...

The Men and Women of the [Lake Station Police Department](#) would like to thank St. Mary's Hospital and thier Security Director Steve Duran for providing first aid trauma kits to all of the Officers of the police department. Thank you for your support and donating these valuable kits to all of us.



👍❤️ 161

8 comments 4 shares

👍 Like

🔗 Share



Lake Station Police Department limited who can comment on this post.

View more comments



Carol Lowe
Yeah Nice gesture!!

Like 3d



Lake Station Police Department

July 23 at 6:38 PM · 🌐

...

The Men, Women and Staff wanted to thank Jets Pizza who provided a delicious lunch and dinner for all of us earlier this week. Their support of local law enforcement is much appreciated....Thank you again 🍕🍕🍕



Exhibit 3



Lake Station Police Department

July 28 at 2:10 AM · 🌐



On July 27, an incident occurred involving canines that were being transported to a K9 training facility from O'Hare Airport to Michigan City, In. During the transport, the driver of the vehicle was caught in a 2-hour traffic delay, the AC unit that was being used to keep the canines cool failed. Upon failure, the temperature rose inside and some of the canines, due to the extreme heat from today's high temperature began rising inside the cargo area. Since the cargo area was s... [See more](#)

🙄🤔🙄 432

841 💬 182 ➦

👍 Like

➦ Share



Lake Station Police Department limited who can comment on this post.



Phoenix Ann

who transfers that many dogs stacked up like that , & come to find out those are supposed to be your k9s ? went 2+ hours in the back of a truck with out being checked on , we're they even given any water during the ride back from ohare? and nobody's responsible for the dead dogs ?we're tired of you guys sweeping everything under the rugs to make yourselves look better , do better you guys are sick! this could've been prevented !

Like 1w Edited

👍 44



Rebecca Pilla

Phoenix Ann and they have the audacity to say it wasn't animal cruelty

Like 1w

👍🙄🙄 19



Lake Station Police Department

Phoenix Ann yes they had water in the crates and again the AC unit malfunctioned and failed. This wasn't swept under the rug and there wasn't anyway of knowing the AC unit was going to fail.

Like Reply 1w

🤔👍🙄 19



Top fan

Vicky Nikolich

Lake Station Police Department still should be consequences for driver and anyone else responsible for these pups lives.this heat was predicted with warnings.the dogs didn't know .Humans are suppose b to b have the intellect not the dogs. Someone needs to be held accountable.Most people are out trying to save animals lives not uncaring about them in EXTREME heat.TERRIBLE.Thanks for informing us but would like to know what's gonna b done to All who were responsible for these dogs lives.i mean deaths

Like 1w Edited



Jennifer Christine

Lake Station Police Department what is put on your k9 unit vehicles to make sure the dogs are protected in case of an AC failure while the handler is out of the vehicle for 2 hours (or any amount of time) - and what is safety protocol in general?

Like 1w Edited



Kathy Smith Scott

Lake Station Police Department they could have someone ride with them.

Like 1w



Friedemann Diederichs

Lake Station Police Department so why did you mofus allow the owner drive on with a broken truck and dogs still suffering inside? Because he is a cop with a dirty side business?

Like 1w Edited



Michael Beverly

Why did you not follow proper protocol?

Like 1w



Alisha Shockley

Lake Station Police Department you didn't follow proper procedures. I hope the humane society nails you guys to the wall!!!

Like 1w



Mary Pat Holtschlag

Lake Station Police Department was the ac fixed before he left with the 4 live dogs and ten dead dogs?

Like 1w





Rocky Anderson

Lake Station Police Department and yet you allowed them to leave with remaining sick dogs in a non a/c truck? Wth is wrong with you? That alone spells corruption! Who's lining your pockets? Get out of here with this trying to say it wasn't his fault or ESPECIALLY your fault!!! Shame on you!!!

Like 1w



Becca Tipton

Lake Station Police Department the water bowls were dry and kennels shredded (picture proof) so no it's not an accident or whatever other term you choose to use. Had it been my transport I'd be fined to the moon and back and lost all the dogs. This is unacceptable and you need to take accountability for the lack of action on your departments part!

Like 1w



Top fan

Jen Brieger Saxe

Lake Station Police Department answer one simple question "WHY WAS THE DIRECTOR OF THE HUMANE SOCIETY PREVENTED FROM SAVING SOME OF THESE DOGS? Simple question.

Like 1w





Ann Melle

Lake Station Police Department

How much water? In EVERY crate?

Did you document and observe that there was an air conditioning unit^{OBJ?}

Are you taking the word of the driver that he actually HAD the air conditioning on? Because you let the truck go on down the road you lost your evidence, you should've secured the animals and taken the truck to be inspected by a mechanic to confirm the air conditioning actually did fail, and that he intentionally did not bake these animals by leaving the air conditioning off to save money.

Was the temperature of every animal taken before they were released to go on down the road? If you would've listen to your humane officer, you would know that even though an animal appears to be OK, if their temperature was high enough to suffer from heat stroke it can bake their organs and they should've been taken to a vet not sent down the road! Every dog that was in that truck was subjected to the same temperatures as the ones that died. Every single one of them should've gone to a vet. How long was the drive that the driver still had to make with the dogs that he left with? I understand it was over 100°. Even with the back door open, which was incredibly unsafe - these dogs were still at risk, and possibly could then also, I've been subjected to carbon monoxide poisoning.



Judy Gunn

Lake Station Police Department Who is your District Attorney? I need a name and email address. I will also be asking for an offense report tomorrow or Tuesday. You were responsible for these dogs as soon as you responded to the call, and you failed to act. You are criminally responsible for failure to act. I live in Texas, and intend to see that the officers at the scene are held accountable for failing to get these dogs help. If your officers don't know the laws regarding this incident, they should have inquired. Ignorance is no excuse.

Like 23h



Judy Gunn

I will also be asking the the State Police to investigate this incident, because your agency considers this case closed. A small town police agency does not have the ability to rule. Get your paperwork ready.

Like 23h

The comment Lake Station Police Department is replying to has been deleted.



Lake Station Police Department
Phoenix Ann and no he doesn't work for us

Like Reply 1w



Chad Martinez
Lake Station Police Department does he have any affiliation with the department or does he have a personal relationship with any members of the LSPD?

Like 1w



Chad Martinez
Lake Station Police Department ???

Like 1w



Lake Station Police Department
Chad Martinez we have no affiliation with the owner or driver or the k9s

Like Reply 1w



Chad Martinez
Lake Station Police Department transparency is key and it doesn't appear that's occurring here.

Like 1w Edited



Michael Beverly
Lake Station Police Department was he an ex police officer from somewhere? [OBJ]

Like 1w



Chad Martinez
Lake Station Police Department The chief at lake station hired the mchenry as a reserve for the pd he was formerly chief at

Like 1w



Missy Williams
Lake Station Police Department WHY was the driver allowed to drive away with some of the dogs?????

Like 1w



Missy Williams
Lake Station Police Department who is Flora??

Like 1w





Betina Campbell Beverly

@Lake Station Police Department, then why did you not follow proper protocols, establish that all proper paperwork was in order and most importantly make sure all of the dogs were healthy before allowing the driver to put the dogs, and the dead dogs, back in their death trap?' Sounds to me like there was some "affiliation" for you to allow the driver such leniency and complete disregard for a proper investigation...oh wait...maybe it was just plain incompetency...your call!

Like 1w Edited



Michael Beverly

Chad Martinez the information on the driver WILL come out...There's a reason why they will not release the drivers name likely he is or was involved in law enforcement in some capacity, and they cut him one of those cop to cop breaks, is there any reason why the public in general cannot trust officers

Like 1w



Chad Martinez

Michael Beverly If you need it

Lake station Indiana police department
Case number 23LS06727

Like 1w





Jennifer Webber

With all due respect and as the contracted animal control agency with The Humane Society of Hobart, this statement is not accurate. Multiple municipal code violations were made by both the owner of the pets and LSPD. Specifically The Humane Society of Hobart was denied the right to impound these pets in distress, and get these animals medical treatment, and conduct a proper investigation. Our vehicles sat on the scene running with AC and the owner would not let us take them and LSPD sided with him. We arranged hospitalization at Hobart Animal Clinic and brought IV fluids to the scene and told the officer that the remaining four needed to be hospitalized. Instead they were returned to the owner, placed back on the same broken truck, and driven to Michigan in an open door box truck in which the crates were not secured. Another code violation. The pets should have been seized immediately further investigation and taken to the vet. Then after investigation, returned to the owner. We also were denied to check proper health certificates and vaccine records, again required by law, for transport. I expect to meet with the Mayor and Police Chief immediately. The owner "so concerned about his dogs" sold one on the scene to a good Samaritan for 7500. I saw the check and saw it with my own eyes. I would like a call immediately.

Like 1w Edited

Like 1w Edited



Ann Melle

Jennifer Webber from posts elsewhere in this feed - there is WAY more going on here than you realize:

"(the transporter)His wife works for your police department (Flora) she showed up in her squad car gave her husband (transporter) a kiss and stated they were her dogs all on video

He is also the owner of F.M k9 training in Michigan City maybe the department should be more transparent and also review her body cam..."

"Flora is the same Portage officer who mishandled K9 Nyx leading to the mauling of a Yorkie at Bacon fest a few years ago. Her negligence caused the death of both the Yorkie and the euthanization of Nyx. And guess what training facility Nyx came from? And of course that incident was also labeled a freak accident."

"Mike McHenry (of FMk9) and Flora McHenry. She was/is a Portage police officer...so there is the REAL reason no one was investigated."

Like 1d



Jennifer Webber

Under section 6-30.3 f,h, and i Impoundment Procedures and Sec. 6-17 Animals in Motor Vehicles of the Lake Station Municipal Code I am officially taking possession of those pets hospitalized. The owner must provide all required health certificates and vaccine records required for transport by law and pay all fines and fees to be determined before acquiring his pets back. I will notify Crossroads, HPD, and Schererville PD. We will do this the right way.

Like 1w



Karen Brunker

Jennifer Webber the dogs were picked up from O'Hare Airport you know they had to have their vaccines and health certificate to travel on a plane

Like 1w



Karen Brunker

Sara Lee it shouldn't be a problem do we know if they gave the records to the veterinarian offices treating them?

HEALTH CERTIFICATES

The USDA requires that your pet must be at least eight weeks old and fully weaned before traveling. Only pets in good health are permitted to fly. Airlines will not transport animals that are violent, ill, or in physical distress. All pets crossing state borders, with the exception of guide dogs, are required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to have a rabies immunization and valid health certificate issued by a licensed veterinarian within 30 days of travel. If your pet is traveling via cargo, or if you are a breeder, dealer, or research facility transporting a dog, the health certificate should be issued no more than 10 days before departure.

Like 1w Edited



Jennifer Webber

Karen Brunker Yes exactly and so all he needs to do is provide that. I saw no paperwork on the scene. The man that purchased the dog for 7500 compromised heat stroke was not given paperwork to my knowledge at the time of sale. We need the facts...the citizens of Lake Station need the facts, and those animals deserve better.

Like 1w





Karen Brunker

Jennifer did anyone video him selling the dog at the scene or any contract given

We all know how this will play out without evidence 🙄

Like 1w Edited



Jennifer Webber

Karen Brunker Everything was photographed and video footage was taken. Let me be clear...we love serving the town and residents of Lake Station and have made huge strides in the protection of pets and support for pet families with pop up food pantries, free vaccine clinics, Impoundment of 400 stray animals a year. We give and give and give...and to be treated like we were, disregarded as professional contract partners with knowledge of the law and ordinance is at the least disappointing and extremely hurtful to us. But the worst is animals lives were lost because we were prohibited to use our authority to take possession of these dying pets, get them to a hospital, provide a thorough investigation, and upon compliance return them to the rightful owner. Lives were lost.

Like 1w Edited





Keath Rhymer

The dept failed to protect dogs transported illegally no vet papers as required. I would never trust this dept to do its job. Your not welcome in Marion cry we protect those who can not speak

Like 5d



Christine Borek Parkhill

You guys are nothing but 3rd world hillbillies. And the person you entrusted to take those dogs should be in a senile home. With all you dimwits assisting him. Typical of Indiana and your police out there to be brainless and thoughtless. You should be ashamed!! In no way should any of you be police officers. I'd seriously be scared if I had to live in Lake Station.

Like 5d Edited



Tricia Green

So why can't the Hobart Humane society take the owner and lake station police dept to court. Nothing about this is right. Makes you wonder what else the police department is covering up. There are enough videos out there to put a case together even if the police won't help. Lake Point needs a police dept review and heads need to roll. They are counting on it being forgotten but you can bet it will happen again, only next time may not be animals.

Like 5d



Julia Haynes O'Quinn

Tricia Green PETA is now investigating:

"PETA has discovered that Lake Station Police Chief James Richardson apparently has a long-standing relationship with the owner and operator of the company that was transporting the dogs, Mike McHenry of FM K9."

Like 1d



Judy Gunn

Tricia Green Take this to the State Police. They must investigate the actions of this police department and charge them criminally. "Chief" James Richardson can be fired.

Like 23h



Allen Crist

Why the hell wasn't there any monitoring or alarms? This is a complete lack of standard care for these animals. It's not a "freak event". It's very predictable that AC units fail. That's why there are so many products available for monitoring and alarm of heat for animals being transported.

Predictable = Preventable. There should be criminal charges for negligence in this case.

Like 5d Edited



Deborah Ann

The dogs in the transportation vehicle are dead because the Lake Station police department acquiesced to the driver and did not allow the Humane Society to remove the dogs and transport them to veterinarians for the appropriate care that could have saved many of them. There are protocols and regulations established for a reason, the police did not follow them and they are responsible for the suffering and death of all the canines in that truck. This matter needs to be investigated by outside agencies not the police department and those responsible need to be held accountable and charged with felony animal cruelty and death.

Like 5d



Deborah Singletary

He should have checked during 2hr delay had he done so good chance could have been saved. Idiot.

Like 4d



Lee Anne Smeaton

You mean these people are allowed paid by the police to carry animals of any kind in a vehicle that does NOT have a temp indicator for the box?? Disgraceful! Them when help arrives the idiot owner refused help for the dying k9s because he couldn't provide paperwork. That's neglect twice over.. shame on the Lake Station PD!!!

...

Like 4d



Malcolm Faber Holly Bourg

So many k9s die in cars . I have seen a few in my career. Im lost for words. R.I.P my friends

Like 4d



Scott Hoefer

Not according to the vet, who had serious concerns about the dogs and their care, who filed a notice of seizure for them which you blocked and then let the driver go before they could fully inspect the truck. You lying pigs

<https://globalnews.ca/.../police-dogs-dead-heat-van.../>



GLOBALNEWS.CA

8 police dogs die in overheated van in Indiana, raising questions of neglect - National | Globalnews.ca



Like 3d Edited



Joseph Waldman

1312, without exception.

...

Like 3d



Joseph Florio

This is horrible. I'm so sad about the German Shepards babies. Rip little guys.

Like 2d



Len Goldberg · Follow

STOP USING ANIMALS IN ANY WAY. ANIMALS ARE NOT YOURS TO USE AND CONSEQUENTLY ENDANGER. ANIMAL LIBERATION NOW !!

Like 2d



Michael Gulley

Don't trust PETA. They are bad news. You can handle the investigation without an outside independent source. They want to be that source and it won't turn out well.

Like 2d



Julia Haynes O'Quinn

Michael Gulley You sound like a buddy of the dog owner, Mike McHenry, or the Police Chief.

If the police department had handled this situation the way it DESERVED, PETA wouldn't have to get involved right now.

Like 1d



Ariel Scarpelli

The humane society had immediate care on the premises but you would not allow them to help!!!! This is what you aren't telling people. You let those dogs needlessly die and suffer 🤔

Like 2d



Sylvia Blunt

Jack booted thug cops protect their own and don't give one crap for police dogs unless a member of the public kills one. It's okay if a sorry police trainer kills 8. Typical behavior. Excuses, excuses. Stop with the excuses and take responsibility for being an irresponsible loser.

Like 2d



Sylvia Blunt

No one believes you. The driver SHOULD have stopped, gotten out, checked on dogs every 20 mins or so or call for new transport. These deaths are all on your heads, helping the K-9 trainer get away with it. 🤔🤔🤔🤔🤔🤔

Like 2d





Ellen Baer

Why wasn't there a camera in the back and other equipment to allow any driver to know what was going on in the back? This should be standard. Was the vehicle checked before transport? Why didn't the driver pull over to check on the dogs? Being from that area originally, I know that despite traffic he could have pulled over after 30 minutes to do a check or even pulled to the side of the highway. INEXCUSABLE not to be more responsible. Your department needs to be investigated and held accountable for these lives. If you cannot take responsibility for dogs in a transport after where they came from, then you should not have them. I hope any live dogs are placed elsewhere. Animals should never be crated! Seems like you all did everything wrong and do not want to accept it.

Like 2d



Angela Hamilton Helms

Already swept under the rug. Pure evil. These dogs deserve justice. They were officers of the law!! You did this.

Like 1d



Judy Gunn

No charges against the driver? Seriously? Will the state have to be asked to investigate the situation? If the dogs were found in the agency's jurisdiction, why hasn't the driver been charged?

Like 1d



Judy Gunn

An incident and Lake Station Police Department didn't have a clue what they were doing. Good to know. Open Records Request on the way. Get ready for the state to get involved. I think this police department needs to be shut down.

Like 1d



Carly Morgan

If this is all true this is revolting and a huge double standard. Why wasn't the humane society allowed to take the dogs and properly care for them? Instead you actually allowed this guy to load them back up into the hot little cages into the back of the truck with the door open and go off? Everyone involved in this needs to be investigated! What a blatant display of law for thee and not for me and total disregard for animals! <https://www.peta.org/.../dogs-hot-box-truck-lake-station-in/>



PETA.ORG

Nearly 20 Dogs Hauled in Hot Box Truck, 8 Die—but No Investigation? Urge Local Officials to Act! | PETA

Like 1d Edited





Carly Morgan

1. Not a freak event. Negligent. Dogs should never have been transported in the back of a box truck. 2. If you truly were trying to save the dogs you would have allowed the humane society to take them in the air conditioned vehicles to a hospital instead of actually LETTING THIS GUY LOAD THEM BACK IN THE HOT CAGES AND ONTO THE TRUCK!!!! BEYOND BELIEF!!! I'm furious! This guy is still being allowed to train animals after this?? WHY??? "The humane society representatives had access to multiple air-conditioned vehicles to get the dogs to immediate care but were forced to stand by while dogs died, vomiting and convulsing from heatstroke. The Lake Station Police Department reportedly wouldn't allow the humane society to transport the dogs for emergency veterinary care and instead made the animals wait for an ambulance intended for humans. The police also apparently nullified a notice of seizure that the humane society had issued, which would have required that the dogs' owner comply with all applicable laws before they could be released from veterinary treatment back to his custody."

Like 1d



London Animal Rights Activism - [Follow](#)

Shame on you for your incompetence and cruelty at letting these individuals die. And stop referring to them as 'canines' in that clinical and thus dismissive way — that sounds just like when men refer to women as 'females'. They were DOGS.

Like Reply 1d



Yasmin Young

It's disgusting that you all protected the animal killer because he was former law enforcement. It just goes to show that you all are more interested in protecting "your own" than justice. But, if a regular person did it, you all would have murdered them in the name of "fear for your life." It's despicable.

Like 1d



Julia Haynes O'Quinn

PETA is now investigating you and has FINALLY released the name of this man: Mike McHenry. Something you all should have done a week ago if you hadn't been so busy covering it up.

"PETA has discovered that Lake Station Police Chief James Richardson apparently has a long-standing relationship with the owner and operator of the company that was transporting the dogs, Mike McHenry of FM K9."

Like 1d Edited



Agnes Sigurbjörg Nolan

It's heartbreaking to think that these poor dogs had been flown from Europe and were obviously stressed from that alone. I seriously doubt this truck ever had AC. And was the driver asked to produce the trucks maintenance record? That's certainly the expectation for truckers on the road. And to be allowed to leave with the remaining dogs is beyond comprehension. Here is some information being posted by others on this site. Let's see whether our concerns are addressed and that the guilty parties are made to account for what happened.

"PETA has discovered that Lake Station Police Chief James Richardson apparently has a long-standing relationship with the owner and operator of the company that was transporting the dogs, Mike McHenry of FM K9."

Like 23h



Judy Gunn

To Whom does one direct an Open Records Request?

Like 22h



Glenn Wright

Has internal affairs investigated the incident yet? Any cops suspended? Any arrests made? Anyone lose their job over the incident?

Like 22h



Teri Stehr

Dogs are not cargo! That was the first mistake made. These dogs should have been transported in a way that had eyes on them at all times. These were animals that were to be trained as fire fighters. No other recruit would have been put in a cargo truck and left to fend for themselves with no means of escape or a way to let someone know they were in distress. Animals have a heart and soul just as much as any person. Ask any K-9 officer about their partner and they will tell you the same thing! Shame on whoever decide to transport these brave recruits this way!

Like 1h Edited



Joellen Margarita

At least 8 dogs bound for K-9 training DIED from heat stroke in a box truck! Local humane agents tried to help, but Lake Station Police Department BLOCKED their efforts. THIS MUST BE INVESTIGATED!

Like 1h



Joellen Margarita

DISGUSTING, you need to be investigated

Like 1h





Courtney Clayton Vernon

Sounds like the police department wouldn't let humane rescuers help...what was being hidden and why? Maybe these poor souls could have been saved.

The police department and the person/vendor transporting the dogs should obviously be investigated, by an INDEPENDENT agency! These K9s were just as important as any human officer 😞

This police department should also no longer be allowed to have K9 officers 😞😞😞

Like 1h



Chris Kurtz

Ineptitude. You should be shut down.

Like 1h




Exhibit 4



  159

19  4 

 Like

 Share



Lake Station Police Department limited who can comment on this post.

View more comments



Joellen Margarita

At least 8 dogs bound for K-9 training DIED from heat stroke in a box truck!

Local humane agents tried to help, but Lake Station Police Department **BLOCKED** their efforts. **THIS MUST BE INVESTIGATED!**

Like 1h



Exhibit 5

Lake Station Police Department's Post



Lake Station Police Department

August 4 at 3:59 PM · 🌐



The Men and Women of the [Lake Station Police Department](#) would like to thank St. Mary's Hospital and thier Security Director Steve Duran for providing first aid trauma kits to all of the Officers of the police department. Thank you for your support and donating these valuable kits to all of us.



👍❤️ 161

8 comments 4 shares

👍 Like

➦ Share



Lake Station Police Department limited who can comment on this post.



Kathy Markle Hill
Stay safe!

Like 4d



Cheryl Kasparian
Kimberly Lynne

Like 4d



Terry Harger



Like 4d



Wayne Swanson

Thank you St.Mary's and Steve Duran for your generosity in providing first aid trauma kits to the Lake Station Police Department.

Like 4d



Glen Croy
James,

This is awesome. St Mary's really takes care of you guys and helps you.

Like 4d



Derek Croy
Glen Croy lmao

Like 4d



Bethany Manfreddi

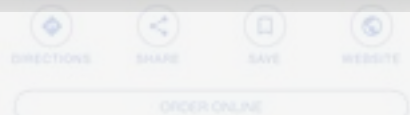
And you are the most amazing people in the law enforcement I'm not sure I'd be here if wasn't for you all

Like 4d



Carol Lowe
eah Nice gesture!!

Like 4d



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Featured



Lake Station Police Department

March 13 · 🌐



Lake Station Police Department

December 19, 2022 · 🌐

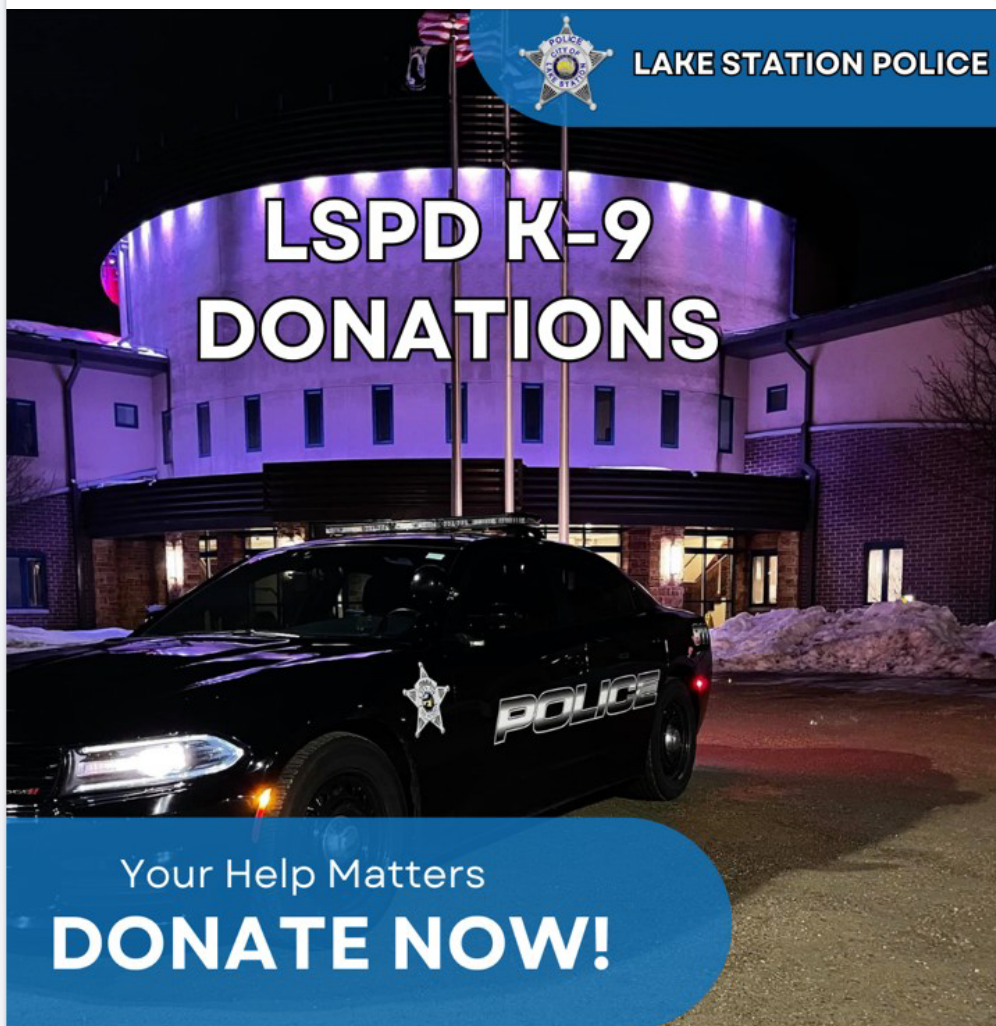


Exhibit 6



Lake Station Police Department

July 21 at 7 52 AM



WE NEED YOUR HELP!

The Lake Station Police Department is requesting the public's assistance with funding our new K-9 program and are requesting donations to get our program off of the ground

DONATION INFORMATION

Donations can be made in the form of check, cash, or money order. Please make any checks to the Lake Station Police Department with K-9 fund in the memo line



1969 Central Ave. Lake Station
Indiana 46405



👍👎😬 50

7 🗨️ 20 ➦

👍 Like

🗨️ Comment

➦ Share





Bill Stearns

f you need something designed - NO CHARGE!

Stickers, shirts, etc. ... [See more](#)

Like Reply 2w



Bob Kocon

Sell some t-shirts and challenge coins.

Like Reply 2w



David Elliott

e should have the police departments donate to our dogs, go pay some veterinarian bills at the clinic for the people.

Like Reply 2w



Glen Croy

ames. I've never stopped thinking of you. Ever since our friendship ended and I broke up with you I've had a hole n my heart.

-Glen Croy (not some guy named Bill)

Like Reply 2w



Ana Smith

Kendra Wilson

Like Reply 1w



Muenhover Mihammi

as this the dogs in the hot trck???

Like Reply 7m



Muenhover Mihammi

truck

Like Reply 3m



Write a comment...



Exhibit 7



Lake Station Police Department

July 21 at 7 52 AM



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1969 Central Ave. Lake Station
Indiana 46405



👍👎😬 50

5 💬 20 ➦

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share





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f you need something designed - NO CHARGE!

Stickers, shirts, etc. ... **See more**



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Like Reply 1w



rite a comment...

