



December 11, 2023

Wayne D. Hudson  
Chief of Police  
Shaker Heights Police Department

Dear Chief Hudson:

I hope this message finds you well. I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and our nearly 191,000 members and supporters in Ohio to urge you to **immediately retire and transfer permanent custody of K-9 Igor to former Shaker Heights police officer Chad Hagan**, who was his handler for more than five years and has offered to pay the city \$10,000 to help offset the cost of replacing him.

According to [news reports](#), Igor has been part of Hagan's family since the two were partnered together when the dog was only a year old. They have hardly spent any time apart over the last five years ([more than half the typical life expectancy](#) of a German shepherd), forging a powerful bond that no doubt made them an efficient team on duty and inseparable companions off duty. Sudden separation and kenneling would be certain to cause significant distress to Igor. Studies have shown that the [human-animal bond is crucial](#) to a working dog's success and that high levels of [stress and anxiety impair an animal's ability to perform](#) as expected. Despite the city's assertion that Igor could perhaps continue working for at least two more years, the dog is already approaching the age when large-breed K-9s should be retired. **It's in the best interests of the community for Igor to be retired and remain with the Hagan family.**

Additionally, although the official [statement](#) released by the city cites Shaker Heights municipal code as preventing the agency from selling Igor to Hagan, the city in fact maintains discretion to transfer legal custody of the animal. Code section [141.07](#) is inapplicable to the sale of a dog who is not retired, injured, disabled, or too old for duty, and the exception in subsection (c) only revokes the *handler's right* to purchase the animal but doesn't prohibit the city from selling him. Therefore, whether the police department chooses to retire Igor or claims that he is "still fit for duty," the city maintains discretion to sell or otherwise release the dog to Hagan.

Most news reports about police dogs highlight [the ugly side of the industry](#), including [the cruelty of outdated training methods](#) and [the suffering and deaths endured in the line of duty](#), incidents that erode a community's trust in law enforcement. **We hope you will take this opportunity to do the right thing.**

Thank you for your consideration. I can be reached at [REDACTED]. I look forward to hearing from you.

Most respectfully,

Allison Fandl  
Manager, Cruelty Investigations Department

cc: Jeri E. Chaikin, Chief Administrative Officer

PEOPLE FOR  
THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT  
OF ANIMALS

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

Info@peta.org  
PETA.org

Entities:

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