

June 2, 2026

Joseph Trigg
Interim Chief of Police

Via e-mail: jtrigg@grcity.us; GRPDinfo@grcity.us

Dear Chief Trigg:

I hope this message finds you well. I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) regarding K-9 Digo, who was injured during a suspect pursuit. We understand that many K-9s are regarded as colleagues and members of their handlers' families, and we wish him a speedy recovery. **Given this incident, would you please retire this K-9 and consider this an opportunity to reassess the use of dogs?**

Digo is not the only K-9 who has been injured in the line of duty, but he's among the few who have survived. The day after the Grand Rapids K-9 was injured, a [Chesterfield County Police K-9](#) in Virginia reportedly died from injuries sustained when a suspect opened fire on him and officers responding to a domestic violence call. Earlier this year, [K-9 Sheik](#) of the Wheeling Police Department in West Virginia died after she was struck by a car. A few months before Sheik died, [K-9 Spike](#) of the Burbank Police Department in California was fatally shot while pursuing a suspect who'd fled from a traffic stop. Earlier that year, [K-9 Rebel](#) of the Albuquerque Police Department in New Mexico was shot during a suspect pursuit and died a short time later at an emergency veterinary clinic. There certainly have been more fatal assaults against K-9s that weren't reported publicly.

Unlike their human counterparts, K-9s do not sign up to risk their lives. They are loyal and protective, but they cannot consent to be used in violent encounters they did not cause or escalate. Veterinary [experts](#) and the [U.S. military](#) recognize that dogs, in addition to suffering the immediate physical pain and other effects of life-threatening injuries, can experience fear and anxiety from [post-traumatic stress](#) for the rest of their lives.

Will you please plan now to use state-of-the-art technology, such as [tactical robots](#), [drones](#), or [portable mass spectrometers](#), which enhance safety and operational efficiency without risking anyone's life, once your current K-9s have been retired? Your department may be able to secure grant funding for new technology through the [Michigan State Police Grants and Community Services division](#), the [DOJ Office of Community Oriented Policing Services](#) (COPS), and the [Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant](#) (JAG) Program. You might also find private or equipment-specific grant funding opportunities through [PoliceGrantsHelp.com](#).

Thank you for your consideration and for all that you do to keep your community safe.

Most respectfully,

Allison Fandl
Manager of Special Projects

