



October 24, 2022

CITY OF
TERRE HAUTE
POLICE
DEPARTMENT

Our Law Enforcement Partners

1211 Wabash Avenue
Terre Haute, IN 47807

Phone: 812.238.1661
Fax: 812.232.9002

Re: Apologies

www.terrehaute.IN.gov

DUKE A. BENNETT
Mayor

SHAWN KEEN
Chief of Police

MARC ELDRED
Assistant Chief / Operations

MATTHEW CARDEN
Assistant Chief / Investigations

It has been brought to my attention that recent social media posts from a member of my department have included derogatory and insulting comments which generalize the entire Vigo County Sheriff's Department, disparages agencies for utilizing our Special Response Team, implies contention between other agencies, and calls into question the operations of the Seelyville Town Marshal. I find these comments undeserved. They clearly impair the working relationships of this department and are contrary to an environment of cooperation necessary to fulfill our law enforcement mission in this county.

For me not to address these comments, sends the erroneous message that the Terre Haute Police Department condones such messaging. Therefore, I want to first apologize to those agencies negatively affected by these comments, and ensure you that the vast majority of the department does not agree with such statements. Our Special Response Team exists to reduce risks and save lives. In no way should any agency be disparaged, or implied that the use of such resource constitutes cowardice. Our own patrol and investigative division utilizes the same when needed, and it certainly does not imply that they are cowards. The appropriate use of the team represents responsible decision-making aimed at reducing the risk to those we lead. Furthermore, the very equipment that is utilized by the team to protect them from harm was obtained through grants. Those grants were approved with the understanding that we would assist our surrounding law enforcement partners when called to do so.



As an agency, we have certainly called upon all of you for assistance over the years, and you have answered that call many times without question. We have lost three officers in the line of duty, and every time you have been there to patrol our streets and assist us so we could grieve. When we had heavy protests in the summer of 2020, we did not stand alone. When we pursue vehicles outside our jurisdiction, we do not do so alone. You are many times our first back-up and partners in everything from the drug task force to our crash team. I cannot tell you how many times many of you have taken calls in the city to help when a large incident drains our resources, but I can tell you that I am glad you are there. At one time or another in the last 25 years, I have received back-up or assistance from all of your agencies, and I am grateful for everyone. While individual disagreements are not uncommon, both in agency and out, it is my hope that in the future they can be handled responsibly and avoid impairing the working relationships between our agencies.

In closing, it is my hope to convey to you my sincere apology for the aforementioned comments and ensure you that the Terre Haute Police Department will continue to work with you to protect this community and display the respect you deserve. To do any less is beneath us and insults the memory of all who have worn this uniform.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shawn Keen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Shawn" and last name "Keen" clearly distinguishable.

Shawn Keen
Chief of Police
Terre Haute Police Department
(812) 244-2217