



COUNTY OF KENOSHA

OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

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Sheriff

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I would like to publicly apologize for some of the comments I made during a press conference I held this past week on January 25, 2018.

On January 24, 2018, one of our deputies spotted a vehicle involved in a Felony Theft from an outlet store in Pleasant Prairie. He gave chase and the suspect vehicle ended up traveling through a red light in the Village of Somers and struck a 16 year old and his mother. The 16 year old had just obtained his driver's license minutes earlier at the Department of Motor Vehicles a mile away. The five suspects ran from the scene and were quickly apprehended. Thousands of dollars of stolen merchandise were recovered in the car.

I am extremely aware that it bothered me that if timing was only a few feet different at the time of collision, it may have been a much more serious accident. This 16 year old reminded me of my own daughter who just received her driver's license less than a month ago and would have travelled this same intersection on her way home after earning it with her mother.

In the press conference I should have kept my comments better directed toward the incident itself and not allowed my emotions to get the better of me at the time. I have been involved in hundreds of on camera interviews and press conferences and have shared my emotions before, but never in this fashion or this extent.

The interesting part of this entire situation is I have received comments both in support of what I said and also not in support. I appreciate comments on both sides and have taken them all to heart.

This morning I had a wonderful meeting with two members of the Kenosha NAACP whom I greatly respect. Even though my comments were not meant to offend people, I can see how they may have. I will always be passionate in my defense for the vulnerable and the victims, but I will do my best not let this happen again.

I plan on working with State Legislators to strengthen penalties for those that break the law and place Kenosha's citizens in harm's way in the future. My goal is to do my best to protect those that live, work, play or travel through Kenosha County. In the situation last week my comments did not necessarily live up to even my own expectations for my office and I again apologize.

Sincerely,

David G. Beth
Kenosha County Sheriff