

The case investigation has been completed by the Brainerd Police Department and the facts of the case have been reviewed by the Crow Wing County Attorney. His determination is that actions of the accused were authorized through the exemption clause of the Proclamation and Declaration of a Local Emergency and Curfew Order issued by the City of Bemidji on May 30<sup>th</sup>.

Specifically, clause 2 c. Exemptions states the following are exempt: Law Enforcement, fire, medics, city and county employees authorized by the city of Bemidji, any person needed for logistical purposes authorized by the City of Bemidji and individuals traveling directly to and from work, seeking emergency care, fleeing danger or experiencing homelessness.

I'm not afraid to admit when I made a poor decision, and this was one of those times. On this evening the situation was fluid and rapidly evolving. Sheriff Beitel and I were handling large amounts of information and trying to do our best. State Representative Grossell's offer regarding citizens that wanted to help came at the same time we received information regarding a bus of individuals traveling to our City with ill intent. Rep Grossell was informed he could station these individuals to watch for this bus and inform us if it arrived. This allowed citizens to participate in keeping our city safe while keeping licensed peace officers available to respond when needed. At no point were citizens recruited to actively patrol the streets of Bemidji. This is a duty that will always remain a function of licensed peace officers or through authorized organizations such as the Beltrami County Sheriff's Posse or the Bemidji Police Departments Reserve Officer programs.

Although my intentions were good I now recognize that this decision has left some members of our community feeling unsafe and further marginalized, for that I apologize. Moving forward, I assure you that I will consider how my decisions affect everyone.

The very core of this issue involves citizens who want to participate in the safety of our community. Fundamentally, I believe that we all want to live in a safe community. I have often said that the police cannot do this alone, we need our community to be engaged and participate in promoting safety and security. This ideology is the foundation of community policing. My hope is that we can build relationships of trust with all community members and groups that will allow for meaningful communication that promotes safety and security.

Mike Mastin, Chief of Police  
Bemidji Police Department  
*Ganawenjigeng miinawaa Naadamaageng - To Protect and Serve*