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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **OFFICIAL MEDIA STATEMENT**

The Crystal Police Department has a long tradition of excellence in providing public safety services to the residents of the city of Crystal. We are proud of the professionalism of our staff and the record of our police department.

At issue is the investigation into complaints regarding Officer Watt and Sergeant Erkenbrack. There are multiple processes for employees to defend their employment rights. While these processes are ongoing, we need to respect them and allow them to play out. We recognize these investigations are time consuming and expensive, but they are necessary.

The city has been providing requested information, within the limits of Minnesota data privacy law, to Communities United Against Police Brutality for nearly a year. The organization has made a number of serious allegations about the Crystal Police Department. We take any allegation brought forward by any person or organization very seriously. All allegations of misconduct are properly investigated.

In a flier recently distributed by the CUAPB, a number of unrelated issues are addressed. For example, the flier references an incident that occurred in 2008 with the Ramirez family of Crystal which alleged that members of the Metro Gang Strike Force illegally removed the family's property. The flier states that Crystal police refused to investigate the crime, but the city had, in fact, hired both an outside civil investigator and a review was completed by the criminal prosecutor. Both determined the police department acted appropriately. The family was later compensated by the courts for their lost property and the actions of the Metro Gang Strike Force.

We recognize the community's desire for additional information, and we will continue to assess data and release pertinent public data when appropriate. We cannot provide private data, per Minnesota law.

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The City of Crystal is a fully-developed, first tier suburban community just west of Minneapolis in Hennepin County. The City became a Home Rule Charter City in 1960 and currently has a population of over 22,000 residents. Crystal is characterized by an extensive park system, healthy residential neighborhoods and commercial areas that provide for the needs of a diverse population. Residents enjoy convenient shopping at Target and the Crystal Shopping Center as well as the amenities at the Crystal Cove Aquatic Center and Bassett Creek Park.