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City of Ashland, Wisconsin

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

From: Mayor Debra Lewis, City of Ashland
Subject: Statement of Ashland Mayor Debra Lewis on Notice of Lawsuit
Ashland, WI – June 16, 2020

The City of Ashland has been served with a federal lawsuit in connection with the 2018 arrest of a man who pointed a gun at a child at the Ashland Skate Park.

The original incident occurred on March 6, 2018 when Andres Rodriguez, 39, and his wife, Jennifer Rodriguez, 38, both of Ashland, attempted to intervene in a fight involving minor children at the Skate Park. During the altercation, Andres Rodriguez stepped in and pointed a gun at one of the children. The incident was captured on video. Andres Rodriguez pled “no contest” in Ashland County Circuit Court to Intentionally Pointing a Firearm at a Person. Jennifer Rodriguez also pled “no contest” to Disorderly Conduct and Resisting/Obstructing an Officer.

The federal lawsuit alleges that when Ashland Police came to the Rodriguez’s home on March 13, 2018 to question Andres Rodriguez about the incident at the Skate Park, police entered the home without a warrant and used excessive force in arresting Andres Rodriguez. The suit was filed in U.S. District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin on May 26, 2020 on behalf of Andres and Jennifer Rodriguez and their five children. Named in the lawsuit are the City of Ashland and five Ashland Police Officers. The Ashland County Circuit Court in July 2018 held that the arrest of Andres Rodriguez was unlawful because police had no warrant.

“We are committed here in the city of Ashland to transparency and to doing the right thing in all areas of city service, and that includes taking responsibility for our mistakes,” said Ashland Mayor Debra Lewis. “I assure every Ashland resident that I expect that in every interaction with the city – especially those that involve our police – that you will be treated with courtesy, dignity, and respect.”

The city of Ashland will officially respond to the allegations in the Complaint when it files its Answer with the Court within the statutory deadline.

