City of
STE GENEVIÈVE
MISSOURI

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October 10, 2026

City of Ste. Genevieve
Office of the City Administrator

Statement from the City **of Ste. Genevieve**

The City of Ste. Genevieve understands and respects the concerns expressed by the parent regarding the September 28 incident involving their daughter and two other minors. Any parent would understandably have concerns when they believe their child has been placed in an uncomfortable or unfamiliar situation, and the City takes matters involving the safety and well-being of children seriously. Because the Facebook post references the City, City personnel, the Ste. Genevieve Police Department, and the circumstances under which the individuals involved were in our community, we believe it is important to provide some factual clarification.

The City of Ste. Genevieve did not hire, contract with, or employ the reporter or photographer involved in this incident, nor were they associated with the City. This fact was shared with the reporting individuals involved the same day that a police report was filed.

The Missouri Division of Tourism contacted the City's tourism department and requested assistance in showing the visitors some of Ste. Genevieve's historic sites and buildings. The City tourism director agreed to assist with that request, as communities routinely do when working with the Missouri Division of Tourism to promote tourism throughout the state. The reporter and photographer were visiting Ste. Genevieve as part of an article for a French magazine focused on encouraging French tourism and travel along the Mississippi River. They were **not hired by the City to promote Ste. Genevieve**, as has been suggested.

The Missouri Division of Tourism stated that they verified the reporters' identities; both the reporter and the photographer carried press credentials and identification. Those credentials should have been displayed while they were working in the community. The incident and the fact that the reporter and photographer did not wear their press credentials has been reported to the Missouri Division of Tourism. The city has also evaluated our own policies and will supply press passes to any journalist or photographer we contract with, though they cannot be required to wear them in public spaces per legal counsel.

The Police Department conducted an investigation into the incident. A police report was completed and is now available, and the information contained in that report answers the questions that law enforcement is legally able to answer, including identifying the photographer, the reporter, and the magazine for which they were working.

We recognize that the parent was told that a response would be available following the investigation and it is now available. That process takes time. Law enforcement must be allowed the opportunity to gather information, speak with the appropriate individuals, document the circumstances, and determine what information can legally be released before conclusions or responses are provided. The investigation is an important responsibility, particularly when an incident involves minors.

The City also understands the desire for immediate answers. However, **a Facebook post is not the formal mechanism by which an ongoing or recently completed law-enforcement matter is investigated or resolved.** This statement is being issued to provide a factual correction to misstatements about city operations. The Police Department and City officials remain available to address legitimate questions through the appropriate channels, and doing so allows those questions to be answered with verified information rather than assumptions or speculation.

None of this is intended to minimize the concerns expressed by the parent. Parents have every right to question an unfamiliar adult interacting with their children, and we encourage parents to remain vigilant about the safety of their children and notify the Police Department of any suspicious individuals. At the same time, the City has an obligation to ensure that statements concerning City employees, law enforcement, and City operations are based upon verified facts. The City cooperated with the Police Department, provided the information requested of it, and allowed law enforcement to conduct its investigation. The resulting police report is available and contains information that addresses many of the questions.

The City of Ste. Genevieve remains committed to transparency, cooperation with law enforcement, the safety of our residents and visitors, and the responsible promotion of our community.

David Bova,
City Administrator,
City of Ste. Genevieve