



HUGHES COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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Marcia Maxwell
SHERIFF

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To whom it may concern,

It is with great regret that I inform you that the Hughes County Sheriff's Office will no longer be honoring our cross commission with the Muscogee Creek Nation Lighthorse Police. This decision has been a very hard one to make but in light of the tribe's inability or refusal to assist on tribal calls in Hughes County and lack of prosecution of cases we have no other recourse.

The Hughes County Sheriff's Office budget was slashed this fiscal year and we are unable to accommodate the requirements the MCN has put forth on our officers regarding their calls for service. Deputies are required to go to the scene, make the arrest, provide all the paperwork required for the tribal court, as well provide supporting documents of tribal citizenship and transporting the arrestee to another county for incarceration. This is simply not logistically possible with the manpower we have at this time.

The second issue we have is the lack of prosecution in MCN tribal courts. Our goal and duty is to protect our citizens both native and non-native but when we arrest a native suspect, he or she is rarely prosecuted and very rarely spends any time in jail. This is very frustrating to both law enforcement and the victims of crimes within Hughes County. I feel that the MCN has done a great disservice to the people of Hughes County with the issues currently going in in the tribal court system or better yet, the lack there of.

The thought that the tribal court can let the rape of a native child sit on a prosecutor's/investigator's desk for months without any action is infuriating to me. The fact that an elderly native man can be beat to near death and the native suspect be released within days without prosecution is against everything in me. I personally arrested the suspect as he was beating the elderly victim in a ditch full of freezing water during a sleet storm. The victim

was unresponsive and had a core body temperature of less than 87 degrees upon arrival at the hospital. Lighthorse in that case took over immediately after I had the suspect in custody and still the suspect walked free.

These are just two examples of injustice for our native citizens but I assure you that there are many more documented cases where both native and non-native citizens have been victimized without any repercussions from tribal authorities. Is this the direction we want to be headed in Hughes County? Law enforcement officers take an oath to protect the citizens no matter what race is involved but the MCN has not followed thru with their responsibility to the citizens and this is of great concern to me. Everyone should watch Murdered and Missing in Montana and see the direction we are headed. It's scary to think that that injustice is just around the corner for us as well.

There has to be an easier solution to the problem law enforcement in eastern Oklahoma is facing at this time whether it be putting a tribal prosecutor in district courts or reverting back to pre McGirt until the tribal courts and tribal law enforcement can better prepare for the overwhelming task ahead of them.

Our only mission is to protect and serve ALL of our citizens but we but we cannot do that until this matter is resolved. Everyone should be held accountable for their actions equally in equal courts of law and we will not quit fighting for justice until we accomplish that mission.

Sincerely

Marcia Maxwell
Hughes County Sheriff