



Police Department

PUBLIC STATEMENT

On September 7, 2021, a YouTube video was shared anonymously with the Rome Police Department showing a confrontation between Sgt. Ryan Hutchins and two divers. The divers had located in the Etowah River what appeared to be a grave marker/head stone. The divers called 911 to turn the marker over to police. Sgt. Hutchins responded to the call. The released YouTube video shows Sgt. Hutchins becoming agitated with the divers when they refused to provide their names for an incident report. Although the video was noticeably edited, Sgt. Hutchins allowed himself to become confrontational with the two divers.

It is the policy of the Rome Police Department to treat citizens with respect and civility. The Rome Police Department has reviewed the YouTube video and determined that Sgt. Hutchins acted in an unprofessional manner and brought discredit to the Rome Police Department. This matter has been addressed administratively with disciplinary action taken and made a part of Sgt. Hutchins permanent file.

Sgt. Hutchins is a 17-year veteran of the department and has an excellent service record. He acknowledges that he should have handled the situation better. He has stated that he has learned from his mistake, grown from it, and will use this as a tool to become a better a public servant.

The grave marker was determined to be a display model cast by Star Granite Company. The model could have been sent to any vendor in the country for display purposes. All of the local vendors in Rome were contacted and none of them reported any stolen or missing displays.

On behalf of all members of the Rome Police Department, we offer an apology to the community at large. We failed to represent ourselves in a proper manner in this instance. We pride ourselves on our service to the community and hold ourselves to a higher standard.

We also regret that people across our community, who have had nothing to do with this incident, have been on the receiving end of harsh criticism and vulgar language by individuals who choose to remain anonymous.



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