Mayor Krista Browne
City of Viroqua, Wisconsin
124 W. Decker Street
Viroqua, WI 54665

November 8th, 2026

RE: The arrest for trespassing inside of our family's house.

Viroqua,

Thank you for your concern for my safety and my family's safety regarding the trespassing that occurred inside of our house. On Monday, October 26th, around noon, I received a text message that Evan Blattner was inside of our house. Evan was hired as a handyman to paint at our property, in March 2026.

He completed the painting in the interior of our house and was permitted to use the detached garage to finish painting 5 interior doors. Evan had not completed the work and to our knowledge, had not been present at our home since September 11th. When we contacted him to inquire about his plan to finish the task, he was not responsive.

Prior to his trespassing inside our house, on the afternoon of October 22nd, Tanja Birke (Evan's wife) and Council President Steve Willis scheduled a meeting with me to discuss, in their words, "a pressing issue". Without clear knowledge of their concern, I agreed to meet. They made criminal accusations of me, labelled me unprofessional, and suggested that I move my office "privately and voluntarily" to the basement of city hall. During that meeting, I voiced concern that they did not have key facts and were not considering the whole situation. Rather than take time to listen and gather information, they maintained their position. At the end of that meeting, I stated directly to them that, "I feel threatened".

Three days later, at 11:51pm on Sunday October 25th, Tanja Birke requested a closed session be put on the council agenda for October 27th. On October 26th, the same morning the meeting agenda was being amended, while I was working to gather information about what the topic of the closed session would include, I received the notification that her husband was inside of my house without need, notice, nor permission, and for between 20-70 minutes. I contacted law enforcement immediately.

Because of my leadership role in the City of Viroqua Police Department, Chief Neidfeldt, "requested Vernon County Sheriff's Department to conduct the investigation into the complaint due to a conflict of interest." The investigation was completed by the Vernon County Sheriff's Department, and the arrest was made days later, on October 30th, after a thorough investigation.

Thank you, Viroqua, for your concern for our family. And thank you for understanding that this is a sensitive topic for all involved, and only one piece of a larger, ongoing problem.

I want to state clearly that I will not allow threatening behavior to change how I lead and how I live in this city. I will also not allow criminal behavior to change how I lead and how I live in this city. I believe in public safety. I believe in transparency, of elected officials. And I continue to believe in the good of our city.

Thank you.
Mayor Browne