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Town of Sahuarita
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re: Unsubstantiated, irresponsible and harmful public statements by SPD

Dear Mayor Murphy and Town Council:

On behalf of Save the Scenic Santa Ritas Association (“SSSR”), we are writing to you to address extremely serious allegations that Councilmember Lytle and the Sahuarita Police Department (“SPD”) have made against purported members of SSSR, as published in the *Green Valley News* (“GVN”) on September 15, 2026.

SPD’s Commander Manny Amado made a statement to GVN that a council member (later identified as Councilmember Lytle) had called Police Chief John Noland (not 911) on Thursday night, claiming “members” of SSSR “confronted” him at his home, stating that they had been watching council meetings and had “driven down from Phoenix” to “change your mind” (apparently referring to Copper World’s proposed mine in the Santa Rita Mountains). Commander Amado publicly concluded that “we know they’re from the Scenic Santa Ritas because they introduced themselves as such.” See attached GVN article dated September 15, 2026.

At the outset, SSSR vehemently denies that the organization was involved in any way with this alleged incident and SSSR would never condone, encourage, or facilitate such alleged conduct. SSSR has built its positive reputation and close relationships with the Sahuarita community over decades of cooperation and hard work devoted to protecting the Santa Rita Mountains and this Town.

SSSR is based in Tucson. Most of its supporters and volunteers live in southern Arizona. No one is authorized to act on behalf of, or represent SSSR, other than its Executive Director John Dougherty, Outreach Director Paige Humphrey, and SSSR board members, none of whom were involved or had knowledge of the purported incident on Sept. 10. SSSR has neither seen nor received, despite immediate requests to SPD for information, anything indicating that these purported individuals from Phoenix were affiliated with the organization in any way.

Because of the seriousness of these harmful and unsubstantiated public allegations, SSSR urgently requests that the Town provide the following:

1. A copy of any police reports, dispatch records or call logs, or any other documentation relating to this incident.
2. Any statements made by any witnesses, including Councilmember Lytle's statement, both written and recorded.
3. A list of witnesses to the incident.
4. Any body or dash camera footage from law enforcement, security footage from Councilmember Lytle or his neighbors.
5. A detailed description of each person allegedly claiming to be associated with SSSR, a description of their vehicle, and a license plate number.
6. Any record of approval or authorization Commander Amado received to release information to the media, as required by SPD policy and Code of Conduct.

Under SPD's Code of Conduct, an officer may not make any statements to the media that "release or divulge information, evidence or any other matters of the department" without authorization via a GO (general order), directive or authorization of the Chief of Police or his designee. SPD Policy Manual, Code of Conduct – Standards, Rule 21(B).

The Code of Conduct further requires that official business associated with SPD be treated as confidential and "will only be disseminated via officially approved processes, which must include an official and recorded chain of custody or process." Rule 22(A). Dissemination of information to news media is also prohibited without the "express authorization" of the Chief of Police or his designee. Rule 22(D).

It is extremely irresponsible and unprofessional that Commander Amado made public statements claiming members of SSSR were responsible for this incident without first conducting any further investigation or obtaining a statement from SSSR. This is

especially so given that Executive Director Dougherty only learned of the incident on the evening of September 14 when a GVN reporter provided a copy of a police dispatch log to Mr. Dougherty. On the morning of September 15, Mr. Dougherty called and asked to speak to a detective. SPD has not responded.

Even after this call, Commander Amado provided the lengthy unsubstantiated and speculative statement to GVN accusing members of SSSR of carrying out this alleged incident.

It is also troubling that Councilmember Lytle contacted SPD Chief of Police John Noland rather than calling 911 to report the incident. This bypasses the public record trail the media and members of the public rely upon for a contemporaneous record of law enforcement events and injects even more doubt and obfuscation into this alleged incident.

SSSR takes this incident very seriously and will pursue all legal options to determine whether this confrontation occurred, and if so, who was involved.

We appreciate your urgent response and the assistance of all council members, Sahuarita staff and police department, in finding the truth about the circumstances and individuals involved in this alleged incident.

One thing is certain: no one representing SSSR was involved.

Thank you,

/s/ Adriane Hofmeyr
Adriane J. Hofmeyr

/s/ Rui Wang
Rui Wang

cc

Town Manager Shane Dille, sdille@sahuaritaaz.gov

Assistant Town Manager Beth Abramovitz, babramovitz@sahuaritaaz.gov

Chief of Police John Noland, jnoland@sahuaritaaz.gov

SPD Professional Standards Officer Lt. J. Carlson, jcarlson@sahuaritaaz.gov

https://www.gvnews.com/news/local/anti-mining-group-members-accused-of-confronting-councilman-at-home/article_3d6a7191-de90-46ce-8f95-e8df8f4a3f78.html

FEATURED

Anti-mining group members accused of confronting councilman at home

By Kim Smith kim.smith@gvnews.com
Sep 15, 2026























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Sahuarita police officers have been conducting extra patrols around Town Councilman Ed Lytle's home since Thursday night when he reported three people claiming to be with the Save the Scenic Santa Ritas anti-mining group confronted him at his home.

The incident first came to light in a daily call log released by the police department and while neither the log nor Commander Manny Amado confirmed the incident involved Lytle, online records show Lytle lives on the street where officers were dispatched shortly before 6 p.m. Thursday.

The commander said the department is withholding the council member's name at their request.

Amado said the council member in question called Chief John Noland Thursday night to report two women and one man in their 30s to 40s approached him.

"These three members of the SSSR organization walked up to the council member as the council member was parking their vehicle in their driveway and walking up to their home," Amado said. "They said something to the effect of, 'We've been watching the council meetings online and it appears that you are not listening or paying attention to the organization or to our group when they speak about saving the Santa Ritas, and we're here to change your mind' or something to that effect."

The trio was not aggressive, but made it clear they wanted the council member to pay more attention, Amado said.

"The council member politely said, 'I am not going to be intimidated by you. I'm going to, you know, vote whichever way I'm going to vote if that time comes, or something to that effect, please leave,'" Amado said. "Now we know they're from the Scenic Santa Ritas because they introduced themselves as such, and they said they had driven down from Phoenix."

Once asked to leave, they did so without incident, Amado said.

The group did not violate any laws, but had they refused to depart they could have faced trespassing charges, he said.

The call log stated officers were directed to check the residence twice per shift and drive by the home to ensure nothing suspicious is happening and Amado confirmed those extra patrols are ongoing.

No other council members have reported similar incidents, Amado said.

Lytle did not return voice messages seeking comment.

Save the Santa Ritas' Executive Director John Dougherty said they don't have formal members, but doubts anyone associated with their cause would engage in such behavior.

"We certainly do not advocate any of that kind of activity. We make our speeches or comments at the council meeting. I contact them via email, but no, this is not something that we would condone. Nor am I accepting that this is anybody from our group. This could be Hudbay posing (as us) and doing this," Dougherty said. "I know we're in a high-stakes operation here, and I don't trust Hudbay as far as you can throw a rock, and I don't know what's going on here."

Unless or until someone is arrested, Dougherty said "it's all very speculative."

Dougherty has since requested the 9-1-1 call and police report from the town as has the Green Valley News.

According to their website, the Save the Scenic Santa Ritas Association formed in 1996 to protect the mountains from industrial, open-pit mining. They hope to prevent the Toronto-based Hudbay Minerals from constructing the Copper World mining complex.

Hudbay is moving toward a final/definitive feasibility study in the near term and is aiming for a final sanctioning decision this year.

Kim Smith | 520-547-9740

Tags

[Save The Santa Ritas](#)[Sahuarita Police](#)[Councilman Ed Lytle](#)[Confrontation](#)[John Doherty](#)[Lt. John Carlson](#)[Hudbay](#)[Social Conflict](#)[Police](#)

Kim Smith