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Sheriff
Eddy E. Rice



Undersheriff
Smokey Patchin

****MEDIA RELEASE****
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

On Monday, December 18, 2023, the Okmulgee County Sheriff's Office received a call for assistance at the Okmulgee County Jail. The Okmulgee County Jail has its own administration and is overseen by the Okmulgee County Criminal Justice Authority. Upon arrival to the jail, there were 15-20 Muskogee Creek Nation Lighthorse tribal police present. Tribal patrol units had blocked the roadways around the jail and parked tribal units so they blocked on-duty OCSO patrol units in their parking spots, preventing them from responding to emergency calls. The call for assistance at the jail was related to an incident that occurred inside the jail between CNLH tribal police officers and jail staff. This situation was calmed, and CNLH tribal police left the grounds and the prisoner being presented was accepted after all proper booking procedures were completed.

On Tuesday evening at approx. 5pm, Sheriff Rice learned that CNLH tribal police were at the Okmulgee County Jail with a TRIBAL arrest warrant for a NON-TRIBAL OCCJA Detention Officer who was involved in the altercation the previous day. There were several phone conversations made by legal experts related to the issuance of this Tribal arrest warrant for a non-tribal citizen and the CNLH was denied entry into the jail by OCCJA staff. Three OCSO deputies were at their office located in the same building as the jail and observed several CNLH units circling the block and parked at the Okmulgee Library. OCSO deputies were instructed to stay inside their office and absolutely no interactions took place between the two law enforcement agencies.

Sheriff Rice maintains his deputies have been positive and professional during these above-mentioned situations. NO OKMULGEE COUNTY DEPUTIES have been arrested, and CNLH has not attempted to arrest any OKMULGEE COUNTY DEPUTY. Despite misinformation provided by the media, there have been no instances of deputies and/or tribal police pointing firearms at each other.

Sheriff Rice also reminds the public that even under the McGirt ruling, the OCSO has continued to provide services to the tribal citizens of this county. The OCSO routinely takes reports from tribal victims and investigates those cases until completion or unless a tribal suspect is generated, then the report is turned over to CNLH for further investigation.

Sheriff Rice is proud of the job his deputies are doing in the field and the misinformation related to this incident is uncalled for and out of hand.

Thank you

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Rice". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Eddy Rice
Sheriff, Okmulgee County Sheriff's Office