

Rebekkah Shaw  
SRC Executive Secretary  
346 South Rio Grande Street  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101  
(801) 531-3851  
[SRCsecretary@utah.gov](mailto:SRCsecretary@utah.gov)

October 29, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

All correspondence related to this request for records is provided. This appeal is primarily centered on Springville Police Department's assertion that it may deny fee waivers en masse as a mechanism to "level the playing field" for media outlets, instead of considering each request on its own merits.

On 10/9/23, I first submitted a request to Springville Police Dept via e-mail for "an electronic copy of the CAD reports for all calls for service at 1803 E River Bottom Rd for the time period of January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2020." On 10/12/23, I re-submitted the request utilizing the public body's online form as they had requested, at which time I also requested a fee waiver. I do not have access to a copy of the request submitted via their form, however I noted that the records would be made available to the public and that the records pertain to a story of significant public interest.

The requested records are related to the story of the arrest of Ruby Franke, a once-popular YouTube personality who offered parenting advice, who has now been arrested for child abuse. A simple Google search for "Ruby Franke arrest" will turn up dozens of articles covering the story on a national scale. If there is any question about the public interest in this story, I am happy to provide more detailed information. The CAD reports for the specified address and time frame are anticipated to shed light on prior police engagements at Franke's residence, which was previously documented to have multiple calls tagged as "Juvenile Prob".

The disclosure of these records predominantly serves the public's interest over any individual interest. The widespread public discourse surrounding this case demonstrates a collective endeavor to understand the intricacies of the situation, including any potential missed clues or opportunities which may be clearer in light of what we now know about Franke. Although some details regarding a 2022 neglect report have surfaced, the bulk of the information concerning the calls for service, which form the basis of this request, remain undisclosed to my knowledge.

In response to my request for a fee waiver, Springville Police Department's Records Secretary stated "*We are declining to waive fees in regards to any of the Franke reports. This is to keep it impartial for every media outlet that is interested in receiving information from our department.*" As this committee is well aware, there is no provision in Utah's GRAMA to deny fee waivers for this reason. Additionally, the stated reason defies logic. The most effective way to ensure all media outlets receive information from Springville Police Department is to provide records without regard to a requester's ability to pay. The current stance only favors media entities with substantial resources, thereby undermining the spirit of transparency and public insight that GRAMA enshrines.

In response to my initial appeal, the Chief Administrative Officer contends that the denial of my fee waiver was based on its actual merits, claiming that the records do not benefit the public "in such a way that the City should bear the financial burden of [my] document request." However, the true stance of the Springville Police Department concerning a blanket denial of fee waivers was already disclosed earlier by the Records Secretary. This disclosure unveils a contradictory practice that deviates from a case-by-case merit-based evaluation, opting instead for a broad, indiscriminate denial policy. This inconsistency not only undermines the

credibility of the fee waiver assessment process but also stifles the essence of transparency and public interest that the GRAMA statute fundamentally champions.

I believe the denial of the fee waiver in this scenario is unjust, and I earnestly request the committee to reconsider this decision, taking into account the overarching public interest that the disclosure of these records encapsulates.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am willing to provide any further information or clarify any aspect of this appeal as required. I look forward to a favorable resolution that upholds the principles of transparency, public accountability, and the spirit of GRAMA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'PW', with a long, sweeping flourish extending upwards and to the right.

Patrick Wells

[152932-82091062@requests.muckrock.com](mailto:152932-82091062@requests.muckrock.com)

Mailing Address:  
MuckRock News  
DEPT MR 152932  
263 Huntington Ave  
Boston, MA 02115