



City of
MARYLAND HEIGHTS

Statement to the Community

February 25, 2020

Maryland Heights Mayor Mike Moeller has issued the following statement to the public:

On behalf of our residents, first responders and employees, today we as a community mourn the tragic loss of Maria Lucas, a valued and beloved employee at our Community Center. I want to express our sincere sympathies to Maria's family and friends for their loss. We are all saddened and are struggling to deal with this difficult situation.

The City is making grief counseling services available to our employees beginning today, and we plan to also offer these services to any patrons of the Community Center that may need help through this difficult time. We will make the schedule of these services available to the public in the very near future.

I want to thank and commend the bravery of our first responders and Community Center staff that worked to protect patrons at the Community Center at the time this incident took place and reduce the possibility of further loss. Our police officer showed selfless bravery and put the public's safety above his own during this chaotic situation. The staff quickly moved everyone inside the building out of harm's way until the threat had passed. First responders provided emergency medical care without regard for their safety, and police from Maryland Heights and neighboring agencies came together to provide a safe perimeter and help reunite families with their loved ones trapped in the building as quickly as possible.

We are learning more about those involved in this tragedy to determine what can be done to enhance the safety of Community Center visitors in the future. There are many questions to be answered, and we will share as much of the information with the public as we can in the near future.

We are planning a public event to honor the life of Maria Lucas in the near future. We also plan to re-open the Community Center soon and return it to its role as a place in the heart of our community for people to gather and to enjoy their healthy lifestyles.

Maryland Heights is a great and proud community where violent crimes such as this are rare. I am confident that we will work through this difficult time together and emerge a stronger city and community.