



For immediate release

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## **CARVER COUNTY VOIDS SCREAM TOWN CONTRACT, ISSUES STOP WORK ORDER**

CHASKA, MINN. — Carver County Sheriff Jim Olson, County Attorney Mark Metz, and County Administrator David Hemze today announced the termination of the Sheriff's Office contract with Scream Town and its owner, Matt Dunn.

Scream Town had contracted with the County Sheriff's Office for grounds patrol, general security, traffic control, crowd control, and law enforcement.

With no contract in place, the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) issued to SSP Holdings, LP is in substantial violation. Under the CUP, SSP Holdings' Carver County property hosts Scream Town for six weeks annually. The County today issued an immediate stop work order for the Scream Town operation on the SSP Holdings' property.

Olson, Metz and Hemze investigated Dunn's recent social media posts directed to Scream Town staff members. Dunn posted on a private Facebook social media account accessible by Scream Town staff. Certain Scream Town staff later made these comments public including the following:

"Important! The following sign has been added to the ticket booth. In addition, other signs are being added to encourage guests to call in and report any guest issues while waiting in line. Note that we are having a zero tolerance policy with Somalis. (Other guests, you make your best judgement call) But absolutely zero tolerance with Somalis. Your diligence in this matter is crucial. Call me directly if you feel that is the fastest way of communication. 612-518-0364 If they violate ANY of the following, they need to be followed, reported, and stayed with until Scream Town staff/ security arrives. "WARNING- Scream Town is a no tolerance event. You will be removed without a refund for pushing, cutting in line, running, foul language, disorderly conduct, intoxication, drug use, touching actors, kicking walls, vandalism, touching props, entering the wrong waiting line, false tickets, improper hand stamps, attempting to use a ticket twice, and threats. Scream Town reserves the right to refuse service to anyone."

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## Carver County Voids Scream Town Contract, two of two

Among other things, the contract between Scream Town/Dunn and the Carver County Sheriff's Office states:

"...the Parties agree to the following: no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, religion, age, sex, disability, marital status, public assistance status, criminal record, creed or national origin be excluded from full employment rights in, participation in, be denied the benefits of or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any and all applicable Federal and State laws against discrimination."

Since Dunn's comments violated the contract, as well as County, State, and Federal laws, the County voided the contract. Subsequently, the County reviewed Scream Town's CUP. The CUP allows Scream Town to operate its business on the SSP Holdings' property. It requires the CUP holder to conform to County ordinances and State and Federal regulations. Having discriminatory policies and practices does not conform to County ordinances and State and Federal regulations. The CUP also requires Carver County Sheriff's deputies to manage U.S. Highway 212 traffic. With no traffic management in place, the County issued the stop work order under CUP enforcement procedures. "The County is responsible for the public's safety, and it is our duty to act decisively and swiftly when public safety is at risk," Sheriff Olson said.

"We hold equal treatment of all people among our highest principles," County Administrator Hemze said. "Mr. Dunn's comments discriminated against one group based on their national origin. There is no ambiguity to Mr. Dunn's comments. Mr. Dunn encouraged his employees to racially profile a targeted group and his comments are completely unacceptable. They do not comply with County policy, and they breached our contract with him."

"Carver County unequivocally does not allow anyone in its organization to discriminate based on national origin or race and we most certainly will not contract with any business that discriminates or has discriminatory policies," County Board chair Gayle Degler said.

Contract: <https://www.co.carver.mn.us/Home/ShowDocument?id=16473>

CUP: <https://www.co.carver.mn.us/Home/ShowDocument?id=16465>

Carver County Code of Ordinances, Section 152.080:

<https://www.co.carver.mn.us/Home/ShowDocument?id=16467>

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