

Lawyers' Statement

Todd Shapiro and Peter Ganyard released the following statement to CBS News Texas:

"On January 1, 2026, Stephen Bovey and Kristi Hicks welcomed an animal welfare check conducted by multiple Hopkins County Sheriff's Office investigators and Karrie Downs, an animal protection specialist with Animal Investigation and Response.

On the record, during their inspection of the animals on the property, Chief Investigator Michael Russell and Karrie Downs determined that there was "no criminal neglect going on and no action that could be taken." Chief Investigator Russell told Stephen that the welfare check "did nothing but back up everything [Stephen] has been saying," and he and Sheriff Lewis Tatum thanked Stephen and Kristi for their cooperation and assistance.

Additionally, Investigator Russell states that when they walked into the pens, they didn't find any dogs that were malnourished, and that he was expecting to see dead dogs and skin and bones and he didn't see any of that. The dogs were well fed and heavy on the weight. Karrie Downs confirmed that 99% of what is on Facebook is exaggerated or twisted in discussing social media photos of their property and confirmed there's no proof of where those photos were taken.

Stephen and Kristi stand by their stellar reputation in the community, with more than 20 years of experience legally breeding, raising, and rescuing German Shepherds. Kristi and Giant German Shepherds are American Kennel Club recognized breeders. Their dogs are DNA and OFA tested through the American Kennel Club and have received numerous show titles. Their dog, Rex, served two tours in Afghanistan.

Kristi has sold German Shepherds to officers with the Dallas Police Department, Fort Worth Police Department, and Waco Police Department. She has sold German Shepherds to Marines stationed at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, Army Special Forces, and has sold and donated puppies to disabled Marine veterans in Indiana and New Hampshire. Additionally, Kristi sold a retired Keller Army veteran a service dog to assist with his transition into retirement and to help address issues stemming from PTSD and anxiety. She has made donations to veterans' groups, including Shepherds of Mount Eden, which has helped create awards for retired firefighters. Kristi has also recently donated four dogs to rescuers searching for victims of the Guadalupe flood.

Their reputation with law enforcement, military, and civilian customers is impeccable, and their accolades and experience speak for themselves. Despite this, they have endured countless death threats and multiple incidents of trespassing on their property, which have already resulted in three arrests and charges against those trespassers. Every night has become a nightmare as they attempt to return to a sense of normalcy, not knowing whether further verbal or direct threats to their lives will occur. Kerra, the dog referenced in the video, had developed a grapefruit-sized mass on her breast tissue that was dragging on the ground and causing significant discomfort.

They have been fully cooperative with the Hopkins County Sheriff's Office and the Animal Investigation and Response team throughout multiple visits to their property and look forward to clearing their names in court."