



Pittsfield Charter Township
Department of Public Safety

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Mandy Grewal, Supervisor

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
3/12/2017

TYPE OF INCIDENT: Structure Fire

DATE: Saturday, March 11, 2017

TIME: 4:59 PM

LOCATION: 5900 Block of US12

FIRE COMPLAINT NUMBER: 17-583

INFORMATION: The Pittsfield Township Fire Department responded to a structure fire after multiple 911 calls were received at approximately 5:00 pm on March 11, 2017. Upon arrival, fire fighters found a structure with heavy fire coming from both the first and second floors. The fire was brought under control within 20 minutes, although overhaul continued for an additional 60-90 minutes.

Director of Public Safety Matt Harshberger reports that the building, which is the Islamic Center of Ypsilanti, was unoccupied at the time of the fire. Harshberger stated that an ongoing joint investigation is currently being conducted by the Pittsfield Township Department of Public Safety, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), and Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) to determine its cause. The fire caused no injuries and the damage assessment is continuing.

The Pittsfield Township Board of Trustees want to add mention that they stand in support of the Islamic community in and outside Pittsfield. "I am available 24/7 for anyone who wants to reach out to us for support and assistance," noted Pittsfield Township Trustee Yameen Jaffer who also serves as a Board member of the Islamic Center of Ann Arbor. Supervisor Grewal added that "It is because of the welcoming and diverse nature of our community that folks like the Islamic Center of Ypsilanti choose to locate in Pittsfield. As such, our leadership and police will continue working toward providing for the safety and security of all."

Pittsfield Township is working closely with the Islamic Center of Ann Arbor on this issue. Contact information for support: jaffery@pittsfield-mi.gov; publicsafety@pittsfield-mi.gov; communication@mca-a2.org

UPDATE: Wednesday, March 15, 2017

The joint investigation by the Pittsfield Township Department of Public Safety, ATF and FBI led to the identification of a suspect, a 16 year-old Pittsfield Township resident, who has been interviewed by investigators, resulting in the determination that the fire at both 5909 W. Michigan Avenue and 5875 W. Michigan Avenue on February 27, 2017 were incidents of arson.

After thorough review of evidence and investigative information by the Pittsfield Township Dept. of Public Safety, ATF and FBI , the two fires are NOT considered to be motivated by a bias against any race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or gender identity and are therefore not hate crimes.

Pittsfield Township Police will be submitting both incidents to the Washtenaw County Prosecutor's Office for authorization of charges for arson. Status pending review by the prosecutor.

INJURIES: None

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ADDITIONAL: None.

FURTHER INVESTIGATION: Pittsfield Township, FBI, ATF

CONTACT PERSON: Matthew Harshberger, Director of Public Safety 734-822-4921