

STATEMENT

Dominic Biscari is a fine young man from a wonderful, highly respected, hard-working local family.

He and his family express their most profound love, concern, and remorse to the families of Michael Elwood, Tami Knight, and Jennifer San Nicolas.

Dominic has already expressed his regret, sorrow, sympathy, and concern to the victims' families privately.

Dominic grew up in Kansas City wanting to be a firefighter and to help save those in need in our community.

He was a very young firefighter at the time of this tragic accident.

He was driving his crew to fight a fire in the inner city late one evening.

Sadly, three lives were lost due to this sad and unfortunate collision.

Dominic was driving with all the lights and sirens on his fire pumper truck.

Dominic Biscari is not a criminal. He is a fine young man who made a mistake in judgment.

Dominic has no criminal history or history of traffic violations.

He has served our community and its fire department with distinction and has been involved in many successful fire and emergency medical calls.

There was no alcohol involved in this case. There were no drugs involved in this case. Dominic was not texting or on the telephone while driving in this case. These are common contributors to serious accidents.

Other drivers in the area heard the fire truck sirens and pulled over to stop safely.

Every night, when these brave men and women go out on a fire call, they are risking their lives to help save the lives and property of all of us. These dedicated public servants run toward danger rather than away from it.

Dominic cooperated fully with the police investigation in this case.

He has cooperated fully with the families in the civil side of this case.

Sadly, the City has failed Dominic and his fellow firefighters in several ways. We hope the City will take measures to make sure this type of accident never happens again.

The City has the technology to install Opticom receivers at traffic light intersections. The

firetrucks already have transponders to send signals to the receivers.

These transponders turn oncoming traffic lights into green lights so that emergency vehicles can have the green light when going through an intersection. When an emergency vehicle is on a call, sometimes seconds matter. Minutes certainly do.

The City has failed to install the receivers onto these traffic signals.

The City has known for years that Broadway and Westport presents a dangerous intersection.

Numerous studies have recommended ways to make it safer. The City has only made that intersection more dangerous, by granting a special exemption to allow the owners of the building on the southeast corner to build out further onto Broadway, causing a visual obstruction for northbound traffic at that intersection.

The City also did not provide Dominic and his crew with a one channel communication system to communicate while en route to the fire.

The fire call came in on one channel and the call to stand-down came in on another channel that was not audible to the driver or anyone else in the fire truck.

The City next needs to take greater measures to make sure that all required personnel are communicating on the same channel.

The City also failed to provide any uniform mandatory training for Dominic to act as a driver of a fire pumper truck. The only training provided for these young drivers is on-the-job training without any formal instruction or more hands-on training that people receive in other fields such as motorcycle police, bus drivers, helicopter and airplane pilots, and other skilled transportation personnel.

The City's legal department also abandoned Dominic after indicating it would help provide him with representation in defense of civil claims that were filed against Dominic and the City.

It would seem patently unfair that an employer would ask a young man to engage in a dangerous occupation where accidents can happen and then not help him with representation or defense when civil claims are filed after such an accident.

We all hope that the City will take the appropriate measures to rectify all of these problems.

Dominic is committed to continuing to serve the best he can as a diligent member of our fire department.

He will meet all terms of a plea agreement with the Jackson County Prosecutor's Office and follow all orders of the Circuit Court in order to continue to live his life as a law-abiding citizen.

There has been mention of a report from a training officer indicating that Dominic had been unsafe in a driving incident.

Dominic was never made aware of that report, or given a chance to give his side of the story. He was never confronted by anyone making those accusations. He was never allowed to defend himself against those allegations. He was unaware of the report's existence until it was leaked to the media by someone involved in this case. Moreover, prior to the accident, neither the City nor Fire Department conducted an investigation or undertook corrective or remedial actions.

Dominic was not aware of the stand-down order that came through a channel other than the channel he was monitoring on his way to the fire.

You need to understand that a fire pumper truck is a very noisy environment. The sirens are on and loud. Each firefighter is carrying a walkie-talkie and they are audible. The truck itself makes noise and there is also road noise.

Everyone is focused on the tasks they will be performing when they get to the fire. These brave men and women are on a mission to go save lives at their destination.

They all have seared in their memories the tragic consequences they have seen of being too late to a fire.

Dominic was not aware of any stand-down communication prior to entering the intersection.

If he were aware of that communication, he would have stopped and turned around to go back to the fire station.

We hope the City will take measures to install the receivers at all intersections where there are traffic lights. We hope the City will take measures to allow for all communication to be monitored on the same channel. We hope the City will mandate an appropriate training program for fire truck drivers. We hope the City will stand behind its firefighters and emergency responders in the future when there are accidents and civil claims made against those who serve us.

Dominic and his family are very grateful to the supportive comfort given to them by the Union and their representatives.

We also appreciate the courtesy and professionalism shown by the Jackson County Prosecutor's Office staff in this most difficult case.

There will be no further comment on this matter going forward.

Dominic's family have asked that you respect his privacy at this time.