Kato Ballroom

200 Chestnut Street

Mankato, MN 56001

Sunday, April 20, 2014

Statement Regarding Incident at the Kato Ballroom Sunday Morning

We here at the Kato Ballroom are deeply saddened by the events of last evening and express our sincerest condolences to the family of the deceased. Our hearts go out to the family of the young man who lost his life. We commend the police for their quick response and are working with them to assist in the apprehension of those responsible.

We’ve been asked by many to help clarify the situation. Last night, we rented the back banquet room of the Ballroom to the South Sudanese Group at Minnesota State University (MSU) for a celebratory party. There was no alcohol served at the event and only approximately 140 students attended. The Association was told in advance that there would be no alcohol and that none could be brought into the event. Our security checked every attendee as they entered to make sure this was honored. The Kato takes security very seriously and staffed 1 security guard for every 35 students. This ratio exceeds those mandated by the town.

The event began at 10 pm and was peaceful until the lights were turned up at 1:45 am announcing that it was time to leave. At that point, a scuffle broke out amongst some of the students. Ballroom security called 911 asking for police assistance, escorted those students outside and was in the process of breaking up the fight when gun shots were heard. We believe that the shooter went to his car and retrieved his weapon. All of the shootings happened outside of the Ballroom after the party was over.

I, as the new owner, have been proud to offer the Ballroom to all types of groups in Mankato in hoping to serve all of the community, bring people together and make the historic Ballroom a place for everyone to enjoy. We have a very close and positive relationship with the students at MSU. In fact, we’ve hosted three other MSU events this year with no issues whatsoever, including, a 700 student celebratory party for the African Student Association of MSU in March.

I want to thank my security staff for handling the situation as well as they did and thank the police department for their quick and efficient response. We don’t consider the horrific actions taken by one individual to be indicative of the average MSU student. We continue to view the school and the students in an exceptionally positive light.

Once again, our hearts go out to the family of the young man.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tania Cordes

Owner Kato Ballroom