

## **Relatives demand answers as IDs in police shooting - Associated Press State Wire: Minnesota (MN) - August 8, 2018**

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MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Relatives of a man shot to death by St. Paul police officers have joined calls for the immediate release of the officers' body camera videos and the 911 call that preceded his death.

The Bureau of Criminal Apprehension said in a statement Tuesday that **William James Hughes**, 43, died of multiple gunshot wounds early Sunday after officers responded to a 911 call of multiple shots fired on the upper floor of the St. Paul apartment building where he lived.

The BCA said its preliminary investigation found that Officers Matthew Jones and Vincent Adams entered an enclosed porch and knocked on one of two exterior apartment doors. Hughes emerged from the other door and at some point the officers shot him. He died at the scene .

Hughes' relatives and their supporters held a vigil Monday evening outside the Minneapolis American Indian Center, beating a drum and singing in his honor. He was a member of the White Earth Nation, an Ojibwe band based in northern Minnesota. They said his death was especially painful because his cousin was killed in a confrontation with police in 2015.

"Through our grief and difficulty, we have been left with more questions than answers as to why police officers decided to abruptly and violently take Billy's life," said his cousin, Dannah Thompson.

The BCA's statement didn't say why the officers opened fire or give any other details about what transpired during the confrontation. But police spokesman Sgt. Mike Ernster said Sunday that the man was armed with a handgun, and that their body cameras were activated. A gun was recovered at the scene, the BCA said without providing further details about the weapon.

Asked what led officers to shoot and where the gun was recovered, BCA spokeswoman Jill Oliveira said those details are part of the ongoing investigation, and that under state law the agency can't discuss active investigations.

Thompson said the family wants police to immediately release the officers' body camera videos and the 911 call.

When the family found out about Hughes' death, they said, "Not again," his aunt said.

Hughes' cousin, Philip Quinn, was fatally shot by a St. Paul officer in 2015. Investigators said Quinn was schizophrenic and suicidal when he charged the officer with a screwdriver. A grand jury cleared the officers involved.

"When is it going to stop?" asked Kathy Ficken, the aunt of both Hughes and Quinn.

St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter repeated his call Tuesday for quick release of the videos.

Carter told reporters he wants the police chief to work with the BCA to release the footage "immediately." But he said key witnesses must be interviewed and relatives of the man who was killed should view it first. The mayor also wants audio release of the 911 call.

Both officers were wearing activated body cameras. Carter said he has not seen the footage but said it belongs to the city and should be made available as soon as possible.

St. Paul Police Chief Todd Axtell said in a statement Tuesday he expects to share the videos with Hughes' family and release them to the public within the next 10 days. He said releasing the footage any sooner "could obstruct our ability to reach the truth."

In a statement Tuesday, the BCA said the agency is committed "to a fair, impartial and thorough investigation" of what led to Hughes' death. The agency said it is conducting interviews and analyzing evidence, and while it cannot speak for St. Paul, the BCA said it will release all public data once the case is closed.

The Minnesota chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union issued a statement Monday calling on investigators to be more transparent.

"Whenever police kill someone, it is a tragedy," the chapter's legal director, Teresa Nelson, said in a statement. "A police shooting can affect the whole community. The residents of St. Paul along with the family ... deserve to know what happened in this tragic incident. The investigation should be transparent and done in a timely manner."

When the BCA completes its investigation, the Ramsey County attorney's office will review the findings and decide if charges are warranted.

Jones and Adams are on standard paid leave while the investigation proceeds. They both joined the force in 2013. Jones' father, Tim Jones, was a St. Paul officer who was slain in 1994 by a man who was on the run after killing another officer earlier that day.

Personnel files released Tuesday show mostly clean records plus words of praise. Adams was reprimanded in 2014 for a preventable squad car accident in which he was following someone too closely, but he got a medal of commendation last year.

Chief Axtell's letter about the medal noted that Adams was nominated as the 2016 Officer of the Year in the Western District for "exemplary performance," partly for an incident that began with a car chase that officers broke off for safety. Adams and his partner tracked the suspect down a few weeks later. Adams got hurt in the ensuing scuffle and was unable to work patrol for several months, but he took a leading role in a successful crime reduction project while on light duty, the chief said.

Jones has no disciplinary actions in his file, but it contains several thank-you notes, including one in 2013 from a Ramsey County Adult Mental Health official praising him and another officer for their

skills in de-escalating a psychotic man and getting him to a hospital.

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