

## Report: Ogden police justified in November - Deseret News, The (Salt Lake City, UT) - March 14, 2019

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SALT LAKE CITY - Two Ogden officers were legally justified in shooting a man a total of five times after he charged at them with a rock in November, according to the Weber County Attorney's Office.

The findings, released Wednesday in response to a public records request, conclude that 33-year-old **Christopher William Parrish** ignored officers' repeated commands to drop the rock after running from them in a field.

Parrish "could have seriously injured or even killed" the officer nearest him "if he had struck him in the head at close range," Weber County Attorney Christopher Allred wrote in his analysis of the Nov. 9 shooting. Another officer also had reason to use deadly force to prevent his colleague or others from being seriously injured or killed, Allred found.

Last week, Allred's office cleared Ogden officers in two other fatal police shootings that also happened late last year.

Investigators looking at Parrish's death considered body camera footage from three Ogden police officers, plus interviews with other officer witnesses and an employee with Utah's pardons and parole agency.

Parrish's brother, Justin Parrish, on Wednesday called the officers "quick to take a life and ask questions later. They can say justified till they are blue in the face but they will have to answer in court to my lawyer," he said in a message.

Police have said the chain of events began about 6:45 p.m. on the November Friday at Walmart, 1959 Wall Ave. A man told an officer that someone tried to fight him in the store's parking lot, and the officer later identified the aggressor as Parrish, who left the lot in a red pickup truck. The officer followed Parrish and tried to make a traffic stop, but when he tried to verify Parrish's identity, he gave a different name, Allred wrote. Parrish became "agitated and aggressive," and sped away, coming to a rest in a dirt field and nearly hitting the officer on the way, according to one witness account.

When officers chased him, he picked up the softball-sized rock, yelled an expletive and ran through a field, eventually turning toward Ogden officer Tyson Embley "in a fighting posture." Embley tried to use a stun gun from 20 feet away, but it had no effect, Allred found.

Another officer, Brandon Sevenski, came within 7 feet of Parrish, who lunged at him, Allred found. Embley told investigators he believed his colleague could be harmed, so he fired one shot. As Parrish charged Sevenski with the rock raised in his right hand, Sevenski was afraid for his safety and for the officers around him, so he shot Parrish four times from about 6 feet away, Allred wrote. Parrish was pronounced dead at the scene.

"It's fairly rare to see an officer, if they're going to shoot, to shoot simply one time," Allred said Wednesday. "They'll usually shoot more than that to limit the threat." His review does not indicate where the bullets struck Parrish.

The two officers were not injured and have returned to work, said Ogden Police Lt. Will Farr. They were on paid administrative leave during the investigation.

Ogden police said in November Parrish has a criminal history in Oregon and Arizona that includes violent felonies, adding he has tattoos indicating his affiliation with white supremacist prison gangs.

Last week, two officers who shot and killed Richard Galvan, 37, were cleared, and so was an officer who fatally shot 18-year-old Anthony Ray Borden-Cortez.

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