

## **Police: Footage within 10 days - Axtell responds - St. Paul Pioneer Press (MN) - August 8, 2018 - page A4**

August 8, 2018 | St. Paul Pioneer Press (MN) | Mara H. Gottfried [mgottfried@pioneerpress.com](mailto:mgottfried@pioneerpress.com) | Page A4

St. Paul's police chief said Tuesday that he expects to release body-camera footage from police officers who fatally shot a 43-year-old man within the next 10 days.

"Releasing the video any sooner could obstruct our ability to reach the truth," Todd Axtell said in a statement following Mayor Melvin Carter's call for the videos to be made public as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension released information for the first time Tuesday about its investigation into the shooting of **William "Billy" James Hughes**.

BCA crime-scene personnel recovered a gun at the scene of Sunday's Summit-University neighborhood shooting, according to a statement from the state agency.

A St. Paul police spokesman said Sunday that Hughes was armed with a handgun.

### **FOOTAGE RELEASE**

At a Tuesday afternoon news conference, Carter said that while release of the body-camera footage and 911 call that led police to the residence at 905 St. Anthony Ave. "will not provide all of the answers we are all seeking, it will provide more information about the circumstances that led to such a tragic outcome."

Information from investigations into officer-involved shootings, including video footage, has traditionally been released in Minnesota after investigations are concluded.

But Carter noted that a law enforcement agency can make information public before an investigation is finished for several reasons, including to "dispel widespread rumor or unrest."

"I think we've seen plenty of speculation, of guesses, of rumors ... that show that people in this community are concerned and would like a better sense of what happened in this situation," said Carter of the first police-involved shooting to occur since he became mayor in January.

Carter said he believes initial statements should be collected from "key known witnesses and the officers" involved, so the integrity of the investigation is not compromised. Hughes' family should also get to view the footage before it's publicly released, Carter said.

The mayor said he asked Axtell to work with the BCA to ensure those two conditions are met "as soon as possible" for the videos and 911 call to be released.

## BCA: HUGHES EMERGED FROM DOOR

St. Paul police officers responded about 2:30 a.m. Sunday to a 911 call of multiple shots fired on an upper floor of a multi-unit rental property.

The BCA said it found, in its preliminary investigation, that officers entered an enclosed porch and knocked on one of two interior apartment doors.

That's when a man, later identified as Hughes, emerged through the other door, the statement said.

"At one point the officers discharged their firearms, striking Hughes," according to the BCA statement.

Paramedics pronounced Hughes dead at the scene. He died of multiple gunshot wounds, according to the BCA.

Asked what led officers to shoot and where the gun was recovered, BCA spokeswoman Jill Oliveira wrote in an email Tuesday that "(a)dditional details are part of the BCA's ongoing investigation. Under Minnesota law, the BCA is not allowed to discuss active investigations."

## HUGHES REMEMBERED

On Monday, Hughes' family said they had more questions than answers, and they listed their demands. They included: The immediate release of the body-camera footage and 911 calls; an audit of officers' actions as they relate to the department's use-of-force policy; change to Minnesota law on officers' use of deadly force, which they say allows too much discretion; and an independent investigation, not by the BCA.

A friend of Hughes remembered him Tuesday as "having a great heart and a great soul."

"Bill was very wise," said Jason Tarasewicz. "He had made it through a lot of things. I don't think I would be where I am if he hadn't told me about how he got through struggles in his life."

Hughes was a jokester, and he used to say "he could determine if someone was a good person based on how his cat reacted," Tarasewicz said.

## INFORMATION SOUGHT

The BCA confirmed the officers involved were Vincent Adams and Matthew Jones, who both have five years with the St. Paul department. They are on standard paid administrative leave.

"This is an open and active investigation and the BCA continues to conduct interviews and analyze evidence to determine the facts of the incident," the state agency said in the Tuesday statement.

The BCA is asking anyone who witnessed the incident or captured video to contact them at 651-793-7000.

When the investigation is complete, the BCA will turn its findings over to the Ramsey County attorney's office for review.

#### 'VERY DANGEROUS SITUATION'

St. Paul police personnel records show Jones has no disciplinary history and Adams received an oral reprimand in 2014 for a preventable squad car crash.

Axtell awarded Adams a medal of commendation last summer and noted he had been nominated for 2016 Officer of the Year.

Dave Titus, president of the St. Paul Police Federation, said Tuesday that "it's a difficult time for Mr. Hughes' loved ones. It's also a very rough time for the cops and their families that were placed in this situation."

"Our cops were called to address a very dangerous situation that was created, for unknown reasons, by Mr. Hughes," Titus said. "I believe our cops protected lives that morning."

#### PROTEST AT WESTERN DISTRICT

About 100 people rallied outside the Western District headquarters of the St. Paul Police Department on Tuesday evening to protest the fatal shooting of Hughes by its officers.

Sue GoodStar, an elder with Native Lives Matter, said Hughes' death is another in a long line of "stolen lives on stolen land."

GoodStar and others who spoke at the roughly two-hour demonstration demanded that body-camera footage of the shooting be immediately released and that his body be turned over to his family.

Sydney Brown, a cousin of Thurman Blevins, who was shot to death by police in Minneapolis in June, called for the prosecution of the officers who killed both men.

"They did not deserve to die," Brown said of Blevins and Hughes.

The crowd left the police station at Hamline and St. Anthony avenues about 8 p.m. to march east along University Avenue chanting, "No justice, no peace! Prosecute the police!"

Nick Woltman contributed to this report.

Mara H. Gottfried can be reached at 651-228-5262 and [mgottfried@pioneerpress.com](mailto:mgottfried@pioneerpress.com), or on Twitter at @MaraGottfried.

-----  
  
IF YOU GO

What: The city of St. Paul and Hallie Q. Brown Community Center are hosting a gathering where facilitators will lead small-group discussions about the police-involved shooting.

When: 6-8 p.m. Wednesday

Where: Hallie Q. Brown Community Center, 270 N. Kent St., St. Paul

Copyright 2018 Saint Paul Pioneer Press