

Police officer justified in shooting man, - South Jersey Times (NJ) - July 17, 2019 - page 001

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State and county officials have concluded the 2018 police shooting of **Edward C. Gandy** in Millville was justified because Gandy called the police and then purposely held his cellphone to make it look like a gun, making the officers fear for their lives.

Gandy died from his wounds.

Cumberland County Prosecutor Jennifer Webb-McRae said in a statement Tuesday that there were no facts in dispute and the state Attorney General's Office concurred with the decision not to present the case to a grand jury.

Gandy, 46, had run-ins with police eight times in the months leading up to his death, and told police and friends that he wanted to kill himself via "suicide by cop," according to Webb-McRae. Police took him to the hospital for help at least three times, but he was always discharged,

the prosecutor said.

On the day he died, Jan. 22, 2018, Gandy called 911, said he had a gun and was "feeling homicidal," according to the recording of the call.

Officer Colt Gibson was one of three officers who responded to the intersection of North High and McNeal streets. Gandy immediately started walking towards Gibson with his hands behind him, according to police dashboard camera footage.

Gibson repeatedly told Gandy to stop but he continued toward police, holding up a cellphone in both hands in front of him as though pointing a gun, the video shows. His hands went behind his back again as he got close to the cruiser and shots rang out, according to the video.

Gibson shot him three times, Webb-McRae said.

Gandy's family said he'd been diagnosed with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, but medications sometimes helped him feel better. He had been battling cancer for several years and his mental health had gone down hill in recent months, his sister told NJ Advance Media last year.

Webb-McRae's statement details several incidents in the months before his death in which police responded to calls about Gandy, calmed him down, and took him to hospitals for treatment. Each time he was discharged, Webb-McRae said.

On Nov. 15, 2017, police removed him from a Walgreens and Gandy told them he wanted to attempt "suicide by cop" and knew police would shoot him if he had a knife, the statement said.

And on Nov. 25, 2017 police found Gandy at a Wawa, holding a knife to his stomach and telling police to shoot him. He was eventually talked into dropping the knife.

Man killed by police lied about having gun as a cry for help, mom says

Three days later, Gandy was admitted to Bridgeton Inspira's crisis unit after another incident at Walgreens. At that time he said he planned to walk into traffic or assault an officer so they would shoot him, Webb-McRae said. He was discharged and told to seek outpatient treatment, she said.

Gandy's sister, Sheila Goldsmith, told NJ Advance Media last year that she doesn't blame Officer Gibson for shooting her brother because she believes he was suicidal.

"He's at rest. He's at peace. He had a very hard life," she said.

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