

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCILMEMBER MARC ELRICH'S - US Fed News (USA) - June 12, 2018

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ROCKVILLE, Md., June 12 -- Montgomery County issued the following City Council news release:

Today Councilmember Marc Elrich expressed concern about the officer-involved shooting that occurred yesterday afternoon on Three Oaks Drive in Silver Spring. Councilmember Elrich called for "the highest level of attention and thoroughness" in the investigation of the incident.

Councilmember Elrich's full statement is below:

I received the very sad news last night regarding the loss of a life in an officer-involved shooting yesterday in Silver Spring. The police have released a statement and as the details of the case are brought forward, we will have greater clarity about what happened and, more importantly, how and why it happened.

The family and friends of the deceased, Mr. **Robert Lawrence White**, are in my thoughts. Like everyone I am especially concerned about an officer-involved shooting of an unarmed individual. This has to warrant the highest level of attention and thoroughness in the investigation and I expect the camera footage to be released as soon as practical, given the investigation. The family has every right to expect access to every bit of information available as soon as possible and they should expect an outcome where justice is served.

As the County moves forward in the investigation I want to be sure everyone understands the process. As many have heard there is footage from both the officer's body worn camera and the camera of the second officer to arrive on the scene, which is being reviewed. Footage of this nature is so important in an investigation like this, which is why I was committed to supporting the Police Chief's request for cameras for all of MCPD's sworn officers. There were also several witnesses at the scene who have provided their statements to the investigators. Our officers all receive special de-escalation training in hopes of diffusing crisis situations and avoiding confrontations that can turn deadly, as this one did. The officer's actions in this regard will be critically important in understanding what happened here. I anxiously await the results of the investigation into this tragic encounter.

Once all the evidence has been gathered it will be turned over to the Howard County State's Attorney's Office, who will then decide how to proceed with the case. This arrangement was agreed upon a few years ago to help ensure that there is no sense of partiality because of the close working relationship between our State's Attorney and the Police Department. The Montgomery County State's Attorney's office staff work with our officers on a daily basis, which is why it's best that a final determination be made by Howard County's State's Attorney. That is why I supported this arrangement when it was proposed by the County Executive.

The officer involved has been placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation, which is the standard protocol with an officer-involved shooting. All camera footage was immediately turned over to Major Crimes and it will be preserved for the investigation. Additionally, the footage is likely to be released to the public once the initial investigation has been completed. Part of that process will involve the family of Mr. White, who will have a chance to see the footage before it is released to the public.

I understand the anxiety and anger that the shooting of an unarmed black man engenders. I deeply regret that this incident occurred, and we will thoroughly examine our protocols and procedures in the light of this tragedy.

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