

Coroner rules homicide in death of man shot by - LNP (Lancaster, PA) - May 11, 2018

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A man shot himself in the face before being fatally shot by a Manheim Township police officer Tuesday in front of the police station, according to his autopsy results.

Lancaster County Coroner Dr. Stephen Diamantoni ruled the death of 65-year-old **John Simson** a homicide. Diamantoni said his death was caused by a single gunshot wound to the body.

"He had a self-inflicted gunshot wound to his face that preceded the fatal wound fired by the police officer," Diamantoni said.

Officials said Simson drove to the police station off Oregon Pike around 3 p.m. He was armed with a shotgun, which fired at least twice — once at himself — and had a confrontation with a Manheim Township police officer.

The officer made repeated verbal commands and then shot Simson once in the body, according to the Lancaster County district attorney's office.

Diamantoni declined to specify where the shot hit Simson.

"Beyond a reasonable doubt, that wound was fatal," he said.

Police have not said whether Simson was trying to provoke a lethal response from the officer. Police also have not said where he fired the one or more other shots.

The district attorney's office will eventually make a determination on whether or not the officer's use of force was justified.

An East Petersburg resident, Simson became known to police at least since the end of March, court records show.

A Manheim Township police detective received a report of child abuse at Simson's Geneva Road home March 30, according to charging documents.

Simson admitted to his involvement April 5, and police filed six felonies regarding assault of a 9-year-old girl May 4.

That day, Simson turned himself in, was arraigned by District Judge Brian Chudzik and posted \$50,000 bail.

Chudzik repeatedly said "no comment" when asked Thursday to comment on Simson's

arraignment.

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