



MEDIA RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Contact:

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***RE: POLICE ANNOUNCE RESULTS OF OFFICER INVOLVED SHOOTING
INTERNAL INVESTIGATION***

Fayetteville Police Chief Greg Tabor announced today the results of the Fayetteville Police Department internal investigation into the shooting incident that occurred on April 23, 2016.

Per Fayetteville Police Department policy, Chief Tabor designated police personnel through the Office of Professional Standards (OPS) to investigate this incident to determine if departmental policies and procedures were followed. Investigators determined both Corporal Patrick Hanby and Officer Brandon Jones were exonerated in their actions; the investigation clearly indicated the officers' actions were justified, lawful and proper. Both officers' actions were found to be within Fayetteville Police Department Policies, Procedures and Rules.

The investigators' findings were based on a thorough investigation of the facts and circumstances of the incident. The investigation involved examination of officer statements, audio and video records from both officers' Digital Mobile Video Recorders (DMVR), audio and video records from both officers' Taser cameras, independent third party videos and physical evidence associated with the incident.

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The following is a description of the events based on the investigation:

On Saturday, April 23, 2016, at approximately 2:25 AM, Corporal Patrick Hanby conducted a traffic stop on a maroon Chrysler 200 in the parking lot of 2333 North College Avenue for driving without headlights. At the time of the stop, Corporal Hanby believed he recognized the driver as Willie Tillman, observed and smelled marijuana and noticed Mr. Tillman appeared to be nervous for this minor equipment violation. Approximately 30 seconds after the traffic stop was made, Corporal Hanby requested a backup officer.

Mr. Tillman indicated he was unable to produce a driver's license, and he provided Corporal Hanby the false name of Johnny Robinson. Mr. Tillman told Corporal Hanby he was 34 years old, and then gave his date of birth as June 3, 1982. Mr. Tillman's age and date of birth did not correlate with each other. Mr. Tillman was driving a rental car, was unable to provide a rental agreement, and Mr. Tillman's movements inside the vehicle seemed to intentionally block Corporal Hanby's view. Corporal Hanby observed an Arkansas Identification Card sticking out of Mr. Tillman's pants pocket. As Officer Brandon Jones arrived to assist, Corporal Hanby requested Mr. Tillman step out of the vehicle.

As Mr. Tillman got out of the vehicle, Corporal Hanby saw bulges in both of Mr. Tillman's pockets, and Corporal Hanby asked Mr. Tillman if he could search his pockets. Mr. Tillman's demeanor and facial expression changed. Mr. Tillman placed his hands in his pockets, which prompted Corporal Hanby to instruct Mr. Tillman to put his hands on the car.

Mr. Tillman turned away from Corporal Hanby and moved toward the open driver's door. Corporal Hanby instructed Mr. Tillman to stop, but Mr. Tillman refused to comply, and he moved towards the driver's seat of the vehicle. Corporal Hanby then tried to physically prevent

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Mr. Tillman from re-entering the vehicle by grabbing his arm, while giving him commands to get out of the car. Mr. Tillman jerked his arm away from Corporal Hanby, and he sat down in the driver's seat. Mr. Tillman was only outside his vehicle for a total of 13 seconds.

The 2015 Chrysler 200 that Mr. Tillman was driving had a knob-style gear shifter that was mounted on the console of the car, and it also had a push button starter that did not require a key to be inserted in order to run. Mr. Tillman was trying to get the car into gear and was revving the engine, as he was struggling with the officers. Corporal Hanby was partially in the vehicle, with his upper body in the car and his legs outside. Corporal Hanby was trying to keep Tillman's hands off the gear shifter and steering wheel while also trying to get the car's push button start to shut the engine off. Mr. Tillman was hitting Corporal Hanby in the back of the head, neck and arms with his left arm.

Officer Jones immediately entered the passenger side of the vehicle when Mr. Tillman got back into the vehicle. As Corporal Hanby struggled to pull Mr. Tillman from the driver's side of the vehicle, Officer Jones used his body weight in an attempt to push Mr. Tillman toward the driver's door, also attempting to prevent Mr. Tillman from using the gear shifter. Mr. Tillman was able to put the vehicle in drive, and Officer Jones was trying to put the vehicle back in park and trying to shut the engine off with the push button starter.

The vehicle's engine revved loudly as it rolled forward, with both officers physically engaged in a struggle with Mr. Tillman. The loud revving of the engine indicated the vehicle was likely in neutral as the officers struggled with Mr. Tillman over the gear shifter. Mr. Tillman forced Officer Jones out of the way and down towards the passenger seat with one arm. The vehicle then lurched forward again, squealing the tires. Corporal Hanby was still engaged

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with Mr. Tillman in the driver's door, but he was able to lift his legs as the vehicle traveled in a semi-circle through the parking lot and stopped. The door frame struck Corporal Hanby in the hip as the vehicle traveled through the parking lot. Corporal Hanby was able to disengage from the vehicle, and he ordered Mr. Tillman from the vehicle. Mr. Tillman refused to comply. Mr. Tillman was clearly actively resisting the officers' efforts to arrest him.

After trying verbal commands and trying to physically control Mr. Tillman without success, Corporal Hanby used his Taser in an attempt to gain compliance from Mr. Tillman, as Mr. Tillman continued to fight with Officer Jones in the vehicle. Corporal Hanby's Taser probes struck Mr. Tillman in the upper left side of his back, but the Taser did not stop Mr. Tillman's aggression towards Officer Jones. Officer Jones attempted to use his Taser at nearly the same time, and his Taser probes struck Mr. Tillman in the lower right side; the probes appeared to be spaced only two to four inches apart, and they were ineffective in gaining compliance from Mr. Tillman, or stopping his aggressive assault.

Mr. Tillman grabbed Officer Jones' Taser as they struggled, and although he gave a verbal indication of submission, he then struck at Officer Jones with a right hand closed fist. Mr. Tillman continued to refuse Corporal Hanby's commands to get out of the vehicle. Mr. Tillman was able to put the vehicle in gear, spinning the tires as he sped from the parking lot with Officer Jones still in the vehicle. The wires from Corporal Hanby's Taser broke off as the vehicle left the parking lot.

Mr. Tillman continued to fight with Officer Jones as he sped northbound on College Avenue. Officer Jones continued using his Taser, in an attempt to gain compliance, but Mr. Tillman overpowered him, grabbing the top of the Taser, and forcing it down onto Officer Jones'

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hand, tasing Officer Jones, causing his hand to go numb. Mr. Tillman punched Officer Jones on the left side of his forehead, and struck Officer Jones in the mouth with his elbow. Officer Jones was now alone in the vehicle with Mr. Tillman, who had overpowered him, struck him repeatedly and used his Taser against him.

Officer Jones drew his handgun, and Mr. Tillman immediately grabbed the gun, as he had previously done with the Taser. Officer Jones fired one round, and Mr. Tillman then lunged for Officer Jones, who fired two additional rounds. Mr. Tillman did not stop his aggression, and he grabbed Officer Jones' gun with both hands as he pushed his weight against Officer Jones. Mr. Tillman and Officer Jones struggled over the gun until Officer Jones fired a fourth round, striking Mr. Tillman in the right leg, prompting Mr. Tillman to let go of the gun. Officer Jones then retreated to the far side of the passenger seat.

At some point during the struggle, the vehicle came to a stop in the parking lot of 380 North Sunbridge Drive, where Corporal Hanby caught up to the vehicle, and Mr. Tillman and Officer Jones were still struggling. Corporal Hanby ordered Mr. Tillman to get out of the vehicle, but he refused. When additional officers arrived, they pulled Mr. Tillman from the vehicle and onto the pavement, where they secured him.

Officers began rendering aid to Mr. Tillman, until they were relieved by Central Emergency Medical Service and Fayetteville Fire Department personnel. Mr. Tillman received four bullet wounds, three in his upper torso and one in his right leg above the knee.

Willie Tillman was arrested for Kidnapping, two counts of Battery 2nd degree on a Law Enforcement Officer, two counts of Aggravated Assault on a Law Enforcement Officer, Resisting Arrest, Fleeing, Obstructing Governmental Operations, Reckless Driving, No Seatbelt,

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Driving without Headlights, Driving on a Suspended Driver's License, No Liability Insurance and four arrest warrants. He was transported from Sunbridge Drive directly to Washington Regional Medical Center by Central Emergency Medical Service, and he remained there until his death on Monday, May 9, 2016.

Investigators observed three shell casings in the vehicle, and a fourth inside Officer Jones' handgun, indicating the handgun failed to properly cycle and extract the spent casing, corroborating evidence Mr. Tillman grabbed Officer Jones' handgun. Investigators also observed photographs taken of Officer Jones' weapon, and observed a distinct outline of latent prints wrapped around the slide of Officer Jones' handgun.

Investigators determined Corporal Patrick Hanby and Officer Jones followed all Fayetteville Police Department Policies, Procedures and Rules in their traffic stop and interaction with Mr. Tillman. The results of the Fayetteville Police Department's internal investigation revealed Mr. Tillman's actions quickly and continually escalated as he continued to ignore the officer's legal directives. Mr. Tillman physically attacked both officers, overpowered them, struck them each multiple times, turned Officer Jones' Taser against him, and attempted to take his gun; both officers used appropriate levels of force in an attempt to gain compliance.

Fayetteville Police Department Policies, Procedures and Rules, 1.3.1, Use of Force, which states in part, "An officer may use deadly force to protect himself, or others, if he has reasonable belief of immediate threat of death or serious physical injury." Officer Jones and Corporal Hanby used necessary force to protect themselves.

The Fayetteville Police Department internal investigation is complete, and Officer Brandon Jones has been released from Administrative Leave with Pay to return to duty without

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restriction. The Washington County Sheriff's Office is conducting an independent investigation into the shooting, at Chief Greg Tabor's request, to determine if officers acted within the law. The findings of the Washington County Sheriff's Office investigation will be reviewed by the Washington County Prosecutor's Office when the investigation is complete. The Washington County Prosecutor will determine if or when any records associated with the investigation will be released.

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