

Callaway County Prosecuting Attorney

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October 1, 2021

Sgt. Marcus Reynolds
Corporal Gerry West
c/o Missouri State Highway Patrol
Division of Drug and Crime Control
P.O. Box 568
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-0568

VIA EMAIL TRANSMISSION

Re: Incident #200124170

Dear Sgt. Reynolds and Cpl. West:

As you know, I was appointed as Special Prosecutor to review the investigation of the officer-involved shooting during the attempted arrest of Curtis Haas by officers from the Columbia Police Department on March 5, 2020. That appointment came following the request of Boone County Prosecuting Attorney Dan Knight for a special prosecutor.

I am in receipt of all the reports and investigative material from the Missouri State Highway Patrol, as well as the reports and material your agency obtained from the Boone/Callaway County Medical Examiner's Office.

Having reviewed that material it is my belief that the officers involved acted within the law when they shot Curtis Haas.

Specifically, the evidence available to me through the reports, including body-camera video footage obtained from the officers and video footage from a civilian eyewitness, makes clear the following:

1. Officers from the Columbia Police Department responded to the residence of Curtis Haas located at 1707 Sun Court to arrest Haas on charges of sex offenses against a child.
2. Officers made contact with Haas in his vehicle as he was leaving the residence. Haas refused to exit the vehicle and after a short standoff, put the vehicle in reverse, backed down the roadway and returned to the garage of the residence. Officers attempted to intervene and stop Haas but he was able to get back into his garage before the officers could stop him.
3. While fleeing from the officers, Haas exhibited a handgun and pointed the gun at a police officer chasing after Haas.
4. Haas barricaded himself in his own residence and refused repeated requests by officers to surrender himself.

5. Officers attempted to clear the area around the Haas residence and brought in an armored vehicle where officers could remain safely stationed outside the residence. During the standoff, Haas made statements to officers suggesting that they drop their weapons and come out in front of the residence.
6. Officers were able to observe Haas from time to time near windows in the residence and he was armed with a rifle.
7. During the standoff, Haas pointed a rifle out the window of the residence at an officer stationed outside the residence. That officer fired at Haas. It is unknown if Haas was struck at that time, however Haas then fired on the armored vehicle in which officers were stationed.
8. At least three (3) officers returned fire, striking Haas.
9. According to the Medical Examiner, Haas was struck by three (3) bullets – one to his right shoulder, one to the left side of his head and one graze wound to his face. The Medical Examiner determined that the cause of death was the gunshot wounds.
10. Upon entry into the residence, Haas was found to be armed with several firearms, including rifles, pistols and a shotgun, as well as numerous rounds of ammunition.

It is clear from the videos and reports that Haas did not intend to surrender to officers peacefully and was able and willing to use lethal force against those officers attempting to take him into custody. In addition, the area surrounding 1707 Sun Court is a residential area and all those within the vicinity, civilian and officer alike, were in danger of serious physical injury or death due to Haas' actions that day.

In light of these facts, it is clear to me that the officers were acting lawfully in their use of deadly force pursuant to Section 563.046, RSMo., and in defense of person (both self-defense and defense of a third person) pursuant to Section 563.031, RSMo.

For these reasons, I do not intend to file any criminal charges against any of the officers involved in the shooting. Should you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

/s/ Christopher D. Wilson

Christopher D. Wilson
Prosecuting Attorney

CC:
Chief Geoff Jones
c/o Columbia Police Department
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Columbia, MO 65201