



Fayetteville Police Foundation

The Fayetteville Police Foundation Strongly Condemns Fayetteville City Council's Decision on Officers' Legal Support in Shooting

Fayetteville, NC – June 8, 2023 – The Fayetteville Police Foundation, an organization committed to promoting and strengthening police-community relations by providing support and resources to the Fayetteville Police Department, condemns and expresses strong disagreement with the recent decision by the Fayetteville City Council regarding the provision of legal support for the officers involved in the tragic shooting death on July 1, 2022.

On that fateful evening, officers from the Fayetteville Police Department responded to a residence due to a 911 call about an unknown disturbance. Upon arrival, the officers investigated the situation and were later confronted with an armed subject. In response to circumstances of an imminent threat, an officer discharged his weapon, resulting in the unfortunate and tragic death of the subject.

Following this incident, the officers involved were placed on paid administrative leave, as is standard procedure, pending the outcome of the investigation. Subsequently, an extensive review was completed by the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation, the Internal Affairs Division of the Fayetteville Police Department and lastly with the North Carolina Attorney General's Office.

On May 24, 2023, NC Attorney General Josh Stein announced that charges would not be brought against the Fayetteville Police Department officers involved in the shooting. The Attorney General's decision was based on a thorough examination of the evidence, which unequivocally demonstrated that the officers acted reasonably in the face of a deadly threat.



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Attorney General Stein issued a statement affirming the outcome: "After conducting a thorough review of this case, my Special Prosecutions Section has concluded that charges should not be filed in this case, and I agree. The evidence shows that the officers faced a deadly threat and acted reasonably in response. Therefore, no charges will be brought."

Regrettably, despite the Attorney General's decision and the officers' exoneration, the family of the deceased filed a civil lawsuit against the City of Fayetteville and the officers involved, seeking damages resulting from the untimely death.

In early June, the officers officially requested legal representation from the City of Fayetteville for the upcoming civil lawsuit. However, during the City Council Work Session on June 5th, the City Council voted 5 to 4 against providing the officers with legal representation. Consequently, the officers are now compelled to seek legal representation through alternative means.

The Fayetteville Police Foundation finds the Fayetteville City Council's decision deeply disheartening and contrary to standard practice and principles of employment. It is essential to uphold the principle that police officers, who put their lives on the line every day to protect our community, are entitled to adequate legal support and representation when faced with legal challenges.

Furthermore, as outlined in the Fayetteville City Council's FY22 Strategic Plan, the Council's primary objective, Strategic Goal #1, is to ensure a safe and secure community for the City of Fayetteville. Regrettably, this decision blatantly disregards their commitment to this strategic goal, creating a city where the lack of support demonstrated by this council towards its officers and city employees poses a significant challenge in recruiting and retaining personnel to fill the numerous vacancies within their departments.



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This, in turn, could result in reduced patrols and increased response times, negatively impacting our citizens in times of need. Moreover, it will increasingly impede officers' ability to carry out their perilous yet vital duties on a daily basis, as they will no longer have the assurance that the city stands firmly behind their efforts.

The decision made by the council to withhold funding and assistance for the legal counsel of the officers not only jeopardizes the city's potential legal and financial liabilities but also fails to demonstrate responsible representation for the citizens who elected them. Consequently, this action raises concerns about the council's commitment to fulfilling their duties and obligations towards the community they serve.

This dangerous example made by our city goes far beyond just the men and women of law enforcement. The council's vote establishes a precedent that if you are a police officer, fire fighter, sanitation worker, parks and rec worker or an office personnel employee and you are involved in an accident or any other unfortunate situation, the council may not support you in your battles. You, as an employee, working daily to do your best at your job for the city, does so with a lack of support from the city you serve.

The Fayetteville Police Foundation urges the Fayetteville City Council to reconsider its decision and provide the officers involved with the necessary legal support. It is vital to recognize that these officers acted within their professional duties and in response to a clear and present danger.

While we stand with the officers involved and affirm our unwavering support for law enforcement, our heartfelt condolences are also with the families and loved ones of all who are involved and have been impacted by this unfortunate event. The Fayetteville Police Foundation will continue its mission of fostering positive police-community relations and ensuring the well-being of the dedicated officers who serve and protect our city and we are grateful for the 4 council members that stood up for and supported these law enforcement employees.

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