



# City of Graham Police Department



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**DATE:** Tuesday, July 14, 2020

**TO:** News Media

**FROM:** Interim Chief Kristi Cole

**SUBJECT:** **Officer Involved Shooting**

Earlier today, Sean Boone, the District Attorney in Alamance County, released his findings related to the officer involved shooting death of Mr. Jaquyn Light. That tragic event took place on January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at about 11:28 pm.

In my role as the Interim Chief, and on behalf of the entire Graham Police Department, I want to extend our sincere condolences to the family of Mr. Jaquyn Light. The sudden loss of a family member is difficult under any circumstance, and it is particularly painful when the police are involved in the death of a family member.

On January 28<sup>th</sup>, the Graham PD received a Crimestoppers tip regarding a subject wanted on outstanding warrants. We were told the individual was located at a family member's home at 716 E. Elm St. Officers confirmed the details of the tip and went to the house.

Two officers, Corporal Scoggins and Officer Land, knocked and spoke with the residents. At the same time, Officer Pollock approached the front porch on the opposite side of the house. The porch was in a dark area and covered with thick, dark plastic. As the officers spoke with occupants of the residence, Mr. Light was attempting to avoid detection and crawled out from under the plastic. As he turned, presumably to flee, he ran into and contacted Officer Pollock. At this time, Officer Pollock discharged his weapon striking Mr. Light in his abdomen.

The three officers on scene quickly called for Emergency Medical Services and attempted to render first aid. Mr. Light was transported to the hospital and later died of his injury.

Based on our standard practice, Officer Pollock was placed on administrative leave pending a full investigation into this incident. We contacted the North Carolina State Bureau of



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Investigation (SBI) to conduct an independent and objective investigation into this incident. They recently concluded their investigation and forwarded the results to the District Attorney. Our internal investigation was on hold pending the outcome of these investigations and we will look to finalize our review in the coming weeks.

As stated in his press conference today, the District Attorney has concluded that no criminal charges will be filed against Officer Pollock.

Officer Marcus Pollock has been a police officer for over 20 years. He joined our agency in August 2017, and he has been serving in Graham for more than three years. During this time, he has received positive performance evaluations and has had no complaints for excessive uses of force.

At the conclusion of the press conference by the District Attorney, Mr. Boone indicated that he had a court order to publicly release one body worn camera recording that runs 4 minutes and 30 seconds. This video was recorded by Corporal Scoggins as he entered the house and then moved to the area where Mr. Light was shot.

North Carolina statute, NCGS 132-1.4 A (g), covers the release of police video and is very restrictive. These restrictions during the on-going SBI investigation have impacted our ability to release our videos. We have also been sensitive to the content and the feelings of the family. We are willing to release additional video in consultation with the family and District Attorney.

As a part of our investigation it was determined that Officer Pollock's camera was not activated at the time of this incident. The Graham Police Department has a policy that requires officer's to activate their body worn cameras for all arrests to include warrant service. Additional training will be provided to all of our officers regarding the importance of this policy in particular to trust and transparency in modern policing.

Any time a life is taken by a sworn police officer the event is subjected to great scrutiny from both a criminal and police policy perspective. The loss of life in this circumstance is not taken lightly. As an agency we strive to serve the members of our community with professionalism in order to create a safe environment. Sometimes the after-the-fact analysis of police action reveals areas where perhaps things could have been done differently. We are committed to



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conducting that analysis here, and to providing our officers with additional training resources as needed.

The Graham Police Department is committed to constant improvement as a police agency. We have learned from this event and are implementing training advancements as we protect the residents in Graham.

In this volatile time in America, we ask for continued collaboration with our department to improve and ensure professional police services. We are proud to be part of a community that holds us accountable for our actions and we welcome any dialogue from the community that will help us be better.