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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

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Sept. 28, 2012

Alderman Willie L. Hines, Jr.  
(414) 286-2659

## Common Council members question Medical Examiner on Williams investigation

In their ongoing efforts to provide clarity and transparency about the investigation into the tragic death of Derek Williams in Milwaukee Police custody, **Alderman Willie L. Hines, Jr., Alderwoman Milele A. Coggs, Alderman Willie C. Wade and Alderman Ashanti Hamilton** met with the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner this morning, expressing their concerns and seeking answers.

Among the items of discussion the Common Council members took up with the Medical Examiner, Dr. Brian L. Peterson:

- What criteria and protocol were used to reach the Medical Examiner Office's initial findings that the death resulted from "natural causes?"
- What new criteria and protocol were used to reach the revised cause of death, which was "homicide?"
- What new information, evidence and/or rationale resulted in the new conclusion?
- An overview of the concerns raised by the public regarding the handling of the investigation and report.

Perhaps the most telling revelation of the meeting was that having death investigators view raw police video footage was not standard practice when investigating deaths that occur in police custody. Dr. Peterson told the Council members he has since changed that policy administratively, but the Council members believe Milwaukee County should codify that and other procedures into law.

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## **Williams investigation/ADD ONE**

“We are still disgusted, angered and troubled by what we saw in that video,” President Hines said. “As policy makers, we will do everything in our power to implement new policies and procedures that bring about sustained systemic changes, ensuring that life is valued in the provision of services to the City of Milwaukee, and that something like this never happens again.”

The meeting with the Medical Examiner caps a week in which Council members have also met with the Police Chief and the District Attorney. They sent a letter to the U.S. Attorney for the Milwaukee district, urging him to launch an independent investigation into the incident.

The Council members will now draft a letter to county policy makers, urging them to take legislative action and implement a list of recommended changes. Council members continue to work closely with county and state officials in pursuit of their goals.