



CITY OF MILWAUKEE

City Hall, 200 E. Wells Street, Milwaukee, WI 53202 • www.city.milwaukee.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 22, 2014

Red Arrow Park decision demonstrates need for additional reforms

**Joint Statement from Common Council members
Ashanti Hamilton, Russell W. Stamper II, Milele A. Coggs,
Willie C. Wade and José G Pérez**

With the district attorney's decision today not to pursue charges in the police shooting of Dontre Hamilton in Red Arrow Park, we once again offer up our deepest condolences to Mr. Hamilton's family. They have suffered great pain in their eight-month wait for answers, and today's decision provides them with no comfort.

We have discussed it as members of the council, and while we are frustrated, we are not entirely surprised by the decision not to move the case to a jury. This process did not meet the standards of transparency that the public deserves, and it took entirely too long. It's yet another unfortunate example of the need to improve relations between police and the community.

Many members of our community will rightfully object to the DA's conclusions, and we would urge them to continue to maintain the peaceful nature of the demonstrations. We support the right to protest and express public disagreement. Peace is more easily obtained when justice is served.

As local leaders in the City of Milwaukee, we will do our part in the pursuit of justice that must continue well beyond this day and place. There are steps that we can take to try and prevent incidents like this from occurring in the future, and we will pursue them. And while there are some matters that are beyond our control, we will aggressively lobby for action at a state and federal level to help the Hamiltons in their quest for justice.

We support the Hamilton family in their request for a federal investigation into the death of their son, and we urge federal authorities to promptly take up their case.

(More)

We implore state legislators to re-evaluate the new process that has been established for investigating police-involved deaths and make it more responsive and transparent.

And we are working actively to enact local reforms that will ensure that every life is protected by the men and women of the Milwaukee Police Department. These include:

- The creation of a community advisory council to advise the Milwaukee Police Department on better strategies for maintaining community-police relations.
- Re-evaluating the diversity training that is provided to police officers. We will pursue the issuance of a Request for Proposals to seek a new provider for such training.
- Expanding the Fire and Police Commission that governs the Milwaukee Police Department from seven to nine members. It's often forgotten that the Milwaukee Common Council has no direct authority over MPD policies or the discipline of MPD officers. That responsibility is delegated to the Fire and Police Commission, which needs to be expanded in order to make it more inclusive. Starting with the new FPC executive director who must be hired, we will ensure that all new members of the commission will not be confirmed without a comprehensive public vetting.
- Equipping every Milwaukee Police officer with a body camera to record their interactions with members of the public. We will seek funding for this initiative through asset forfeiture or any other avenue we can identify.
- The creation of a comprehensive and effective early warning system to monitor individual officers on the police force for indicators of violent or aggressive tendencies. Complaints against individual officers, performance reviews and other metrics must be used to identify officers who may pose a threat to the public and provide those officers with the retraining and counselling that they need. The ACLU has recommended the enactment of such a policy.

These proposals are only a beginning, and we look forward to a productive dialogue with our colleagues on the council and the public about these important matters.

Signed,



Ald. Ashanti Hamilton



Ald. Russell W. Stamper, II



Ald. José G. Pérez



Ald. Milele A. Coggs



Ald. Willie C. Wade