

July 12, 2012

A Special Meeting of the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners was held on the above date, commencing at 6:24 P.M.

PRESENT: Commissioners: Richard C. Cox, Chair  
Kathryn A. Hein  
Paoi X. Lor  
Sarah W. Morgan  
Michael M. O'Hear

ALSO PRESENT: Edward Flynn, Chief, Milwaukee Police Department, Captain Michael Dubis, Milwaukee Police Department.

1. PUBLIC FORUM – Homicide of Darius Simmons:

a) Mayor Tom Barrett addressed the Board and thanked the Fire and Police Commission for hosting this public forum. Mayor Barrett said the citizen board of the Fire and Police Commission is comprised of citizens of the community and is outside the purview of the Milwaukee Police Department. The citizen board, according to Mayor Barrett, has an important role to play in facilitating open dialog regarding this tragic incident.

b) Alderman Ashanti Hamilton spoke on behalf of Alderwoman Milele Coggs and Alderman Jose Perez in support of this process of sharing information with the community and listening to their concerns. According to Alderman Hamilton, parents want to live in a city where the residents trust the police department. Finally, Alderman Hamilton said that holding the public forum at Rufus King High School shows the willingness of the Board to come to the community and listen to their concerns.

c) Chief Edward Flynn stated that the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) wants justice for Darius Simmons and MPD believes that MPD's conduct during the investigation will ensure justice will be done. Chief Flynn thanked the Board for the opportunity to clear up misperceptions regarding the investigation. Chief Flynn cautioned that all questions may not be answered as MPD needs to preserve the integrity of evidence for trial. According to Chief Flynn there is one chance during an investigation to get it right and while police procedures may seem callous and/or insensitive, the fundamental obligation is to see justice is done for the victim.

Chief Flynn introduced Captain Michael Dubis, Commander of the MPD Homicide Division, to provide a procedural overview of criminal investigations. According to Captain Dubis, a crime occurs when a suspect does something against the public's well-being. Police are called by citizens and/or a witness. When a squad arrives, the officers make an assessment and secure witnesses, the crime scene, and evidence. The officers on scene begin talking to people and contact their supervisor who in turn contacts the Criminal Investigation Bureau (CIB). Once detectives arrive on scene, they talk with officers first on the scene and begin to talk with witnesses. As needed, witnesses are conveyed for further interviews. Photos are taken of the scene and evidence is recovered. Once the scene is exhausted, the detectives return to CIB to discuss the investigation. Detectives continue to talk with suspects and obtain statements until the investigation is completed.

Chief Flynn addressed several misconceptions that are present in the community regarding the investigation and stated that the intentions of the MPD are honorable. Chief Flynn said the MPD is committed to justice for Darius Simmons and a complete, methodical investigation will ensure justice. Chief Flynn left the meeting, but Captain Dubis remained to hear public comment.

(Public Forum:)

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d) The Chair invited public comment regarding the homicide of Darius Simmons. Alderpersons Coggs, Hamilton, and Perez each spoke to express their disappointment that Chief Flynn did not remain at the meeting. Alderwoman Coggs and Alderman Hamilton said they each felt that an opportunity for healing was missed.

Twenty (20) members of the community gave comment regarding the Milwaukee Police Department's investigation of the homicide of Darius Simmons, timeliness of the public meeting, and community relations with the Milwaukee Police Department.

2. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting concluded at 8:22 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael G. Tobin  
Executive Director

MGT:kj