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PROSECUTING ATTORNEY



Office of the Prosecuting Attorney  
CRIMINAL DIVISION  
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March 29, 2019

The Honorable Dow Constantine  
King County Executive  
401 5th Avenue, Suite 800  
Chinook Building  
Seattle, WA 98104

Re: Death of Mitchell O. Nelson

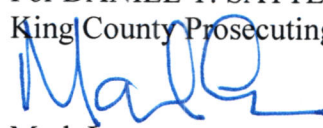
Dear Executive Constantine:

On August 15, 2018, the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office received investigative materials from the Des Moines Police Department concerning the shooting death of Mitchell O. Nelson on April 4, 2018. Pursuant to the latest Executive Order on the inquest process (PHL-7-1-2-EO), this office has reviewed those materials and recommends that an inquest be ordered. The Executive's Order mandates an inquest to investigate "any death involving a member of any law enforcement agency within King County while in the performance of his/her duties."

In this instance, Federal Way police officers observed two suspects attempting to steal a vehicle. When an officer approached the suspect in the driver's seat, later identified as Mitchell Nelson, the suspect fled and barricaded himself in a nearby residence. The homeowners confirmed that there were guns inside the house and that Nelson was trespassing. After failing to respond to commands from Federal Way PD, Valley SWAT was called to the scene to continue negotiations. Various methods were deployed in an effort to flush Nelson from the home, including tear gas and a K-9 unit. At two different points, Nelson discharged his weapon from inside the home. After struggling with the K-9 unit, Nelson became visible to SWAT officers. He still had a firearm in his hands and continued to ignore commands to surrender. An officer fired his weapon striking the suspect who later died on scene.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (206) 477-1970. I would be more than happy to meet with you if you would like to discuss this matter in further detail.

Sincerely,  
For DANIEL T. SATTERBERG,  
King County Prosecuting Attorney

  
Mark Larson  
Chief Deputy, Criminal Division

cc: Andy Hwang, Chief of Police, City of Federal Way