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Thursday, September 03, 2015

Summit County Sheriff's Deputy Found to Use Justifiable Force in Deadly Shooting

AKRON, Ohio (Thursday, September 03, 2015) – Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh announced today that a Summit County Sheriff's Deputy was justified in connection with the May 20, 2015 deadly shooting of Jonathan Colley.

On the morning of May 20, 2015, Jonathan Colley was shot and killed outside the Green home of his step-father, after charging full speed at a Summit County Sheriff's Deputy while holding a butcher knife. The 52-year-old Colley, who was reportedly 6'5" and weighed 265 pounds, had been yelling and destroying items inside his step-father's home. Colley's step-father, Ralph Ralston, called 911 to report Colley was threatening his life and the life of his wife.

The investigation revealed the following:

- In his 911 call, Mr. Ralston indicated law enforcement better be prepared because Colley stated he was going to fight the police.
- One Summit County Sheriff's Deputy had been at the home and dealt with Mr. Colley on three to four previous occasions.
- That Deputy also responded to the home on the morning of May 20, 2015, and warned other deputies that Mr. Colley had mental health issues.
- Mr. Colley had been fired from his job the day before, which made him angry and violent.

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“Our deputies are highly trained and prepared to handle just about any situation,” said Sheriff Steve Barry. “Deputies did everything they could to help Mr. Colley. The deputy opened fire as a last resort and only did so to protect himself and other deputies, as well as Mr. and Mrs. Ralston.”

“Our investigation showed Mr. Colley was out of control and threatened the lives of several people,” said Prosecutor Walsh. “Deputies pleaded with Mr. Colley to have him drop the knife he was holding, but he refused. And when Mr. Colley charged at officers, the deputy had no other choice.”

Please see the attached report for details.