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PRESS RELEASE

TO: ALL MEDIA
FROM: PAIGE CLARKSON, DEPUTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
DATE: MAY 21, 2014
RE: GRAND JURY RULES USE OF FORCE BY SALEM POLICE ON
MAY 9, 2014, WAS JUSTIFIED

Today a Marion County Grand Jury unanimously found that Salem Police Department K9 Officer Trevor Morrison was justified in his use of deadly force against Jacklynn Rashaun Ford, 25 years old, on May 9, 2014.

The Grand Jury convened today to hear testimony from 11 witnesses, including civilian witnesses, police officers from the Salem Police Department and investigators from the Oregon State Police. Ford's mother, Crystal Ehlers also testified. The Grand Jury further examined numerous items of evidence including photographs, scene diagrams, dispatch recordings, ballistic findings and autopsy conclusions. The following is a factual summary of evidence found by the Grand Jury.

On Friday May 9, 2014 shortly after 10PM, Officer Trevor Morrison, a 12 year veteran of the Salem Police Department, was on-duty and operating a marked patrol vehicle within the City of Salem. With him was his K9 partner, Baco, a specially-trained patrol K9 who has been partnered with Officer Morrison for a year. Officer Morrison was responding to assist on another call when he noticed Ford's van traveling in front of him. The vehicle was not properly registered and soon made a turn without properly signaling. Officer Morrison noted that a lone female occupant was operating the vehicle.

Jacklynn Rashaun Ford was the driver of that vehicle. However, upon contact with Officer Morrison, Ford identified herself first as Chrystina Ford, then Chrystina Lloyd with a date of birth of July 1986. Ford could not produce a driver's license or registration but claimed the vehicle belonged to her sister. She would not give Officer Morrison her sister's name. During this conversation, Officer Morrison noticed a knife in Ford's left pocket and requested that she not reach for it. When asked, Ford claimed she had no other weapons.

It is a class C Misdemeanor in Oregon to operate a vehicle without a license, and a Class A Misdemeanor to give a false name to a police officer conducting a traffic stop.

Suspecting that Ford was not being truthful, Officer Morrison gave Ford several opportunities to give him her real name. She maintained she was Chrystina Lloyd. Officer Morrison returned to his car in attempts to confirm Ford's identity. While doing so, he noticed Ford was moving a lot within her car. She then stepped out of the van and faced towards him. He twice directed her to get back into her car. Instead, Ford ran from her vehicle toward Eastgate Basin Park.

Officer Morrison directed several verbal warnings at Ford to stop, which she refused to obey. Officer Morrison deployed his K9, Baco, to assist in the apprehension of Ford. Baco was able to stop Ford inside Eastgate Basin Park. Officer Morrison caught up to Baco who had Ford on the ground. Officer Morrison gave Ford multiple orders to show him her hands, which she refused to obey. Instead, she kept her right hand underneath her body in what appeared to be an attempt to grab something from her waist area. Ford eventually placed her right arm within view and Officer Morrison took control of Baco.

Ford stood up of her own volition as Officer Morrison maintained hold of Baco. Officer Morrison then ordered Ford to the ground in order to place her under arrest. As she was lowering to her knees, Ford suddenly produced a loaded revolver which she proceeded to point at Officer Morrison while she stood to face him. She frantically and repeatedly attempted to pull the hammer back. Officer Morrison responded to this use of deadly force against him by drawing his own duty weapon and firing twice at Ford, hitting her twice. K9 Baco quickly assisted Officer Morrison by dragging Ford away from her firearm that was now lying at her side. Baco is trained to perform this task.

Responding cover officers arrived as Baco was still dragging Ford away from her firearm. They attempted immediate first aid and Medics were called. Ford was transported to the Salem Memorial Hospital where she was pronounced dead.

Officer Morrison and K9 Baco were unharmed during this incident.

It was later determined that Ford had two outstanding felony warrants for Burglary in the Second Degree and PCS-Methamphetamine. She was further on probation for a Menacing conviction that stemmed from an altercation in Portland on April 3, 2013 in which Ford pointed a firearm at an acquaintance.

The Salem Police Department requested that the Oregon State Police Major Crimes Division respond to assume the investigation which is standard procedure when officers employ the use of deadly force. Investigators from the Keizer Police Department and the Marion County Sheriff's Office responded to assist. The Marion County District Attorney's Office coordinated the investigation.

Officer Morrison was placed on administrative leave during the investigation. This is also standard procedure following these types of incidents.

A search of the small park area revealed a holster with approximately 7.9 grams of methamphetamine inside, 2 knives and a cell phone belonging to Ford. The firearm Ford brandished was also recovered by the Oregon State Police. It was determined to be a .22 Long Rifle Caliber Rohm double action six shot revolver, loaded with five 22 Long Rifle caliber cartridges and one 22 Long Rifle caliber fired cartridge case.

Marion County Circuit Court Judge Donald D. Abar granted a search warrant for the van Ford was driving. A search of that van uncovered items of identification belonging to Ford, more ammunition matching the type used in Ford's revolver, a taser, more knives and additional drug paraphernalia. Ford's dog was with her in the vehicle at the time of the stop. The animal was safely removed to County Dog Control and retrieved by a family member soon after.

Oregon State Medical Examiner Karen Gunson performed an autopsy on May 11, 2014. She determined Ford died as a result of two gunshot wounds to her head and chest. One bullet entered the left side of her head behind her ear and exited the right front side of her skull. The other entered the back side of her right shoulder and exited the right front side of her chest wall.

The Grand Jury determined that Ford pointed her loaded weapon at Officer Morrison, likely fired once toward him, and was turning from him while he simultaneously fired. Witnesses relate hearing three gunshots.

Ford's weapon was further analyzed by the Oregon State Police Crime Lab. It was determined to be operational.

A complete inventory of Officer Morrison's firearm and ammunition confirmed he only shot twice.

Preliminary toxicology results revealed the presence of methamphetamine in Ford's system. Confirmatory results are expected soon.

Ford's criminal history further included a conviction on 9-22-11 for Unlawful Possession of Firearm stemming from a traffic stop in Salem on 6-29-11 during which Ford concealed a firearm within reach in her vehicle. She had additional convictions for two counts of Theft 3 on 6-30-11.

The Grand Jury applied the facts of this case to the legal principle dictating circumstances when deadly physical force can be used. Specifically, the Grand Jury found that Officer Morrison reasonably believed that his life or personal safety was endangered when confronted by the armed Jacklynn Ford on the night of May 9, 2014.

The Grand Jury's decision required reviewing all the facts and evidence available and applying them to the legal principle above. The Grand Jury concluded that the actions of Salem Police Department Officer Trevor Morrison were justified.