

CLEVELAND COMMUNITY POLICE COMMISSION

BIAS-FREE. TRANSFORMATIVE. COMMUNITY POLICING.

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(Co-Chair)

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(Co-Chair)

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Dr. Megan Testa

Executive Director

Mr. Jason Goodrick

Friday, July 16, 2021

Kristen Clarke
Assistant Attorney General
United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division,
Special Litigation Section
950 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20530

Bridget M. Brennan
Acting U.S. Attorney Office of the United States Attorney
801 West Superior Avenue, Suite 400
Cleveland, OH 44113-1852

SENT VIA U.S. MAIL and EMAIL

Dear Ms. Clarke and Ms. Brennan,

On November 13, 2020, a police officer employed by the Cleveland Metropolitan Police Department in front of the King-Kennedy housing complex shot and killed Arthur Keith, a former resident of the housing complex. Mr. Keith was shot in the back as he fled from the police.

An investigation of the homicide was conducted by the Cleveland Division of Police. Evidence was presented to a Cuyahoga County Grand Jury by a representative of the Ohio Attorney General who recommended to the grand jury that they return a NO Bill in the case. The only witness to appear at the grand jury was the officer who shot Mr. Keith. According to Attorney General Yost, no other witnesses were found. Moreover, the only video released by the Attorney General or the CDP or CMHAPD did not include the actual shooting.

Newspaper reports since the shooting have quoted local youthful residents who claimed to witness the shooting and tell a different story from the version told by the officer who killed Mr. Keith and which was repeated by the Ohio Attorney General. The Director of the Boys and Girls Club at King-Kennedy, Mr. Richard Starr, has told the co-chair of the Cleveland Community Police Commission that the youths who witnessed the shooting were never interviewed by investigating police officers nor the representatives of the Ohio Attorney General. Mr. Starr reported that the youths' account of the shooting is opposite of the official version offered by the Ohio Attorney General, CDP and CMHAPD representatives.

Further, in a lawsuit brought by Ideastream Public Media to obtain video of the shooting, CMHAPD did not respond that the video over the spot of the shooting was inoperable nor that they had no dash cam footage. They only requested a delay.

THEREFORE, the Cleveland Community Police Commission believes that the investigation into the death of Arthur Keith was woefully inadequate and resulted in a denial of Mr. Keith and of Mr. Keith's family's civil rights. The Commission respectfully requests that the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio and the Department of Justice initiate an independent investigation of the killing of Arthur Keith and the investigation of such killing.

Sincerely,

The members of the Cleveland Community Police Commission

Terry Echols Jeffrey Follmer Gordon Friedman Harriet Hadley
Lewis Katz Frederick Knuckles Charmin Leon LaToya Logan
Victoria Marion Mayele Ngemba Megan Testa Mark Worsencroft