

SALT LAKE COUNTY OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

Rosie Rivera

Sheriff

Jake Petersen

Undersheriff

Jason Mazuran

Chief of Police – Unified Police

Matt Dumont

Chief Deputy – Sheriff's Office

Shanda Gonzalez

Chief Deputy – Sheriff's Office

Kari Huth

Chief Deputy – Sheriff's Office



Unified Police

Sgt. Melody Gray (385) 468-9687
Det. Ken Hansen (385) 468-9689
Det. Kevin Mallory (385) 468-8854

Sheriff's Office

Sgt. Carrie Fisher (385) 468-9824
Danie Bills (385) 468-8879
Dep. Doug Fenton (385) 227-0706

COMMUNITY RELATIONS UNIT

★ 3365 SOUTH 900 WEST, SOUTH SALT LAKE, UT 84119 ★

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 23, 2020

Response to Whittle lawsuit.

A statement from Sheriff Rosie Rivera

Loss of a family member, a child in particular, under any circumstance is tragic. I recognize that the family of Jason Whittle continues to grieve his death, and while my words cannot take away their pain, I do express my deepest condolences.

After interacting with the family at the time of this incident it was apparent to me that they, like many other families in our community, are good people swept up in the challenges associated with supporting a loved one experiencing a mental illness, substance use disorder, or both. Unfortunately, the outcome of this family's struggle ended in the loss of life.

Behaviors displayed by individuals experiencing mental illness or substance use can become dynamic, disruptive, and even dangerous; when this happens law enforcement is often called to intervene, like in this case. These types of calls are becoming more frequent here and across the country. Over the last several years law enforcement as a profession, and the Unified Police Department (UPD) specifically, has evolved to begin to address the social service challenges while continuing to provide critical public safety functions. I am committed to continually grow the tools available to the UPD to maximize peaceful outcomes in these situations.

Officers seek peaceful resolutions when they respond to a call; if an individual's actions threaten death or serious bodily injury officers will act according to their training. The 911 call, findings of the independent investigation, and the Salt Lake County District Attorney's Office ruling the shooting justified support the actions taken by Officer Darrel Broadhead on the night of October 22, 2018.

I stand by these conclusions and Officer Broadhead.

With my profession coming under more and more scrutiny, I want the public to have access to the findings from the District Attorney and the 911 calls. Both illustrate the realities of this situation; a woman was being

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held at knife point by a man who had threatened to kill anyone entering the residence, was allegedly mentally ill, high on methamphetamine, and described as “out of control.”

Characterizing this justified shooting as an execution is unequivocally inaccurate. Being justified does not make the situation any less tragic for everyone involved.

My door remains open to continued conversations with the community. UPD continually reviews our policies and procedures to identify any areas where we can improve and better serve our communities. Information about our training is available on our website.

***Attached- 911 calls, DA letter regarding the OICI.*

Unified Police Department, Community Relations Unit, PIO Hotline 385-468-9686.