



Columbia Missouri Police Department

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Media Release May 20, 2010 Columbia Police Announce Results of Investigation

Columbia Police officers served a search warrant at 1501 Kinloch Court, in Columbia, on February 11, 2010 at 8:27 p.m. The search warrant was for marijuana and the evidence of drug trafficking, to include records, phone numbers, cash, and apparatus to facilitate the use and distribution of controlled substances.

The officers who entered the residence are members of the department's SWAT team. Assisting officers were not all SWAT members; three were not while one was.

Officers located a marijuana grinder, a glass marijuana pipe, three other marijuana pipes in a box, plastic baggies with marijuana residue, and a phone. Other large containers were not collected as evidence, including some in the attic, because while they smelled strongly of unburned marijuana, they were empty upon our arrival. The defendant's phone was seized as it contained information relevant to the investigation.

During the service of the search warrant, officers encountered two dogs, both of which acted aggressively as officers attempted to make entry. One shot was fired at the dogs, and one retreated immediately. The other did not. Subsequently, additional shots were fired at the second dog, in the kitchen, fatally wounding it.

Because shots were fired in an occupied residence, the Internal Affairs Unit conducted the mandatory review into the use of force, to keep the review independent from the SWAT chain of command. The police chief requested that the Internal Affairs Unit conduct the review as a thorough internal investigation. That investigation is now complete.

The investigation was to explore facts and circumstances surrounding the firearms discharges. Changes to policies and practices are outside the scope of the investigation and something the police chief will address separately at the May 20, 2010 press conference.

Investigative Findings:

The investigation began in February.

The officers knew a child was present. They did not know dogs were present.

The first four officers saw the dogs upon entry. The dogs were aggressive and did not retreat. The first officer shot at the dogs in the entryway. The occupants of the house were not in this area, and did not see the shooting.

One dog ran to the right, as viewed on the video. This area leads to a hallway and bedrooms. The other dog described as a pit-bull breed, went to the left, as captured on the video. This leads to the kitchen area.

This dog was shot in the kitchen. The occupants of the house were not in this area, and did not see the shooting.

The officers' decisions were based on the safety priorities they are taught to adhere to.

Both dogs presented either a threat to the officers or a substantial tactical obstacle, initially. The first dog retreated and then no longer posed a threat or tactical obstacle. The other dog did not retreat, and continued to pose a threat or substantial tactical obstacle.

The actions of the officers who made entry into the residence were evaluated based upon Columbia Police Department policy, applicable State Laws, and the information they had available to them at the time. These are the only criteria by which the actions of these officers can be evaluated fairly.

The actions of the officers on scene were appropriate, based on policy, law, and what they knew at the time.

