

Milwaukee Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression: Statement on bodycam footage and murder of Herman Lucas

Posted on Friday, Feb 24, 2023

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[Milwaukee, WI] – On Thursday, February 16, the Fire and Police Commission (FPC) held a special session to discuss the Policies and Standards Committee’s proposed Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). This SOP pertains to the public release of footage related to incidents that result in death or great bodily harm. Presently, the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) is not required by law to publicly release footage pertaining incidents that result in death or great bodily harm.

The current version of the SOP proposal requires MPD to publicly release footage related to these kinds of incidents within 15 days. It also calls for families of victims to be allowed access to the footage within 48 hours. The Milwaukee Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, along with families of people who have lost loved ones to police violence, are demanding for the public release of footage within 48 hours.

The need for this SOP became all the more apparent on Tuesday, February 21, following the police killing of Herman Lucas. Lucas was shot by the police, and there are videos circulating online showing officers on the scene dragging Lucas into a BP parking lot after shooting him. The footage, assuming the police officers actually had their body-cameras on, could reveal whether or not Lucas had a gun on him and threatened the police. The footage may also discredit the Police’s claim that Lucas was a threat. . The longer the footage release is delayed, the more the distrust grows between Milwaukee communities and the police. The public needs to know why MPD killed Lucas on Tuesday. Unfortunately, we only receive empty

statements from MPD, claiming they will conduct an internal investigation. Once again, there is no transparency and no accountability.

Last week's meeting made it clear that MPD representatives and other MAIT (Milwaukee Area Investigative Team) partners have no intention to abide by high standards of transparency. Policies regarding transparency are already in place in cities like Akron, OH, and Minneapolis, MN. They claimed that releasing footage within 48 hours would jeopardize investigations, but they couldn't provide concrete details as to why that would be the case when asked about these points. They went as far as to threaten pulling out of the MAIT protocol if the SOP is adopted.

The Milwaukee Alliance, families, and the public are demanding the FPC ensure a higher standard of transparency with this SOP. Our hearts go out to the family and friends of Herman Lucas. We demand transparency in this case through the timely, public release of the footage and public release of the names of officers involved in the shooting. In the event of protocol violations, we also demand accountability from the officers involved.

The Milwaukee Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression (MAARPR) campaigns against police crimes committed primarily against the poor and Black, Indigenous, and people of color. We demand the creation of a civilian police accountability council, or CPAC, to ensure that our community is in direct control of our police force.