
PRESS RELEASE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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Westland Reaches Settlement in William Marshall Jail Death Case

Westland, MI - On May 7, the City Council approved a settlement with the Estate of William Marshall, subject to Court approval. Mr. Marshall died of accidental cocaine toxicity while in the custody of the Westland Police and Fire Department on December 10, 2017. Mayor William R. Wild expressed his sympathies to the family of William Marshall. He said, "We would hope, pray and expect that no one in the custody of the Westland Police Department would ever lose their life. I know the police officers, paramedics and firefighters throughout both departments, from the lowest ranks to the Chiefs, feel as terrible about this situation as do I."

Mayor Wild made a promise to the family that he would do everything in his power to ensure an incident like this never occurs again. As such, he has directed the Chiefs to conduct a review to strengthen and clarify departmental policies should this type of situation ever present itself in the future. He has further instructed the Chiefs to take the time for additional training, as necessary.

The Wayne County Prosecutor's Office continues to investigate this matter. The City will cooperate with the Prosecutor and not impede that investigation in any way so that this matter can be brought to conclusion.

Police Chief Jeff Jedrusik also expressed his sympathies to the family of William Marshall. According to Chief Jedrusik, "It is not uncommon for defendants in narcotic cases to swallow drugs. What was uncommon in this case was the unknown large quantity of drugs that were swallowed. The toxicology report confirmed that Mr. Marshall swallowed an extremely large amount of cocaine which became fatal. I do not know if medical staff would have been able to save him, but I do know that we should have gotten him to a hospital sooner."

Chief Jedrusik said he is looking at whether any Department rules were broken or need to be strengthened. The Department will continue to review its rules and regulations concerning prisoner detention, training of employees, whether individual employees will receive discipline and the nature of the discipline.

Fire Chief Michael Stradtner expressed his sympathies to the family of William Marshall.

The resolution of the civil liability arising from the death of William Marshall is an important step for the family and for the Fire Department. Chief Stradtner said, "City paramedics grieve the loss of every patient they attend to and transport." Shortly after the event, one paramedic voluntarily left the employment of the City. As a result of Chief Stradtner's review of available facts, and in compliance with the union agreements, the Department has moved forward with the termination of the remaining paramedic.

The Estate will be before the probate court seeking approval of the resolution later this week.

For more information, please call Aubrey Berman at (734)467-3200