



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on August 15, 2014

Shooting Victim Accused of Robbery as Police Release Officer's Name in Ferguson

In the days following the police shooting of Michael Brown, 18, in Ferguson, Missouri, officials had not revealed the identity of the police officer involved in the shooting because of fears that protesters may retaliate against the officer and his family. On Friday, however, police revealed that the officer was Darren Wilson, a six-year veteran of the police force.



Ferguson Police Chief Thomas Jackson stated that authorities were hesitant to release the name of the officer who shot Brown owing to fear of death threats. Jackson explained that Wilson has never had any disciplinary action taken against him.

Likewise, Greg Kloeppe, a lawyer for the union representing the Ferguson police, said Officer Wilson had received an "extraordinary effort in the line of duty" award in February.

But Jackson noted that authorities felt now to be the best time to release Wilson's identity. "A lot of the stakeholders had a big meeting conversation yesterday," Chief Jackson told a St. Louis television station, "and then yesterday evening and we made the determination that today is the day." He added, "Nothing specific went into that decision, but we feel that there's a certain calm," and, "There's a huge outcry from the community." As a safety precaution, police have moved Wilson and his family from the town.

The announcement follows days of demands from the local community to release the name of the officer involved in the shooting. Benjamin L. Crump, a lawyer for the Brown family, had accused the police of "playing games" and said they were "not being transparent."

According to the *New York Times*, refusal to release the identity of the officer had "galvanized demonstrators and prompted civil rights groups to go to court to force its release."

But Jackson explained that the hesitance to release Wilson's name was based on safety concerns after death threats had been made against the officer and his family on social media. During the same press conference in which Wilson's name was released, police also revealed that Brown had been involved in a robbery at a local convenience store minutes before the shooting took place.

Authorities handed out copies of a police report to reporters that held details involving a robbery in which Brown was said to be involved before he was fatally shot.

According to Jackson, Officer Wilson had been dispatched on August 9 to investigate a "strong-arm" robbery at a convenience store before his encounter with Brown. The incident report pertaining to the robbery states that Brown and another man, Dorian Johnson, were suspected of taking cigars from the store. Video footage captures Brown manhandling the store clerk during the confrontation.



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“After viewing Brown and reviewing this video, I was able to confirm that Brown is the primary suspect in this incident,” the police report about the convenience store robbery stated. The police said that Brown, who was in the store with a friend, had stolen boxes of Swisher Sweets cigars. When confronted by the clerk, Brown “forcefully pushed him back into a display rack” before leaving.

([See the video here.](#))

The incident report has already been met with skepticism by critics in the community who claim the police are attempting to protect the officer. One Ferguson resident told CNN that the police are “tarnishing this young man’s name.” “Anyone could walk in the store and they could get surveillance and take a picture,” the woman said. “I don’t see that he’s robbing the store. I just see a picture of a young man.”

Another told CNN’s Don Lemon that deadly force should not have been used against a suspect of a robbery. On Twitter, community activists revealed their outrage at the release of the incident report. “How can they not release info on the shooting but link #MikeBrown to robbery. Shame on them,” @NafisMWhite tweeted.

Details of that encounter still remain murky. The Blaze writes:

Conflicting stories have emerged about whether Brown and the other man physically assaulted the officer, pushing him into his squad car and struggling for his weapon, or whether Brown was trying to run when he was shot, as [Dorian] Johnson has said. While Johnson has been vocal in media interviews over the past week talking about what happened to Brown, he has not mentioned a robbery.

According to Jackson, Wilson was “treated for an injury” following the fatal shooting.

The death of Michael Brown has prompted protests and violence in Ferguson, Missouri. ABC News reported, “Ferguson faced five consecutive nights of unrest and violence following Brown’s shooting death.”

According to Missouri Governor Jay Nixon, releasing the name of the officer was necessary in order to help Ferguson’s healing process. “I was pleased to hear the chief indicate this would be a day in which, finally, that initial name would come out, and we’ll work to make sure that his family [is safe] and there’s security around that,” Nixon told ABC News. “I think those kinds of concrete steps of transparency leading to justice are vitally important now to heal the old wounds that have been made a fresh by this difficult and horrific situation.”

In an effort to quell the violence in Ferguson, on Thursday, Nixon ordered the Missouri Highway Patrol to take charge of security and crowd control in place of the St. Louis County Police Department. The *New York Times* indicated that the change in tone and tactics has been immediately apparent.

Captain Ronald S. Johnson, an African-American in the Missouri Highway Patrol, is now heading the security efforts in Ferguson. He has attempted to defuse the frustration amongst Ferguson residents. He said, “In our anger, we have to make sure that we don’t burn down our own house. That does not prove a point.”

But the release of the police report is said to have been “met with renewed anger by residents of Ferguson” reports *New York Times*.

Captain Johnson said he had not been told how the authorities planned to release the information. “I would have liked to have been consulted,” he said.



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