

News Release from
The Honorable Sandra Doorley
Monroe County District Attorney

May 23, 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Statement by District Attorney Sandra Doorley Regarding
the Death of Richard Davis on May 31, 2015**

Rochester, NY- During the last 30 days, a Monroe County Grand Jury conducted an investigation into the death of 50 year old, Richard Davis of Rochester, NY. On May 31, 2015, after a series of events on or near Tremont St in the City of Rochester, Mr. Davis was tased by an officer of the Rochester Police Department. Mr. Davis collapsed at the scene and immediately received medical intervention. However, Mr. Davis, a decorated veteran of United States Marine Corp, who had served his Country overseas was pronounced dead at Strong Memorial Hospital after efforts to resuscitate him were unsuccessful. Mr. Davis, who is survived by his father, brothers and sister, 6 children, and many grandchildren, had struggled in recent years with PTSD and addiction.

Members of the Rochester Fire Department and Rochester Police Department first encountered Mr. Davis just before 9:00am on Sunday May 31, 2015 at the corner of Tremont St. and Morgan St. in the City of Rochester after responding to the area for a hit and run. When emergency personnel arrived they found the red Dodge Ram 1500 Mr. Davis was driving crashed into a church. Mr. Davis, who had originally left the scene on foot returned to the crashed pickup, and despite warnings from members of the Fire Department not to touch the truck, re-entered vehicle, started it and managed to back it up, crashing into a fence and causing first responders to take cover. Mr. Davis continued to drive the full-size pickup which was heavily damaged around the corner crashing into another house on Tremont St. Ultimately the Dodge Ram became disabled in the middle of the road and Mr. Davis exited the vehicle. Despite repeated commands to get on the ground, Mr. Davis never complied, and continued to advance toward the police officers who were attempting to control the situation. As Mr. Davis neared officers and continued to ignore commands, a taser was deployed by a Rochester Police Officer, which ultimately allowed officers to gain control of Mr. Davis although he continued to struggle with police as they attempted to place him in handcuffs. Shortly after he was successfully handcuffed a member of the Rochester Police Department saw Mr. Davis was not breathing. The police immediately removed the handcuffs and CPR was administered by EMTs from the Rochester Fire Department

and Rural Metro Ambulance. Mr. Davis was transported to the hospital where he was pronounced dead.

Under New York State law, grand jury proceedings are secret, and only upon a showing of “a compelling and particularized need for access” can grand jury information be disclosed in a public forum. However, as District Attorney I can share that the Grand Jury in this case heard extensive testimony and was presented with significant evidence over the period of the presentation including testimony of numerous civilian witnesses, police witnesses, witnesses from the Rochester Fire Department and Rural Metro Ambulance, as well as testimony by the medical examiner regarding Mr. Davis’ cause of death.

Following the presentation of all of the evidence, the Grand Jury was instructed on the law of justification, otherwise known as self-defense. The Grand Jury found that the officer was justified as defined by New York criminal law in deploying his taser during the encounter with Richard Davis on May 31, 2015.

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