



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
TWENTIETH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Michael T. Dougherty, District Attorney

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Press Release

The District Attorney's Office announced today that the investigation and legal analysis of the non-fatal shooting of Mr. Sean Wood on October 22, 2023, involving Corporal Leonard Fazio and Police Officer Houston Lair of the Lafayette Police Department, has been completed. The incident took place at 2441 Waneka Lake Trail, in Lafayette, Colorado.

The Critical Incident Team for the 20th Judicial District, also known as the Boulder County Investigation Team ("BCIT"), investigated this case. This multi-agency team is designated to investigate use-of-force incidents in which any law enforcement officer used deadly, or potentially deadly, physical force against a person while acting under the color of official law enforcement duties. Following this incident, the Lafayette Police Department ("LPD") quickly notified the BCIT. The BCIT responded and conducted a thorough investigation. Consistent with protocol, the Lafayette Police Department did not participate in the investigation into the use of force by Corporal Fazio or Police Officer Lair.

This announcement, and the decision of the District Attorney, is not to be construed as commentary on the criminal charges, which are merely allegations, pending against Mr. Sean Wood. He remains innocent of the charges against him unless and until a jury finds him guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. Under the law, the District Attorney is required to make, and publicly disclose, the findings and conclusions which are the bases for not charging Corporal Fazio and Officer Lair. As required by statute, those findings are detailed in the decision letter being released today and briefly summarized here:

On Sunday, October 22nd, at approximately 2:30 a.m., Sean Wood arrived unannounced at the home of his father, Mr. David Wood. Based on Ring camera footage located around the home, Sean Wood is seen entering the garage, pacing around a gun safe located inside the garage, before entering the home and contacting his father. Within approximately ten minutes of arrival, garage camera video shows Sean Wood and his father re-entering the garage, verbally arguing about the gun safe and Mr. Wood's refusing his son access to the guns located inside the safe. Mr. Wood pleaded with his son, but Sean Wood pushed Mr. Wood backwards down the garage stairs, causing him injury and pain.

Shortly thereafter, Mr. Wood called 911 and reported that his son was undergoing a "psychotic event" or was having a "reality issue."

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He reported his son pushing him down the garage stairs and indicated that it was possible he was under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and that officers might have to restrain him. During this same time frame, Sean Wood walked into the kitchen and retrieved two large kitchen knives from a butcher block, before telling Mr. Wood he needed to kill himself and began stabbing himself in the leg. Mr. Wood tried to stop his son from stabbing himself, which resulted in injuries to Mr. Wood's arm and forehead. Mr. Wood then ran outside followed by his son, who was armed with a knife in each hand.

Upon arrival, Corporal Fazio and Officer Lair immediately observed two males in the front lawn. They saw Mr. Wood running away from Sean Wood, who was carrying two knives with one in each hand. The officers parked their patrol car and ran towards the two men. Ring camera and body-worn camera video captured the officers loudly and clearly issuing commands to "drop the knife right now!" Instead, Sean Wood can be seen turning and gesturing toward the patrol headlights, disregarding the commands, and then turning and charging at Mr. Wood as he backed away. Officers observed Sean Wood repeatedly slashing at Mr. Wood, as he crouched with his hands up in a defensive posture and screamed in distress.

Corporal Fazio and Officer Lair saw large, bleeding wounds on Mr. Wood's face. Despite their orders to drop the knife, Sean Wood continued slashing at Mr. Wood. Corporal Fazio discharged his firearm three times and Officer Lair discharged his firearm twice. The shots fired were within one second of one another and occurred approximately nine seconds after arriving on scene. After dropping to the ground, Sean Wood remained armed with one of the two knives and began stabbing himself again, while yelling at the officers to shoot him in the head. Officer Lair then deployed his taser to stop Sean Wood from continuing to stab himself. Both Mr. Wood and Sean Wood suffered serious injuries.

Under the circumstances, it was reasonable for Corporal Fazio and Officer Lair to believe Mr. Wood, or possibly themselves, to be in imminent danger of being killed or seriously injured. Based on Colorado law, the physical force that they used in response to Sean Wood's actions was both reasonable and appropriate under the circumstances presented.

District Attorney Michael Dougherty stated, "The Critical Incident Team conducted a thorough and independent investigation, which is important in these situations. Based on my office's review of that investigation, each of the law enforcement officers were justified in using force to save Mr. Wood's life. They moved quickly and bravely in response to the serious threat and then immediately rendered medical aid to both the father and son. It is a sad case; it is fortunate that no one died that night."

The District Attorney's detailed report can be found at this link:

<https://www.bouldercounty.org/districtattorney/officer-involved-shooting-decision-letters/>.

DA Dougherty conducts a Community Town Hall after every BCIT investigation in our continuing effort to be transparent and accessible. For individuals interested in the process and findings, District Attorney Dougherty will conduct a virtual Town Hall via Microsoft Teams at 1:00 p.m. on **Tuesday, December 12, 2023**. Questions can be submitted in advance via email to boulderda@bouldercounty.org. The link to join is <https://bit.ly/LafayettePDOISTownHall>. Community members are, also, able to call into the Town Hall by calling 720-400-7859 Conference ID: 548 153 946#.