



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MIDDLESEX DISTRICT ATTORNEY
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Please note: in regard to the following statement, District Attorney Ryan will be available for comment today via phone between 1:30-3:00 p.m. To schedule an interview time please contact Jacquelyn Goddard, (781) 897-8325.

Statement from Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan:

“The Middlesex District Attorney’s Office and the Massachusetts State Police assigned to the Middlesex District Attorney’s Office have completed the investigation into the facts and circumstances of the shooting of a stabbing suspect, Douglas Sparks, 30, of Medford, in Tewksbury on February 17, 2015.

This investigation concludes that, in the totality of the circumstances, the two detectives were justified in the use of deadly force and that there was no criminal conduct involved in the shooting of Douglas Sparks.”

Background:

The focus of this investigation was to determine whether the actions of either Tewksbury police detective in the shooting of Douglas Sparks were criminal or whether, in the totality of the circumstances, the officers were justified in the use of deadly force.

This incident began at approximately 9 a.m., February 17, when the Tewksbury Police Department received 911 calls about the stabbing of two individuals at the Salter School, 515 Woburn Street. Officers responding saw the stabbing suspect in the area of 55 Forest Avenue. When officers approached the suspect, they saw the suspect holding a gun. The suspect refused to comply with the officers’ orders to drop the gun and subsequently shots were fired by the officers striking the suspect. The suspect was transported to Saints Memorial Hospital in Lowell where he was pronounced dead.

The suspect’s gun was later determined to be a .177/4.5 mm caliber Colt model Defender by UMAREX BB gun, with a CO2 cartridge, with 12.177 copper colored BBs. This BB gun had no orange tip. The BB gun was charged and was loaded with 12 BB pellets when recovered.

The Middlesex District Attorney’s Office, by statute, has the duty and authority to oversee all death investigations in Middlesex County.

The investigation into the officer-involved shooting included interviews of all the responding police officers and civilian witnesses; ballistics examination; examination of evidence found at the scene; review of radio transmissions, police reports, and review of the medical examiner's findings.

To read the "Findings Of District Attorney Marian T. Ryan Regarding Officers Involved In The Fatal Shooting On February 17, 2015, In Tewksbury, MA" please visit the website of the Middlesex District Attorney: www.middlesexda.com

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