



Yakima Police Department



News Release

Subject: Use of Force Incident – Case #18Y039788
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Use of Force Review Board Finds Officer's Actions Reasonable During Fair Fight

A Use of Force Review board has concluded that Yakima Police Officer Ian Cole's actions, including the amount of force he used to control and arrest a suspect during a fight at the Central Washington State Fair on the evening of September 23rd, were reasonable.

The review board, which was made up of Sunnyside Police Chief Al Escalera, Ellensburg Police Captain Dan Hansberry, Heritage University's Criminal Justice Department Chair Kim Bellamy-Thompson, Yakima Police Captain Jay Seely, and Yakima Police Lieutenant Chad Stevens, reached its findings after conducting an investigation, examining all available evidence, which included cell phone video, and evaluating applicable Yakima Police Department ("YPD") policies.

In addition to finding that Officer's Coles actions and use of force were reasonable given the circumstances that existed when he and YPD Detective Kevin Cays responded to a call of a fight in progress at State Fair Park on the evening of September 23rd, the review board encouraged YPD officers to undergo additional training. The training recommended by the board includes better documentation of use of force incidents to ensure why use of force was necessary in a given incident.

"Based on the findings of the review board, Officer Cole, who has been assigned to desk duty since September 24th, has been returned to his regularly assigned duties in the YPD Patrol Division," said Interim Yakima Police Chief Gary Jones. "Also, as recommended by the board, additional training for YPD personnel is being scheduled."

While patrolling the fairgrounds on September 23rd, Cole and Cays responded to a report from a YPD Gang Unit officer that a group of young people, possibly gang members, were fighting. When Officer Cole and Detective Cays arrived at the scene of the reported fight, they found about a dozen young people throwing punches at and kicking each other.

After being verbally ordered by Cole and Cays to cease and disperse, some of the young people involved in the fight left the area, but others continued to fight. Cole and Cays then used pepper spray to break up the remaining group. One of the young men involved in the incident continued to refuse to follow the orders of Cole and Cays. In an attempt to gain control of the young man who was ignoring the orders from Cole and Cays, Cole delivered a push kick to the suspect, who fell to the ground.

Two suspects involved in the fight were arrested. Charging documents were forwarded to the Yakima County Prosecutor's Office.



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