



Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

*Supervisor Willie Johnson, Jr., Supervisor Peggy A. West
Supervisor Anthony Staskunas, Supervisor Eddie Cullen*

For Immediate Release: December 15, 2016
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Sheriff Clarke Rejects Invitation to Meet with Judiciary Committee

MILWAUKEE – Sheriff David Clarke, Jr., did not appear at a special meeting of the County's Judiciary, Safety, and General Services Committee Thursday morning that was called specifically for him.

Chairman Willie Johnson, Jr., scheduled today's special committee meeting at the request of committee members who wanted to speak to Clarke directly about two lawsuits filed against the county as a result of the deaths, and about the potential for additional lawsuits stemming from the two other deaths.

The Judiciary Committee regularly discusses current and pending litigation against the County.

Members of the Committee members released a joint statement regarding Clarke's absence.

"Apparently Sheriff Clarke's reason for not showing up today is that he didn't want to talk about ongoing investigations. The reason we go into closed session when discussing lawsuits or the potential for lawsuits is precisely so we can discuss sensitive issues like ongoing investigations," said Supervisor Anthony Staskunas.

"It's in the interest of the public and Milwaukee County taxpayers that we gain a better understanding of the circumstances leading to these deaths," said Supervisor Johnson.

"There's nothing stopping Clarke from talking about these deaths with us other than his desire not to share information, and that's extremely troubling," said Supervisor Eddie Cullen.

"Sheriff Clarke should welcome an independent investigations policy because it would assist all of us as we search for truth and it's the right thing to do for the taxpayers of Milwaukee County," said Supervisor Peggy A. West.

The committee voted 4-1 in favor of adopting a resolution that would establish a policy for external investigations into deaths that occur in the County Jail and House of Corrections. Supervisor Alexander voted against the resolution, while Supervisors Johnson, West, Staskunas, and Cullen voted in favor.

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