

Statement from the Grand Rapids Police Officer's Association posted on Facebook 4/26/2022

The below statement in no way is meant to detract from the heartache the Lyoya family is experiencing from the loss of their family member. However, with the demand for transparency the Grand Rapids Police Officer's Association believes a few comments about this all-around tragic situation are appropriate.

Christopher Schurr has worked in law enforcement for approximately seven years. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in business-accounting, with a minor in Criminal Justice. Chris successfully completed a Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards certified police academy and successfully completed the Grand Rapids field training program for new recruits. Officer Schurr has no criminal conviction history. He has extensive community involvement outside of police work, both locally and internationally.

Officer Schurr worked in a juvenile detention facility helping young people through difficult struggles. Officer Schurr has been on multiple mission trips to the country of Kenya, and was married in Kenya. Officer Schurr graduated Magna Cum Laude near the top of his college class in business-accounting, yet his passion for community involvement called him to become a public servant and serve the entire community of Grand Rapids with its rich cultural diversity. Officer Schurr's life experiences have led to his cultural awareness and sensitivity on the job.

Officer Schurr, and all police officers, took an oath to serve the community by enforcing laws and protecting the public. A police officer has the obligation to protect themselves, fellow officers, and the community in often volatile situations. Police Officers are often required to march into episodes that turn dangerous for the officer and members of the public.

While most police interactions remain peaceful, this is not always the case. Police are trained that a simple traffic stop can quickly turn dangerous or deadly for the police officer or innocent bystanders. A subject of police contact may have a history of violence, sometimes even multiple violent episodes, and may attempt to harm the police officer or public. Subjects might be under the influence of substances affecting their demeanor and volatility. Subjects may have weapons or attempt to gain control of the officer's weapons to harm the officer or public. Subjects might have

extensive criminal histories, including outstanding arrest warrants, which might cause them to resist/assault an officer at all costs to avoid apprehension and the stiffer penalties that might be applied. A fleeing subject may pose risk to the community. We have had episodes right here in the City of Grand Rapids, including last week with an armed individual, where fleeing subjects enter residences to avoid apprehension thus posing a serious threat to occupants of that home.

Often human nature is to second guess the actions of others, including the actions of a police officer. What is difficult to duplicate is the real time stress, fear, exhaustion, and challenges that a police officer faces in volatile situations. Critically, when assessing a tragic police officer involved matter such as this, all facets must be scrutinized, including the history and volatility of the parties involved. We appreciate the thorough investigation and review of this matter by law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies. As tragic as this case is all the way around, we feel a thorough review of this entire situation will show that a police officer has the legal right to protect themselves and community in a volatile dangerous situation such as this, in order to return to his/her family at the end of their shift.

The GRPOA stands with Officer Schurr and will continue to give him and his family whatever support they need.