

APPENDIX A

**June 24, 2020 Letter from Joliet Elected Officials
to the Office of the Illinois Attorney General Requesting Investigation
re: Joliet Police In-Custody Death**

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
BOB O'DEKIRK

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June 24, 2020

Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul,

We, the elected officials for the City of Joliet (i.e. Mayor and City Council), whose signatures are affixed below, hereby request the Civil Rights Bureau for the United States Attorney's Office to open a formal investigation of the in-custody death of an African American arrestee in Joliet Police custody on January 28, 2020. The day after this death, myself and the rest of the city council received a short email from the police chief informing us of the incident and that the matter would be investigated by an outside agency. Since that time, there have been no further updates given either to myself or the city council.

The video I was shown depicts a middle age man handcuffed and sitting in the rear of a squad car. It appears in the video that the man is chewing on an unknown object. As a police officer attempts to remove the man from the vehicle, the man appears to be barely conscious and is not cooperative in stepping out of the car. During this period, a second officer opens the opposite car door and says "Wake up bitch" while striking the handcuffed man in the face with an open hand. The officer then immediately applies a chokehold and pinches the man's nose shut while ordering him to open his mouth. Shortly after, all audio of the incident disappears, and it is impossible to hear anything further. Following this, an officer inserts a collapsible baton into the mouth of the man, who is still completely unresponsive, and retrieves clear plastic bags from inside the man's mouth.

Approximately two weeks ago, I began to hear stories about a veteran Joliet Police Sergeant claiming that he had viewed the in-squad camera video of the incident in question and that he was very disturbed by what he had seen. I approached the Joliet interim City Manager Steve Jones and the Joliet Corporation Counsel Sabrina Spano and asked if either had ever reviewed the squad camera which recorded the death of this individual. Both told me they had not and that, to their knowledge, no video had ever been presented to the legal department or city hall. I asked for either of them to acquire a copy of the video and allow me to view it.

On June 16, prior to the City Council meeting, I watched the video with the Corporation Counsel on her computer. Immediately after, I called the City Manager into her office and again watched the video in his presence. On June 17, I emailed the City Manager stating I had grave concerns over both the content of the video and the fact that this had been withheld from myself, the City Council, the City's legal department, and apparently the City Manager himself.

On June 18, I met with City Manager Jones and Corporation Counsel Spano and presented a list of questions I wanted to have answered. It should be noted that during the meeting I felt Mr. Jones to be somewhat resistant to my efforts. Mr. Jones stated to me initially "This is a personnel matter and is none of your business." Later in the meeting, I told

both parties that the City Council needed to see the video as soon as possible and I planned on playing this in Executive Session the following week. Mr. Jones initially opposed this stating that it was premature to show the video to the City Council. He eventually agreed after the Corporation Counsel agreed with me that the video needed to be shared.

On June 23, the video was shown to the City Council in Executive Session. It should be noted that this meeting was tape recorded and is available for review in the City Clerk's Office. During a contentious meeting, Mr. Jones informed the council that the matter was being investigated by the Will County Major Crimes Task Force. When questioned why at least one officer was not on administrative leave, Mr. Jones stated that the police department had not received any recommendation from the Will County State's Attorney's Office. Mr. Jones stated there has been no police internal affairs investigation regarding the matter and even made the incredible claim that, to date, the police chief had never viewed the video.

Please accept this appeal to your office for an immediate review of this matter. As the elected officials of the City of Joliet, we are concerned with the manner in which this incident has been handled. In the interests of justice, as well as an effort to preserve peace within our city, we ask for an independent review of the incident which involves the death of a citizen while in police custody.

We, the undersigned, appreciate your attention to this matter and offer our assistance.

Sincerely,



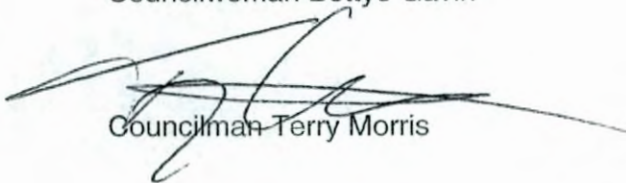
Mayor Bob O'Dekirk

Councilman Don Dickinson



Councilman Larry Hug

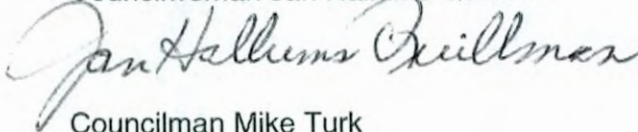
Councilwoman Bettye Gavin



Councilman Terry Morris

Councilman Pat Mudron

Councilwoman Jan Hallums Quillman



Councilman Mike Turk

Councilwoman Sherri Reardon