

**San Francisco Chief of Police William Scott
Talking Points and Briefing Book**

October 19, 2023, OIS Town Hall Remarks



Safety with Respect

**SFPD Headquarters
Conference Room 1025
Thursday, October 19, 2023 – 1500 hours**

Prepared Remarks

Welcome

Good afternoon.

We're here today for a Virtual Town Hall regarding an officer-involved shooting that occurred on Monday, October 9, 2023, at Geary Boulevard and Laguna Street.

Before proceeding, I'd like to announce to our viewing and listening audience that this Town Hall is being translated into Spanish, Cantonese, and American Sign Language (ASL) for members of our community who speak those languages.

On Mr. Yang

Without suggesting a premature judgment on the appropriateness of the force used in this particular incident, today's presentation will include details from an officer-involved shooting incident that ended tragically, claiming the life of 31-year-old Zhanyuan Yang. I'd like to express my deepest condolences to Mr. Yang's surviving family members for the tragedy they've experienced.

In the San Francisco Police Department, we recognize that our sworn duty as law enforcement officers imposes no more solemn obligation on us than to honor and respect the sanctity of human life. We also know that, as police officers, we are sometimes required to use force — including deadly force, at times — in the performance of our duties.

We recognize, too, that officer-involved shootings can have traumatic effects on members of our communities — especially for individuals, their families and loved ones, who have suffered traumas of their own in encounters with the criminal justice system, wherever it may be.

To any of our viewers experiencing trauma from this incident — or from the information or images that we will present during this Town Hall — please know that help is available to you. You may can contact the **San Francisco Department of Public Health's** crisis line at **(415) 970-3800** for trauma services.

Outline of Town Hall

Here is what we hope to accomplish today.

First and foremost, in the San Francisco Police Department's aspiration to be a national model of 21st century policing. We work to earn the trust of those we serve by committing to transparency and to the tenets of procedural justice — in this process, and in this Town Hall presentation.

Procedural justice depends on the legitimacy of police as well as our entire criminal justice system. With these town halls, we work to embody the foundational tenets of what procedural justice is all about.

- We will release facts known to us, at this time, about this incident.
- We will try to do so in a manner that is impartial and neutral.
- We will answer questions from members of the public as well as members of the news media; and
- We will listen to public feedback.

Acting Commander Mark Im will be presenting the facts of this case in a few minutes. Before turning the floor over to him, however, I want to emphasize that this incident is subject to multiple independent and ongoing investigations. As such,

there may be some information we cannot release at this time, either.

- Because the release of certain information is prohibited by law; or
- Because the release of certain information could compromise an ongoing investigation; or
- Because certain facts have not yet been established with certainty; in other words, we are not able to release unconfirmed information.

The Scene at Geary Boulevard and Laguna Street

Next, Acting Commander Mark Im's presentation will include a detailed verbal narrative of the facts as we know them as well as audio and video content from the officer-involved shooting incident.

- SFPD officers who responded to the scene were wearing department-issued body-worn cameras, which were activated while they were on their way to the incident. Consistent with our Body-Worn Camera Policy, Department General Order 10.11, you will see Body-Worn Camera (BWC) video from those officers from multiple perspectives.

Commitment to Transparency

At the San Francisco Police Department, our commitment to full transparency has guided our officer involved shooting investigations and town halls for several years now.

Although our practices predate the enactment of many police transparency and accountability laws in California, we believe our approach has remained consistent with the letter and spirit of reforms implemented by...

- Senate Bill 1421 (for police transparency); and
- Assembly Bill 1506 (for police accountability).

Online Access

SFPD's commitment to transparency in this process will also be reflected in our release of information online. Video from this Town Hall — including audio recordings from 911 calls and dispatchers and the video footage I just mentioned — will be posted on SFPD's website, at sanfranciscopolice.org. It will remain available there for public viewing.

As a reminder, all of SFPD's governing policies and procedures can also be found on our website.

San Francisco Police Department directives mandate that we release the names of officers from officer-involved shootings — unless safety concerns argue against disclosure.

In this matter, we identified no safety concerns and Acting Commander Mark Im will release the name of the officer as part of his presentation.

Investigative Processes and Responsibilities

I would like to explain the investigative processes for an officer-involved shooting next. San Francisco has a multi-agency response to officer-involved shootings, and each agency's investigation is independent.

Whenever an officer-involved shooting occurs in San Francisco involving an on-duty San Francisco police officer, the following agencies are immediately notified:

- The **SFPD's Investigative Services Detail (ISD)** is the unit responsible for investigating the events that led up to the officer-involved shooting.

- The **SFPD's Internal Affairs Division (IAD)** is responsible for conducting an administrative investigation to determine if the officer or officers responsible for the OIS are in compliance with the standards and requirements of SFPD policy.

Although the investigations of both SFPD units run in parallel, each has a distinct investigative purview and focus. Each maintains a strict internal firewall to comply with legal standards and requirements.

- The **San Francisco Department of Police Accountability (DPA)** conducts an independent administrative investigation. San Francisco voters created DPA — as a successor to the Office of Citizen Complaints — with their passage of Proposition D in the June 2016 election. DPA investigates all SFPD incidents in which any of our officers discharge a weapon within the course and scope of their duties, and whenever that discharge results in an individual's injury or death.
- The **San Francisco District Attorney's Office, Independent Investigations Bureau (IIB)** is responsible for determining the legality of the officer involved shooting. Based on their independent investigation and review, The District Attorney of the County of San Francisco will make the final

decision as to whether the involved officers' actions complied with the laws of the State of California.

- The **San Francisco Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME)** has responsibility for conducting an on-scene investigation, collecting evidence, and taking custody of a deceased person in any officer-involved shooting that results in a fatality. In tragic cases such as these, the OCME is responsible for conducting an autopsy to determine the decedent's cause of death and to report those findings publicly. In this incident, because Mr. Yang died from his injuries, the OCME will conduct an investigation to determine cause of death.

- All notified agencies dispatched investigators and appropriate personnel to begin their respective and independent investigations.

Conclusion and Introduction of Acting Commander Im

Finally, I'd like to point out that we take community feedback very seriously. Based on feedback from prior officer-involved shooting Town Halls, we will also take questions and answer

them to the extent we're able — understanding that this incident remains an ongoing investigation.

We will allocate one hour for public comments and questions.

Thank you very much for joining us today. And now, Acting Commander Mark Im.