

MANITOWOC COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Manitowoc County Courthouse, Room 325
1010 South Eighth Street
Manitowoc, Wisconsin 54220-5398

DISTRICT ATTORNEY
Jacalyn LaBre

Telephone: 920-683-4070
Fax: 920-683-5046

VICTIM/WITNESS PROGRAM

ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEYS
Gail A. Prost
Anthony Lambrecht
Jordan Feest
Angelina Scarpelli
Marconi De Franco Barrios

COORDINATOR
Amy Plagemann
920-683-4074

April 9, 2020

Special Agent Jay Yerges
Wisconsin Department of Justice- Division of Criminal Investigations
Appleton Office

Re: Officer Involved Death
DCI Case Number 19-8159

Dear Special Agent Jay Yerges,

This letter is to inform you of the conclusion reached by my office regarding the review of the officer involved death which occurred in Manitowoc County on December 22, 2019 and which resulted in the death of Forest Springstube. The purpose of my review was to determine whether there existed evidence to support a conclusion that the actions of Manitowoc County Sheriff's Deputy Eric Roehl involved criminal conduct. After consideration of all of the evidence and circumstances surrounding the incident, this office concludes that Deputy Roehl acted appropriately and that there is no probable cause to believe that Deputy Roehl committed any criminal offense.

Prior to reaching a conclusion, I reviewed all available investigative reports from law enforcement agencies, including the Wisconsin Department of Justice – Division of Criminal Investigations (DCI), Two Rivers Police Department, multiple squad recordings and the Manitowoc County Sheriff's Office (MTSO). I have summarized the investigative reports below.

On Sunday, December 22, 2019, at approximately 2:55 a.m., MTSO Deputy Eric Roehl attempted to catch up to an automobile after identifying the automobile was traveling 90 miles per hour in a posted 70 mph on Interstate 43. The automobile exited onto STH 310 from the interstate. In an attempt to stop the operator of the automobile for speeding, Dep. Roehl activated his patrol vehicle's visual emergency lights and audible siren. The operator eluded Dep. Roehl and achieved high rates of speed. Deputy Roehl attempted to catch up to the fleeing automobile traveling on STH 310. On the recording from Deputy Roehl's patrol vehicle, a law enforcement mobile radio transmission indicated there was an automobile traveling "a hundred and five" (105 miles per hour [MPH]) and that it was "coming into the city (Two Rivers)

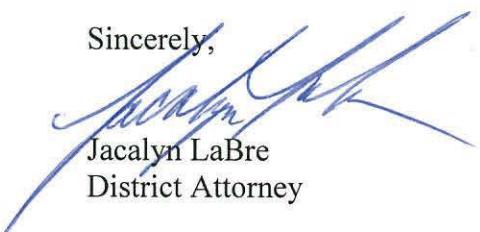
shortly." Seconds later, the patrol vehicle negotiated a gradual curve and smoke/steam was depicted rising in the air from the right (south) side of the roadway. Dep. Roehl transmitted via mobile law enforcement radio, "10-50" (motor vehicle crash) at "02:57:17" (2:57 a.m.). Deputy Roehl had come upon the automobile that had crashed broadside into a utility pole. The crashed automobile was the one being followed by Deputy Roehl. Deputy Roehl approached the automobile to look for occupants. He observed a male inside, checked for a pulse and requested emergency service personnel. The male inside of the automobile did not have a pulse and was determined to be deceased. He was later identified as Forest Springstube. The crash scene was consistent with a high speed crash.

An autopsy upon Forest Springstube was performed at the Fond du Lac County Medical Examiner's Office on December 26, 2019 by Chief Medical Examiner and forensic pathologist, Dr. Adam Covach, MD. The autopsy revealed Forest Springstube died as a result of injuries sustained in the referenced motor vehicle crash.

The facts presented demonstrate that Deputy Roehl acted in a manner consistent with the law and consistent with his training as a law enforcement officer. He was attempting to stop an automobile that was traveling more than 20 miles per hour over the speed limit. The automobile continued to pull away from the Deputy. The automobile crashed before the Deputy could effectuate a traffic stop. Thus, it is the opinion of this office that Deputy Roehl did not commit any criminal wrongdoing.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jacalyn LaBre".

Jacalyn LaBre
District Attorney