

Man Shot, Killed During Minnesota Traffic Stop Sparks Unrest

Crowds of mourners and protesters gathered in a Minneapolis suburb where the family of a 20-year-old man said he died after being shot by police before getting back into his car and driving away, then crashing several blocks away. The family of Daunte Wright said he was later pronounced dead.

The death sparked protests in Brooklyn Center into the early hours of Monday morning, and stores were broken into, as Minneapolis was already on edge and midway through the trial of the first of four police officers in George Floyd's death. Brooklyn Center is a city of about 30,000 people located on the northwest border of Minneapolis.

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz tweeted he was praying for Wright's family "as our state mourns another life of a Black man taken by law enforcement."

I am closely monitoring the situation in Brooklyn Center. Gwen and I are praying for Daunte Wright's family as our state mourns another life of a Black man taken by law enforcement.

– Governor Tim Walz (@GovTimWalz) April 12, 2021

Police didn't immediately identify Wright or disclose his race, but some protesters who gathered near the scene waved flags and signs reading "Black Lives Matter." Others walked peacefully with their hands held up. On one street, written in multi-colored chalk: "Justice for Daunte Wright."

Demonstrators gathered shortly after the shooting and crash, with some jumping on top of police cars and confronting

officers. Marchers also descended upon the Brooklyn Center police department building, where rocks and other objects were thrown at officers, Minnesota Department of Public Safety commissioner John Harrington said at a news conference. The protesters had largely dispersed by 1:15 a.m. Monday, he said.

Harrington added that about 20 businesses had been broken into at the city's Shingle Creek shopping center. He said law enforcement agencies were coordinating to tame the unrest, and the National Guard was activated.

Brooklyn Center police said in a statement that officers had stopped a motorist shortly before 2 p.m. Sunday. After determining the driver had an outstanding warrant, police tried to arrest the driver. The driver reentered the vehicle and an officer fired at the vehicle, striking the driver, police said. The vehicle traveled several blocks before striking another vehicle.

Police said the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office will release the person's name following a preliminary autopsy and family notification. A female passenger sustained non-life-threatening injuries during the crash.

Katie Wright, Daunte's mother, huddled with loved ones near the scene and pleaded for her son's body to be removed from the street, the Star Tribune reported. She said her son had called her when he was getting pulled over, and she heard scuffling before the call ended. When she called back, she said his girlfriend told her that her son had been shot.

Carolyn Hanson lives near the crash scene and told the newspaper that she saw officers pull the man out of the car and perform CPR. Hanson said a passenger who got out was covered in blood.

Brooklyn Center Mayor Mike Elliott announced a curfew in the city until 6 a.m. Monday. In a tweet he said, "We want to make sure everyone is safe. Please be safe and please go home."

Police said Brooklyn Center officers wear body-worn cameras, and they also believe dash cameras were activated during the incident. The department said it has asked the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension to investigate.

The trial of Derek Chauvin, the former Minneapolis officer charged in Floyd's death, was slated to continue Monday. Floyd, a Black man, died May 25 after Chauvin, who is white, pressed his knee against Floyd's neck. Prosecutors say Floyd was pinned for 9 minutes, 29 seconds.

Harrington said more National Guard members would be deployed around the city and in Brooklyn Center.

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