



FULLERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

PRESS RELEASE

ROBERT DUNN, CHIEF OF POLICE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Subject: Downtown Fullerton Protests – A Message from Fullerton Police Chief Bob Dunn

May 30, 2020

Early yesterday morning, we were alerted to an advertised protest in Downtown Fullerton. The protest was in reference to the death of George Floyd, in Minneapolis, and was scheduled for 4:00 PM today.

Immediately, Fullerton Police Department Staff began planning for a response, should the protest move from its advertised peaceful posture to violence and disorder. Attempts were made to connect with the protest organizers to help them facilitate their constitutional rights, while providing a framework for them that ensured the rights of everyone in our community. We never received a reply.

When the group, of about 125 people, assembled at 4:00 PM, Officers made contact and attempted to establish a line of communication. While many present were appreciative of our efforts, it quickly became clear some elements of the group had ill intentions.

Around 5:00 PM, the large group made their way from the bus depot, at Santa Fe Avenue and Pomona Avenue, to the Fullerton Police Department. The crowd walked in lanes of traffic, blocked vehicle traffic, and attempted to take over the intersection of Commonwealth Avenue and Highland Avenue. In one instance, Donald Gibson – 41- Resident of Anaheim, was observed vandalizing the windshield of a passing vehicle. He was detained and arrested for felony vandalism. He is currently being held at the Orange County Jail in lieu of \$20,000 bail. Officers issued the remainder of the group an order to disperse. The crowd moved down Highland Avenue, to Santa Fe Avenue, and stopped again at the bus depot.

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Their protest continued and about 50 people remained. Again, the group walked from the bus depot to the Fullerton Police Department. This time, the group stayed in the intersection of Commonwealth Avenue and Highland Avenue. Officers again deployed to the intersection and issued the group and order to disperse. After officers advanced, most of the group walked away. However, Valerie Paniagua – 24 – Resident of Buena Park, refused to disperse and laid in the roadway. She was arrested for failing to disperse after the declaration of an unlawful assembly. She was booked and released on a citation at the Fullerton Police Department Temporary Holding Facility.

Fullerton Police Chief Bob Dunn said: “Many have seen the disturbing video of the officers involved in the death of Mr. Floyd. As Chief, I was as shocked as I know many in our community were. His death was wrong and many of my colleagues have similarly condemned that action. The Fullerton Police Department values our relationship with the community which has been built upon public trust, community responsiveness, and mutual respect. That respect includes the rights of people to exercise their constitutional right to protest. However, when protestors, mostly from outside Fullerton, deliberately disobey the law and commit acts that endanger our community, we have a duty to intercede. The officers of the Fullerton Police Department and our partner agencies professionally performed their duty today. As Chief, that is my expectation and it is what we strive to do each and every day.”

There were no reported injuries during the protest today. Below are the booking photographs of the suspects who were arrested.





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PRIOR BOOKING PHOTO FROM 2016

DONALD GIBSON (6-11-78)

Charged with Vandalism and Possession of Drug Paraphernalia

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VALERIE PANIAGUA (4-3-96)

Charged with Failure to Disperse

