



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 21, 2021

COPA CONCLUDES INVESTIGATION INTO OFFICERS ACTIONS INVOLVING 10-YEAR-OLD

The Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA) recently concluded its investigation into the actions of two members of the Chicago Police Department who searched and handcuffed a 10-year-old boy who they suspected of possessing a firearm. COPA sustained allegations finding that the juvenile was handcuffed for an extended period of time in violation of Department policy.

COPA recommended that Officers Spicuzza and Garduno each be suspended from the Chicago Police Department for a period of thirty (30) days and be required to participate in related training. The Superintendent objected to COPA's recommendation of discipline and, pursuant to the process set forth in Ordinance, a single Police Board member has upheld the Superintendent's objection.

COPA became aware of this incident on June 8, 2018 following its review of media reports and immediately initiated an investigation into the officers' actions. The May 31, 2018 incident began when two officers were dispatched to 1117 S. Kedzie in response to a call of an individual 10-12 years old with a gun. When officers arrived near the location, they observed a 10-year-old boy who matched the description provided by dispatch. The officers attempted to detain the boy and after a brief foot pursuit, handcuffed, searched, and detained him for approximately seventeen minutes resulting in a traumatic and physiological response. No weapon was recovered.

"We are disappointed by the decision overturning COPA's findings and recommendations in this case but remain steadfast in our commitment to accountability of law enforcement officers," said COPA Chief Administrator Sydney Roberts. "While COPA values the member's review and conclusion, it maintains that the officer's prolonged restraint of this child, after he was searched, demonstrated he was not armed, could no longer present any threat and was experiencing emotional and physiological trauma is unacceptable and in violation of CPD policy. The long-standing practice of the Chicago Police Department to keep persons who are no longer a threat and have demonstrably committed no criminal offense restrained must cease. It can no longer be considered an acceptable police practice."

Over the course of its investigation, COPA interviewed all involved parties, both civilian and sworn, as well as additional witnesses. COPA investigators also obtained and reviewed relevant video from a local media outlet, audio tape of the related OEMC radio transmission, the officers' Investigatory Stop Report (ISR) and an OEMC Event Query Report.

COPA's findings and recommendations are reflected in the Summary Report of Investigation (SRI) and posted on COPA's website.

COPA is the City of Chicago's civilian led agency responsible for receiving complaints and conducting administrative investigations into allegations of police misconduct and launched in September of 2017.

MEDIA CONTACT: Ephraim Eaddy - ephraim.eaddy@chicagocopa.org - 312-771-3718