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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rochester police officer cleared following pursuit

ROCHESTER, Minnesota – A review of a Rochester police officer's actions during an early morning pursuit on August 12 finds no criminal liability.

Officer James Perry discharged his weapon at a vehicle during the final moments of the pursuit, which ended on the 3400 block of Kenosha Drive NW. The vehicle, driven by 26-year-old Dawante Atkins, struck Officer Nick Kruger, who was on foot. Officer Perry saw the vehicle hit Officer Kruger and throw him onto the hood. The vehicle also hit two squad cars.

The Rochester Police Department requested the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) to conduct a complete and independent investigation.

Due to a potential conflict of interest, the matter was referred to Mower County Attorney Kristen Nelsen for review. Upon review of the BCA's investigation into the officer's actions, Nelsen indicates she "finds no criminal liability on the part of Rochester Police Department Officer James Perry regarding the discharge of his weapon."

"We are committed to providing the highest level of public safety to the community and are grateful no one was seriously hurt during this incident," says Police Chief Jim Franklin. "We are conducting a thorough internal review and using this opportunity to enhance our critical incident training."

The BCA is continuing to investigate the actions of Atkins, and charges against him are pending. Because the investigation is ongoing, no additional information can be released at this time. Any inquiries should be directed to the BCA.

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