

**\*\* PRESS RELEASE \*\***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**September 9, 2015**

**TO: Media, News Directors, Editors, and Producers**

**Contact: City of Pasco, (509) 545-3485**

**Subject: Franklin County Prosecutor's Office decision related to Feb. 10 shooting**

Today, the Franklin County Prosecutor's Office announced that it was not bringing criminal charges against officers involved in the February 10 shooting of Antonio Zambrano-Montes.

We respect the legal process and reaffirm that the Pasco Police Department was not involved in the independent investigation, nor did the Department or City of Pasco participate in the Prosecutor's decision.

At this time, the Pasco Police Department has yet to complete its own internal investigation of the matter. That process is ongoing and expected to conclude shortly. While operating independently of the Franklin County Prosecutor, internal investigators were waiting for charging decisions before finalizing their inquiry.

This unfortunate incident has caused concern within our community, and the City of Pasco and Pasco Police Department appreciate the efforts of the Department of Justice's Community Relations Service and Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) as well as the Washington State Commission on Hispanic Affairs and other local leaders and residents to achieve a better understanding of the challenges we face together.

Further, we welcome the announcement from Governor Inslee's office directing the Washington State Attorney General to conduct a review of the case, as it will further increase confidence in the process.

We are all committed to building a safer, more inclusive and stronger community.

Over the past year, the Pasco Police Department has worked with its partners and initiated changes to better serve our residents, including:

- Participating with COPS on additional training for officers regarding diverse communities.
- Expanding Crisis Intervention Training to more officers.
- Coordinating regular meetings with local clergy, specifically Hispanic churches, to improve relations and understanding.
- Implementing social media (Facebook and Twitter) sites that help improve communication with the community, and launching Spanish languages versions.
- Expanding recruitment efforts, focusing on individuals who appreciate serving and reflect diverse communities. We encourage bi-lingual applicants.
- In conjunction with the COPS office to help open lines of communications and problem-solving with community members, the Department has started “Coffee with a Cop”.
- Exploring best-practices from police chiefs around the country.
- Training officers to handle large demonstrations and renewing officers’ understanding of protecting the demonstrators’ First Amendment rights.

“The several past months have afforded numerous opportunities for rich dialogue with and among community members over a wide range of ideas and opinions. We have come together as a community and worked to address the issues and questions that have stemmed from this incident,” said City Manager Dave Zabell. “As a City and a Police Department, there is always more to learn, and we are constantly reviewing how to continue to improve service to the public.”

“As a department, we remain committed to providing a safe environment and reducing the fear of crime while affording dignity and respect to every individual,” said Police Chief Robert Metzger. “while the Prosecutor’s decision has been made, we will continue our work with community leaders, residents and local mental health care providers to ensure a safe city that values all our residents.”

The City will continue to update information regarding the officer-involved shooting at [www.pasco-wa.gov/policeshooting](http://www.pasco-wa.gov/policeshooting).