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The Dane County Public Safety Communications Center has been working with and assisting police investigating the terrible, tragic murder of Brittany Sue Zimmerman.

The Public Safety Communications Center receives a high volume of 9-1-1 calls made either accidentally or intentionally in error. 115 of these so-called 9-1-1 hang-up calls were received on April 2nd from landlines and cell phones.

83 of these calls were placed from cell phones. These calls can range from children playing with phones, buttons inadvertently bumped on phones left in coat pockets or purses, or crime victims looking for help.

Public Safety Communications operating practices are based on the requests of local law enforcement agencies and recommended national standards. The Madison Police Department has requested officers not be dispatched to all these wireless 9-1-1 calls mentioned above. The 9-1-1 Center has notified the Madison Police Department on several occasions that it is willing and able to immediately begin dispatching officers to all these types of calls.

Madison police had previously requested the 9-1-1 center not release information regarding the Zimmerman case to protect the integrity of the police department's homicide investigation.

Detectives during the course of their investigation discovered a 9-1-1 call from what was subsequently determined to be placed from Ms. Zimmerman's phone on April 2nd. A 9-1-1 Center review later confirmed this.

Further investigation revealed a dispatcher answered this call, and inquired several times to determine whether an emergency existed on the other end of the phone and received no answer to the inquiries. The dispatcher proceeded to answer another 9-1-1 call that was waiting to be answered.

This call was another 9-1-1 hang-up call. The dispatcher called back the second 9-1-1 call, confirmed the call wasn't an emergency, and proceeded to immediately answer another 9-1-1 call regarding an unwanted person in a residence.

Under current policy, if dispatchers answer a 9-1-1 call and either don't hear a voice on the other end of the call or are unable to determine if there's an emergency, the dispatcher calls that number back. However, at their request, law enforcement officers are only automatically dispatched if the call was received from a landline phone.

Landline calls are precisely located via 9-1-1 technology. The accuracy of determining the origin of cell phone calls may range from within a city block to several miles.

As recently as Wednesday, April 30th, the Madison Police Department reaffirmed with the 9-1-1 Center that police do not want audio of the 9-1-1 call from Zimmerman's phone, content of that call, and time the call was placed released.

All the information included in this statement is consistent with Madison Police Department directives to the 9-1-1 Center about this case in order not to compromise the ongoing investigation into this terrible tragedy.

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