

Officers won't be charged in death of man in custody

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GREEN BAY - Green Bay police officers will not face criminal charges in the death of a 48-year-old man who became unresponsive while in custody at the Brown County Jail.

Jason R. Thomson died Feb. 10 while he was being taken from the jail to a hospital.

Thomson was accused of causing a disturbance at a different Green Bay hospital earlier that morning and was restrained, arrested and brought to the jail to be booked, according to the Wisconsin Department of Justice Division of Criminal Investigation.

The incident started after the Green Bay Metro Fire Department responded to St. John's Shelter Feb. 9 around 11:30

p.m. for a report that Thomson was having a seizure. He was taken to St. Vincent Hospital, where a doctor remembered treating him for seizures in the past, according to the state investigation report.

According to the report:

Thomson was "resting comfortably" and medically cleared to be released but had to use the bathroom. A technician stayed with him while he used a hand urinal. Thomson began yelling at the technician. He followed her into the hallway where he continued screaming and staff could not calm him.

Police were called to the hospital. Interviews and hospital surveillance video showed Thomson resisted police Officer Michael O'Donnell, who brought him to the floor.

He was arrested as he kept kicking on the floor, the report said.



O'Donnell

Officers used a restraint device and transported him to the jail. The state report noted that officers did not use "strikes or compliance holds" and that the restraint device was authorized by the Green Bay Police Department.

Thomson was conscious and talking when he arrived at the jail, based on video evidence cited in the report. The jail nurse examined him and said he should be taken back to the hospital to be cleared again for admittance. She watched Thomson's condition when he was in the squad car and noticed he became unresponsive.

Officers took him out of the car and put him on the floor of the sally port, a garage-like area of the jail. Life-saving

measures were performed until he reached the hospital, according to DCI. He was pronounced dead at Aurora Hospital.

Thomson's sister was quoted in the state report as saying Thomson had epilepsy and "cracked his skull" many times in the past.

The doctor who conducted the autopsy said it did not identify a cause of death but noted several "medical deficiencies and evidence of abrasions and contusions." The toxicology report was pending.

The Brown County District Attorney decided not to file charges against O'Donnell or the other officers involved, according to the state Division of Criminal Investigation.

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