



September 3, 2015

First I would like to extend out my personal condolences to the entire Chapman family.

I have just been made aware of the decision reached by the grand jury in the shooting death of 18 year-old William Chapman on April 22, 2015 in the Wal-Mart parking lot at 1098 Frederick Blvd. Officer Stephen Rankin has been indicted for First Degree Murder and Use of a Firearm in the Commission of a Felony. I am confident that the Grand Jury impartially weighed all the evidence presented before rendering their final decision.

The Virginia State Police investigated the incident, and was provided any and all resources to conduct a fair and impartial investigation. All information was submitted to the Commonwealth's Attorney and presented to the grand jury. I believe in our criminal justice system and the laws under which it operates. Our duty, as a law enforcement agency and as a community, is to allow the criminal justice system to take its course, but I understand that this tragedy does not end today. A family has lost a loved one, an officer and his family's lives have been turned upside down, and our community is hurting. We are sure to face additional challenges in the coming days, weeks and months ahead.

It is important that we, as a police department, continue to work toward our vision of "police and citizens together building a safer community." I assure you that we believe in our vision and will continue to work towards its achievement. My intent is to work closely with everyone in our city to make Portsmouth a better community.

I want to thank the Virginia State Police for answering our call for assistance to ensure that an independent and unbiased investigation was conducted. With the conclusion of the State Police criminal investigation, our Professional Standards Unit will conduct an internal comprehensive and administrative investigation to examine this incident with respect to Department policy and procedure. While this investigation is in progress and under further review, Officer Stephen Rankin's employment is being terminated in accordance with the Law Enforcement Officers' Procedural Guarantees.

Sincerely yours,

Dennis A. Mook
Interim Police Chief