

State police investigate Gallup police use-of-force incident

Written by Staff Reports
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On June 28, the New Mexico State Police Investigations Bureau was contacted to investigate a use-of-force incident involving an intoxicated male and the Gallup Police Department.

State Police agents learned on June 28 around 8:30 pm, GPD officers were dispatched to the J. C. Penney to remove an intoxicated male. The male was later identified as Rodney Lynch, 41, of Gallup. Lynch was combative with the officers on scene. He was taken into custody and transported to Na’Nizhoozhi Center, Inc.

When they arrived at NCI, Lynch struck one of the officers and again became combative. As the officers attempted to gain control of Lynch, a sergeant and an additional officer, both of GPD, arrived.

The sergeant noticed that Lynch appeared unconscious.

The officers started first aid on Lynch and called for EMS, who transported Lynch to an area hospital. Lynch was then transported to an Albuquerque hospital, where he later died and was pronounced by the Office of the Medical Investigator.

This case is still under investigation by the New Mexico State Police Investigations Bureau. The cause and manner of Lynch’s death is under investigation by the OMI.

The names of the officers involved will not be released by State Police. At the conclusion of their investigation, it will be sent to the appropriate district attorney for review.

Capt. Erin Toadlena-Pablo, public information officer for GPD, said July 9 the officers involved in the incident have been placed on administrative leave with pay as the investigation continues.

“The department is aware of the NMSP [statement] and have no further information about the

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NMSP investigation, and therefore cannot comment,” Toadlena-Pablo said.