Prosecutors dropping Taylor case

Tony Robleski  Austin American-Statesman  USA TODAY NETWORK

Travis County prosecutors will not move forward with the case against Austin police officer Christopher Taylor in the death of Michael Ramos in a shooting that fueled the city’s social justice protests of 2020. The decision comes after prosecutors this week sought additional charges against Taylor for crimes that included aggravated assault, deadly conduct and manslaughter – as well as a murder charge – and a grand jury declined to issue any indictments. Prosecutors could have gone to trial on an existing murder charge against Taylor in Ramos’ death but are declining to do so. A jury deadlocked last year in a murder case against Taylor, and prosecutors initially said they would take it to trial again. Travis County District Attorney José Garza cited the grand jury’s assessment of the case in his decision to not move forward. “We are surprised and disappointed at this result, but we also respect the grand jury’s decision and time,” he said. “Our hearts continue to break for the Ramos family, who we know are still grieving.”

Lisa Fazenbaker, right, hugs Haleigh Bond after Travis County Attorney Delia Garza announced Wednesday that charges have been dropped against people arrested during the April 29 pro-Palestinian protest at the University of Texas. PHOTO BY JAY JANNER/AMERICAN-STATESMAN

Criminal trespassing counts dismissed for 79

Lily Kepner  Austin American-Statesman  USA TODAY NETWORK

All criminal trespassing charges against people arrested during the April 29 pro-Palestinian protest at the University of Texas will be dismissed, Travis County Attorney Delia Garza announced Wednesday. Charges for obstruction and interfering are still pending.

“Freedom of speech – the foundation of it was so that government doesn’t stop speech that it doesn’t agree with,” said Travis County Attorney Delia Garza at Wednesday’s news conference.

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