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For Immediate Release - UPDATE

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Beverly Hills Police Launch Internal Review of Policies/Procedures

Beverly Hills, CA – The Beverly Hills Police Department has launched an internal review as a result of the arrest of Charles Belk last Friday during a bank robbery investigation.

Mr. Belk was arrested after being positively identified by an eye-witness to the robbery. However, Beverly Hills detectives, after reviewing bank surveillance video, were later able to determine that Mr. Belk was not involved in the robbery and he was released.

Following his arrest, Mr. Belk has made allegations that the police department did not provide him with telephone calls or timely access to his attorney, did not properly advise him of his Miranda rights, and most of all, could have released him much sooner had the police viewed the video evidence earlier in his detention.

“We are taking these allegations very seriously,” said Beverly Hills Police Chief David Snowden. “We (BHPD) take pride in the professionalism of our department and the high quality service that we provide to those who live, work and visit our community.”

Chief Snowden said that he sincerely regrets how Mr. Beck’s detention was handled. “The arrest of Mr. Belk was lawful and proper based on the information known to the officers in the field at the time of the arrest,” he said. “However, we should have done a better job once Mr. Belk was taken into custody.”

Chief Snowden has assigned the case to his Professional Standards Unit to look into the allegations related to Mr. Belk’s arrest and to review policies, procedures and protocols related to the processing of arrestees including arrestee access to phone calls and legal representation. Special emphasis is being given to the timely investigative review of video or other electronic evidence which may tend to exonerate a person in custody.

Although the internal review is still underway, Chief Snowden said that breakdowns in our handling of this matter already have been identified and will be addressed. The City of Beverly Hills is committed to ensuring that an arrestee is given prompt access to telephone calls and legal representation. Chief Snowden also stated that policies and training issues will be addressed to prevent the recurrence of an incident similar to Mr. Belk's. "Ultimately, how we interact with the public we serve is what matters the most."

Also arrested on Friday was Brianna Clemons Kloutse, believed to be the "Purse Packing Bandit" responsible for nine recent bank robberies in and around the Los Angeles, West Hollywood and Beverly Hills area.

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