

Family of man killed by Vacaville cops sues

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(03-26) 14:21 PDT VACAVILLE -- The family of man shot and killed by Vacaville police last year filed a federal civil rights lawsuit Wednesday against the city, saying he suffered from mental illness and posed no threat.

Kendall Walker, 24, of Fairfield was shot when he got out of his car and charged at officers with a hammer and knife at the end of a chase on July 18, 2013, police have said.

But in a lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court in Sacramento, Walker's parents, Leslie Molera and William Walker, said their son "had no weapon in his hands and posed no significant or immediate threat of death or serious bodily harm" to the officers who shot him.

Walker "had not made any movement or gesture under the circumstances that a reasonable officer would perceive as posing an immediate threat to justify the use of deadly force," said the suit, which seeks unspecified damages and names the city, then-Police Chief Richard Word and two officers as defendants.

The city has not responded to the suit in court.

The incident began when two residents reported someone making threats in a south Vacaville neighborhood, police have said. Officers found Walker and tried to ask him some questions, but he refused to answer them and drove away in a Geo Metro, police said.

Officers chased him to Ulatis Drive, where he drove around spike strips designed to puncture tires and then drove his car toward an officer, who jumped out of the way, authorities said.

Other officers then twice used their cars to spin his car to a stop. Police said Walker emerged from the car with a hammer and a knife and was shot.

The family's attorney, Michael Haddad, said officers had been in contact with Walker earlier in the day and knew that he was mentally ill or emotionally disturbed.

Walker hadn't threatened anyone but instead had been acting erratically, repeatedly knocking on the door of his longtime friend, whose sister informed their mother, a police dispatcher, Haddad said.

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