

**December 17, 2024**

**Paul Henderson  
Executive Director  
Department of Police Accountability  
1 South Van Ness, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94103**

**RE: Request for Investigation of Multiple San Francisco Police  
Department Officers**

Dear Executive Director Henderson,

We have learned that multiple officers violated San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) policies by using unnecessary force against Public Defender client Amelia Jones, failing to de-escalate or intervene in that wrongful use of force, and writing dishonest accounts of the arrest. We write to initiate a formal administrative complaint and request a full investigation against the following officers:

Jason Robards, star 9  
Jasmine Williams, star 2403<sup>1</sup>  
Gary Kunaboot, star 1273  
Lance Tom, star 621  
Sgt. Thomas Ly, star 793

**Amelia Jones' Arrest<sup>2</sup>**

At quarter to 8:00 in the morning on July 24, 2024, more than 50 protestors blocked passage to the Israeli consulate on Montgomery Street. More than a dozen SFPD officers were dispatched with helmets, batons, and megaphones. The officers pursued the protestors west on Sacramento Street.

SFPD officers lined up shoulder to shoulder covering the width of Sacramento Street.<sup>3</sup> Lt. Jesse Cruz (star 2326) announced on a megaphone that the protest was

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<sup>1</sup> Ofc. Williams is at times referred to as “Officer Barranti” and has “Barranti” on her uniform. On rosters before September 2023 Ofc. Jasmine Williams’ last name was Barranti. For clarity, she is referred to by the name she used in her report, “Ofc. Williams.”

<sup>2</sup> All details are from SFPD Incident Report number 240461343, authored by Ofc. Gary Kunaboot and individual officer Incident Report Statements unless noted otherwise.

<sup>3</sup> Williams BWC at 1:51.

an unpermitted march and ordered people to leave the street and return to the sidewalk or they would be arrested.<sup>4</sup>

The officers advanced towards Kearny Street at a run.<sup>5</sup> Ofc. Williams was behind most of the officers and passed so close to Jones, who was standing by her bike watching the officers charge past her, that she knocked Jones' bike down.<sup>6</sup> Sgt. Moore was the last one up the block and asked Jones "did you fall? Are you OK? Did you fall?"<sup>7</sup> Jones quietly replied "No."<sup>8</sup>

Another woman came from behind the officers on a bicycle and picked up a helmet bag that one of the officers had dropped, then rode past Jones toward the officers, stopping at the red light just in front of them.

At Kearny Street, Ofc. Ovares asked the person on the bike, "is this one of our bags?"<sup>9</sup> Two additional officers approached her, then two more, and Ofc. Tom grabbed the person's backpack and ripped her to the ground.<sup>10</sup> Ofc. Kunaboot wrote that the bicyclist "attempted to flee the scene," but the video does not reflect this. Eight officers surrounded her on the ground when Jones, still halfway down the block, yelled out "No, stop."<sup>11</sup> Two older women standing near the officers said, "don't hurt her" and "you're hurting her" before chanting in unison "Don't Hurt Her."<sup>12</sup>

While the officers surrounded the downed bicyclist, Jones approached,<sup>13</sup> pushing her bike, and yelled "What the fuck is wrong with you? We're just trying to go to work. Mother fuckers!"<sup>14</sup> Ofc. Kunaboot yelled at her to "get back" as Ofc. Williams approached her with her baton in both hands, parallel to the ground.<sup>15</sup> Jones took several steps backward and repeatedly said, "What the fuck?", turned toward the sidewalk, and yelled "stop hurting them" while Ofc. Williams shoved her baton into Jones' back.<sup>16</sup>

Jones, on the sidewalk holding her bike, told officers, "I'm on my way to work, I'm on the phone with my coworkers, and I'm just trying to help someone"<sup>17</sup> as Ofc.

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<sup>4</sup> Williams BWC at 4:10.

<sup>5</sup> Williams BWC at 4:57.

<sup>6</sup> Williams BWC at 5:27 at Moore BWC at 5:29.

<sup>7</sup> Moore BWC at 5:33.

<sup>8</sup> Moore BWC at 5:35.

<sup>9</sup> Robards BWC at 5:48 and Ovares BWC at 5:58.

<sup>10</sup> Robards BWC at 5:56.

<sup>11</sup> Robards BWC at 6:09.

<sup>12</sup> Robards BWC at 6:18.

<sup>13</sup> Jones was never closer than 30 or 40 feet to the other woman.

<sup>14</sup> Kunaboot BWC at 6:28.

<sup>15</sup> Kunaboot BWC at 6:37.

<sup>16</sup> Kunaboot BWC at 6:43 and Williams BWC at 6:43.

<sup>17</sup> Williams BWC at 6:55.

Williams repeatedly shoved her with the baton. Ofc. Williams told her “we’re trying to clear the street for you, then,”<sup>18</sup> and Jones replied “you guys are freaking people out” as Ofc. Williams pressed her baton into Jones’ arm.<sup>19</sup>

Ofcs. Williams and Robards both wrote that Jones “immediately became hysterical” and denied Jones passage on the sidewalk,<sup>20</sup> despite one of the chanting woman from earlier being allowed free passage on the other side of them, less than an arm’s reach from Jones.<sup>21</sup> Jones told the officers, “I’m trying to get to my office building, it’s right there,” pointing to the corner on the opposite side of Sacramento Street from where the woman on the bike was being detained.<sup>22</sup> Ofc. Robards told Jones “Go down Spring,<sup>23</sup> go around,” pointing back the way Jones had come.<sup>24</sup> The older woman, who had been chanting earlier, was allowed to return to the corner of Kearny Street.<sup>25</sup>

Jones began crying, said “oh my god, what is happening” and moved as close as possible to the building.<sup>26</sup> Ofc. Williams hemmed Jones in between the building, her baton, and sidewalk construction.<sup>27</sup> She yelled out while crying, “my office building is right here.”<sup>28</sup> Jones yelled out for help and jumped to try and see over the officers.<sup>29</sup> She raised her arm and Ofc. Williams shoved her baton into Jones’ ribs<sup>30</sup> then shoved her with her right hand in the abdomen.<sup>31</sup> Ofc. Williams ordered Jones to “get out of my face” as she pushed Jones in the chest, then shoulder.<sup>32</sup> As Jones screamed for help, the older woman walked back toward her unimpeded and reached in her pocket, pulling out a cell phone.<sup>33</sup> Officers allowed the older woman to approach to within arm’s reach of Ofc. Robards<sup>34</sup> as another woman with luggage passed by with no issue.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> At the time, protestors were not at the intersection of Kearny and Sacramento Streets, and pedestrians were moving freely.

<sup>19</sup> Williams BWC at 7:04.

<sup>20</sup> The sidewalk was where Lt. Cruz told protestors to move three minutes prior.

<sup>21</sup> Robards BWC at 6:47

<sup>22</sup> Williams BWC at 7:05.

<sup>23</sup> If Jones had followed this suggested route she would have run into the group of protestors as they had moved south down Kearny – several officers’ heads are focused that direction and later people march back from that direction.

<sup>24</sup> Robard BWC at 6:58.

<sup>25</sup> Kunaboot BWC at 7:02.

<sup>26</sup> Robards BWC at 6:58.

<sup>27</sup> Robards BWC at 7:01.

<sup>28</sup> Robards BWC at 7:03.

<sup>29</sup> Robards BWC at 7:06.

<sup>30</sup> Williams BWC at 7:20.

<sup>31</sup> Williams BWC at 7:22.

<sup>32</sup> Williams BWC at 7:23.

<sup>33</sup> Kunaboot BWC at 7:21.

<sup>34</sup> Kunaboot BWC at 7:27.

<sup>35</sup> Ovares BWC at 7:25.

Jones tried to move to the side of Ofc. Williams, and Ofc. Williams mirrored her movement, remaining directly in front of and physically in contact with her.<sup>36</sup> Jones first moved left, then back right, hand raised with Ofc. Williams following and repeatedly shoving Jones, pressing against her body.<sup>37</sup> Jones' hand came down and contacted Ofc. Williams' helmet.<sup>38</sup> Ofc. Williams and Robards wrote that Jones grabbed and yanked Ofc. Williams' riot helmet in a sharp, aggressive manner causing her neck to bend forward.

Ofc. Williams wrote that she pushed Jones back and Jones grabbed her riot baton.<sup>39</sup> Officers Robards and Williams attempted to grab Jones, then Ofc. Williams performed a leg tackle, dropping Jones to the ground.<sup>40</sup> Jones screamed for help, but her legs were pinned by Ofcs. Williams and Robards as she was placed in handcuffs.<sup>41</sup>

### **Officers Violated Multiple SFPD Policies**

#### *1. SFPD officers must use minimal force and maximum de-escalation*

SFPD is committed to operating with a “minimal reliance on the use of force” by using crisis intervention and de-escalation tactics.<sup>42</sup> “Active resistance” involves physically evasive movements and not merely failure to respond to verbal commands.<sup>43</sup>

Officers are expected “to exercise sound judgment and critical decision making when using force options.”<sup>44</sup> Rapport building and communication with non-compliant people can defuse conflict and result in voluntary compliance without force.<sup>45</sup> When feasible, officers must attempt to de-escalate situations and consider “the possible reasons why a subject may be noncompliant.”<sup>46</sup> Engaging in de-escalation techniques is a core element of an officer's duty.<sup>47</sup>

#### *A. Ofc. Tom violated DGO 5.01 by failing to de-escalate and using sudden excessive force*

Ofc. Tom used excessive force in ripping the other bicyclist off her bike. The person was stopped at a red light, surrounded by officers, and sitting still. She was not

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<sup>36</sup> Robards BWC at 7:11.

<sup>37</sup> Robards BWC at 7:12.

<sup>38</sup> Robards BWC at 7:16.

<sup>39</sup> While Williams drops her baton, it is Sgt. Moore who picks it up during the arrest.

<sup>40</sup> Kunaboot BWC at 7:29.

<sup>41</sup> Moore BWC at 7:30.

<sup>42</sup> SFPD DGO 5.01.

<sup>43</sup> SFPD DGO 5.01.05(C).

<sup>44</sup> SFPD DGO 5.01.01.

<sup>45</sup> SFPD DGO 5.01.02(B).

<sup>46</sup> SFPD DGO 5.01.02(C).

<sup>47</sup> SFPD DGO 5.01.02(C), explicitly stating that an officer “will be found to have fulfilled” their duty if they act to de-escalate an incident.

attempting to flee and had approached them willingly. Ofc. Ovares said twice “let go of the bag” before screaming “let go of the bag it’s not yours!” The woman was calmly responding, if not complying.

No one told her to get off the bike, Ofc. Tom took it upon himself to yank her off from behind, trapping her leg under the bike until another officer pulled it away from her. Her backpack is subsequently tossed down the street.<sup>48</sup> There was no reason for Ofc. Tom to violently pull her to the ground, other than reflecting the anger coming from Ofc. Ovares for her apparent attempt to take police property that had been dropped on the street.

*B. Ofcs. Tom, Williams, Kunaboot, and Robards violated DGO 5.01 by using excessive force and failing to de-escalate*

Ofc. Williams repeatedly pushed Jones with her baton to prevent her from walking down a street that multiple other people were allowed to walk down without being accosted or stopped, including people who were actively protesting and chanting against the police use of force on the downed bicyclist. Ofc. Williams cornered Jones and would not let her create distance by repeatedly inserting herself into Jones’ space while telling Jones to “get out of my face.” After Williams repeatedly shoved Jones, inserting herself into Jones’ space and pressing against her, Jones’ arm came down and made incidental contact with Williams’ helmet. Jones was not even looking at Ofc. Williams at the time and the accidental contact did not warrant the reaction and extreme use of force that Ofcs. Williams, and then Kunaboot and Robards, unleashed.

None of the officers tried to calm Jones or defuse her visible distress. The first point of contact was Williams knocking Jones’ bike over (likely by accident) followed by Williams shoving Jones with her baton. No time was given to de-escalation. The use of force on a distraught pedestrian near a protest violated DGO 5.01.

*2. Ofcs. Williams, Kunaboot, and Sgt. Ly violated DGO 2.01 by omitting the extent of Williams’ use of force and embellishing Jones’ resistance*

“Honesty, credibility, even temperament, and sound judgment are essential” duties for an SFPD officer.<sup>49</sup> Officers are prohibited from knowingly submitting “false, inaccurate, [or] materially incomplete” records and from falsifying official reports or records.<sup>50</sup>

Ofc. Williams did not document that she repeatedly shoved Jones in the arm, back, abdomen, and chest with her baton. Failure to document her initial use of force influences the starting point of a criminal action and can lead, as it did in this case,

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<sup>48</sup> Moore BWC at 7:43.

<sup>49</sup> SFPD DGO 2.01.03(1).

<sup>50</sup> SFPD DGO 2.01.03(9).

to charges being brought that lack merit. Ofc. Williams also omitted that she repeatedly shoved Jones with an open hand on her chest, abdomen, and shoulder before Jones' arm contacted her helmet.

Ofc. Kunaboot also omitted any mention of Ofc. Williams' use of force prior to Jones' incidental contact with Ofc. Williams' helmet. Both officers described that contact as a "violent ripping" when the video shows Ofc. Williams leaned into Jones' space, effectively ensuring that Jones' arm would contact the helmet when Jones lowered it.

Similarly, Sgt. Ly drafted a misleading chronological of investigation, writing that Ofc. Williams told Jones to back up and omitting that she repeatedly shoved Jones. Sgt. Ly wrote that Jones repeatedly disobeyed orders to backup, but omitted the detail that Jones turned around when she first encountered Ofc. Williams, which gave the officer the opportunity to shove her in the back. Sgt. Ly also repeats that Jones "grabbed" Ofc. Williams' helmet, when the video does not reflect this.

Were it not for the BWC, there would be no account of the excessive force used against Jones because the incident reports are materially incomplete, in violation of DGO 2.01.

*3. Ofcs. Williams and Robards violated DGO 5.17 by targeting Jones and allowing other people free passage on the sidewalk*

SFPD policy declares that the guiding principle of the department is its "commitment to treating all people with dignity, fairness and respect."<sup>51</sup> Officers must "carry out their duties in a manner free from bias and *eliminate any perception* of policing that appears biased."<sup>52</sup> Policing is biased when an officer inappropriately considers race, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, socio-economic status, age, or affiliation with any non-criminal group.

Officers Williams and Robards both demonstrated their bias against Jones in describing her as "hysterical," a historically gendered term.<sup>53</sup> The officers took her fear as a threat and allowed multiple other people free passage along both sidewalks, in both directions – people of different age, race, and affiliation with the protestors. Jones was the only person Ofcs. Williams and Robards prevented from moving up Sacramento Street to Kearny Street. Their action had, at minimum, a perception of bias, and that alone is a violation of DGO 5.17.

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<sup>51</sup> SFPD DGO 5.17.

<sup>52</sup> SFPD DGO 5.17 (emphasis added).

<sup>53</sup> See generally <https://www.byarcadia.org/post/hysteria-as-a-misogynistic-construct>, [https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/j.ctv18dvt2d.10.pdf?ab\\_segments=0%2Fbasic\\_search\\_gsv2%2Fcontrol&refreqid=fastly-default%3Aa22f2a7086ce9acf78c90492415a60e0](https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/j.ctv18dvt2d.10.pdf?ab_segments=0%2Fbasic_search_gsv2%2Fcontrol&refreqid=fastly-default%3Aa22f2a7086ce9acf78c90492415a60e0;); <https://ir.library.louisville.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1360&context=honors>; <https://medium.com/@peacelovetrig/on-the-sexist-etymology-of-hysteria-and-what-academia-did-about-it-ef98815ddb6c>.

*4. Ofc. Kunaboot and Robards violated DGO 5.01 by failing to intervene while Ofc. Williams used unnecessary force*

If the opportunity exists, SFPD officers have a duty to intervene and prevent another officer from engaging in excessive use of force.<sup>54</sup>

Ofc. Williams was the aggressor in this interaction, repeatedly shoving Jones with her baton and hands, but Ofcs. Kunaboot and Robards had the ability to stop her from advancing on and using force upon Jones. They both failed to do so, in violation of DGO 5.01.

### **CONCLUSION**

Officers violated multiple SFPD policies during their reaction to a concerned bystander watching a police over-reaction with eight officers surrounding a downed bicyclist. They should be fully investigated, and the DPA should recommend appropriate discipline.

Respectfully,

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Integrity Unit  
Brian Cox & Zac Dillon  
Office of the Public Defender

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<sup>54</sup> SFPD DGO 5.01.02(F).