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**NINA MOINI:** Our top story this afternoon, MPR News has learned that the Minneapolis Police Officer who fatally shot Amir Locke during a no-knock raid in 2022 is responsible for leading the police department's use of force training.

The head of the police department says he understands why the choice of Sergeant Mark Hanneman to do this type of training will concern some, but says Hanneman is the right person for the job. However, the decision to put Hanneman in that position has upset members of Locke's family and others who say it hurts MPD's efforts to reform police culture and repair community relations. Cari Spencer has been reporting on this and joins me now in the studio to tell us more about it. Thanks for being here, Cari.

**CARI SPENCER:** Yeah. Thanks for having me.

**NINA MOINI:** First, you spoke to Amir Locke's mother, Karen Wells, for the story. What reaction did she have when she first heard that the officer who killed her son is now in this type of leadership position?

**CARI SPENCER:** Yeah. She was-- she was really outraged and really hurt. She said it reopens wounds that have never closed. She says Hanneman shouldn't have a job, let alone be leading others in the department, and that this shows they aren't changing culture, and that they don't care. Here's what she told me.

**KAREN WELLS:** Anybody that stands behind Mark Hanneman becoming a trainer for other officers, they are going to continue to have the bloodshed of my baby boy, Amir Locke, on their watch-- on their hands, actually. On their hands.

**CARI SPENCER:** Wells and Amir Locke's father have sued the city and Hanneman over their son's death, and that is still playing out in federal court.

**NINA MOINI:** And it's been more than three years since Amir Locke was killed during that raid, Cari. Take us back to the incident for those who may not have all the details. What happened?

**CARI SPENCER:** Yeah. So in February of 2022, Hanneman was part of a SWAT team conducting a no-knock raid on an apartment in Downtown Minneapolis. They burst in, shouting and armed, to Locke, who was asleep under a blanket on a couch. After getting woken up to six officers, Locke reached for and held his gun. Then Hanneman fatally shot him three times. This all happened within the course of about nine seconds.

And you'll remember that they weren't searching for Locke, he was not a suspect in the homicide investigation. About two months later, the Attorney General and Hennepin County Attorney at the time, said that there was insufficient admissible evidence to file criminal charges. The city banned no-knock warrants in most situations as well at that time.

Then in September of that year-- so about seven months after the shooting, Hanneman was promoted from an officer to a sergeant. And at that time, he was moved to become a trainer.

**NINA MOINI:** Cari, what did Chief Brian O'Hara tell you about Hanneman? Specifically, why does he think that he's the right person to lead use of force training? As we mentioned earlier, the city's police chief is defending his position, Hanneman's position, as a use of force trainer. What did the chief have to say?

**CARI SPENCER:** Well, O'Hara says he understands concerns about this role, but he ultimately decided to keep him in the position because he thinks Hanneman is the right person for getting other officers to buy into why change is necessary.

**BRIAN O'HARA:** I know this is difficult, and I know a lot of people aren't going to be happy with it, but I think, at this point, having him there, based on all of the information that I have been provided, is the best decision that I can make to continuing to advance the reform.

**CARI SPENCER:** And Nina, O'Hara also told me that other MPD leadership officers and this independent monitor group that's overseeing court-ordered reforms have all said that Hanneman is a really good trainer. That group did confirm with me that they think he is a good trainer.

**NINA MOINI:** OK. As you reported in your story, Cari, the shooting occurred nearly two years after the police killing of George Floyd. It appears that while the city was trying to rebuild trust with communities of color, MPD promoted an officer who killed another Black man. What are city and state leaders saying about this?

**CARI SPENCER:** So I checked in with some Minneapolis City Council members about this, including Council President Elliott Payne. He was troubled by it. And he characterized Hanneman leading use of force training as, quote, "poor judgment." He said even the symbolism of this assignment should have made it a clear wrong choice, and that it raises the question of whether or not MPD is taking trust-building seriously.

**ELLIOTT PAYNE:** Arriving at some technocratic decision that there was no policy violation, and therefore, everything is OK would make me question the judgment of somebody around what the work is ahead for reforming police.

**CARI SPENCER:** I also got a response from Rebecca Lucero, that's the Commissioner of the state's Human Rights Department, and that is the body that investigated MPD and found a pattern in practice of racially discriminatory policing and excessive force without accountability. MDHR reached a settlement agreement with the city, and part of that is why there are these new use of force trainings, which Hanneman is at the front of.

And she said in a statement, quote, "For transformational change to take root, city leaders must understand the significance and impact of this and many decisions." The commissioner had raised concerns about this with the monitoring group who relayed that to the chief, but of course, Hanneman is in that position now as the department trains on a new set of policies.

**NINA MOINI:** Cari, thank you for your reporting.