

NEWS

Sister on brother who died after being restrained in jail: 'You have to know that something is not right'

Sarah Lehr Lansing State Journal

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LANSING — The sister of a man who died after he was restrained in the Lansing jail says her family has been suffering for six months while trying to piece together information.

Heather Hulon filed a federal wrongful death lawsuit Monday against the city over her brother's death. She made her latest remarks Wednesday night over a Facebook Live talk show hosted by Michael Lynn, Jr., a Lansing firefighter who's suing the city for racial discrimination, and Lynn's wife, Erica.

An Ingham County medical examiner ruled Anthony Hulon's cause of death as positional asphyxia and his manner of death as homicide, a death certificate shows.

'I can't breathe': Wrongful death lawsuit filed against Lansing Police Department officers

The 54-year-old died April 11 after four officers handcuffed him behind his back and pinned him to the ground while attempting to put a waist restraint on him, according to a lawsuit and a video of the incident released by his family's attorneys. In the video, Anthony, who was arrested April 10 for misdemeanor domestic violence, growls, screams, struggles against the officers and says repeatedly "I can't breathe" while officers continue to restrain him.

He also says "I'm passing out" and an officer tells him "take a deep breath."

It's clear to Heather Hulon from the video that Anthony was in distress and she said it should have been clear to the officers too.

"When someone starts making that awful death rattle noise, you have to know that something is not right," she said.

Before the incident at the jail, Hulon had been treated at Sparrow Hospital, where he was found to have methamphetamine and ecstasy in his system.

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"I think he couldn't lift his head up," Heather Hulon said of her brother's actions in the video. She said Anthony's medical records indicate he was given sedatives at the hospital.

Through tears, Heather Hulon described her brother as a "hilarious" man who'd give his last dollar to help someone else.

"He's a fun guy," she said Wednesday. "He's a cool cat. ... I always say he taught me to be cool."

She added, "He had his own issues but he kept that to himself most of the time."

Published in April: Lansing man arrested on suspicion of domestic violence dies in city's detention center

Soon after her father told her over the phone of Anthony's death, Heather said police visited her home in Arizona.

"I just hit the floor," she said. "My husband had to talk to them for me."

Anthony lived in Michigan, Heather Hulon said, and the family had to find the means to fly his body out west.

From 2017: Mother seeks change after son's death in Lansing police custody

"We are not rich," she said, adding that the family could not have a proper funeral because of the pandemic.

A criminal investigation by the Michigan Attorney General's office is ongoing but the four officers, Sgt. Edgar Guerra, Detention Officer Gary Worden, Detention Officer Charles Wright and Officer Trevor Allman, have returned to work. They, along with Lansing Police Chief Daryl Green, are named as defendants in the wrongful death lawsuit.

From 2017: Settlement reached in lawsuit over man's death in Lansing police custody

Green said the officers returned to unrestricted duty after initially being placed on paid administrative leave pending what Green described as a preliminary internal investigation.

"This was obviously a tragedy in April and is still a tragedy," Green said earlier this week, adding that he was not aware that a coroner ruled the death a homicide until he read about it in the State Journal.

Heather Hulon said she struggled to get records and information from the Lansing Police Department. And after hiring lawyers, the family was advised to refrain from speaking publicly until after the lawsuit was filed.

"It's been tough," Heather Hulon said. "It's been really tough. We've been sitting here quiet for six months."

Contact reporter Sarah Lehr at slehr@lsj.com. Follow her on Twitter @SarahGLEhr.