

**BEFORE A MEMBER OF THE POLICE BOARD  
OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO**

<b>IN THE MATTER OF THE</b>	)	
<b>RECOMMENDATION FOR DISCIPLINE OF</b>	)	<b>No. 23 RR 17</b>
<b>POLICE OFFICER ALBERTO COVARRUBIAS,</b>	)	
<b>STAR No. 18769, DEPARTMENT OF POLICE,</b>	)	<b>(CR No. 2021-3940)</b>
<b>CITY OF CHICAGO.</b>	)	

**REQUEST FOR REVIEW**

On December 20, 2023, the Executive Director of the Police Board of the City of Chicago received from the Chief Administrator of the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA) a request for review of the Chief Administrator’s recommendation for discipline of Police Officer Alberto Covarrubias, Star No. 18769, arising out of the investigation of Complaint Register No. 2021-3940 (“Request for Review”).

The investigation stems from an incident on October 4, 2021, in the 6<sup>th</sup> police district. According to the summary report of the investigation, Michael Craig and his neighbor, both of 7758 South Carpenter Street, called 911 to report a domestic incident involving an assault with a knife. Mr. Craig’s neighbor stated that Mr. Craig’s son had knocked on her door and related that his mother had a knife. Mr. Craig told the 911 call taker that his wife had a knife to his throat. Officer Alberto Covarrubias and a sergeant responded to the residence, where they encountered Mr. Craig’s 7-year-old son outside the entrance to the building. The boy stated his mother had a knife and his father told him to call 911. The officers entered the building and announced their office. As they ascended the stairway, Mr. Craig could be heard saying, “She’s got a butcher knife to my neck.” Subsequently, screams were heard as they continued up the stairs to the second-floor apartment. Officer Covarrubias drew his firearm and entered the open apartment door, at which point he immediately yelled, “Oh shit, get down! Stop, stop!” Simultaneously,

No. 23 RR 17  
Police Officer Alberto Covarrubias  
Request for Review and Opinion

Officer Covarrubias fired his weapon twice at Mr. Craig, fatally striking him. The officer later told investigators he observed Mr. Craig with a knife and believed Mr. Craig was stabbing Ms. Willis. Ms. Willis sustained no injuries during the incident, but an autopsy found that Mr. Craig had multiple incise wounds to his arms, head, and back from a cutting instrument, as well as a gunshot wound to the abdomen and another to the chest that struck his heart. Following the conclusion of COPA's investigation, the Chief Administrator issued a recommendation for discipline of Officer Covarrubias. The Superintendent of Police did not agree with the Chief Administrator's recommendation and proposed less discipline for Officer Covarrubias.

The Chief Administrator recommended that the following allegations against Officer Covarrubias be *Sustained*:

On or about October 4, 2021, at approximately 7:26 a.m., at or near 7758 South Carpenter Street in Chicago, Officer Covarrubias:

1. Discharged his firearm at or in the direction of Michael Craig in violation of Chicago Police Department General Order G03-02; and
2. Failed to immediately render medical aid to Michael Craig in violation of Chicago Police Department General Order G03-02, Section V.

The Chief Administrator recommended that Officer Covarrubias be discharged from the Chicago Police Department.

The Superintendent disagreed with the Chief Administrator's recommendation for discipline of Officer Covarrubias. The Superintendent stated that he does not concur with the allegation that Officer Covarrubias discharged his firearm at or in the direction of Michael Craig in violation of General Order G03-02. The Superintendent agreed with the sustained finding that Officer Covarrubias failed to immediately render medical aid to Michael Craig in violation of General Order G03-02, Section V, and also stated that Officer Covarrubias failed to use de-

escalation techniques. The Superintendent proposed that Officer Covarrubias be suspended for a period of ninety (90) days.

According to the Certificate submitted by the Chief Administrator: (1) the Chief Administrator issued the recommendation for discipline on March 30, 2023; (2) the Chief Administrator received the Superintendent's written response on June 30, 2023; (3) the Chief Administrator's designees met with the Superintendent's designees and concluded their discussion of this matter on December 20, 2023; and (4) the Request for Review was sent via email to the Executive Director of the Police Board on December 20, 2023.

The Executive Director of the Police Board prepared and forwarded the Request for Review file to Aja Carr-Favors, the member of the Police Board who was selected on a random basis, pursuant to Article VI of the Police Board's Rules of Procedure ("Reviewing Member"). The Reviewing Member reviewed the Request for Review pursuant to Section 2-78-130(a)(iii) of the Municipal Code of Chicago and Article VI of the Police Board's Rules of Procedure. Following her initial review of this matter on December 22, 2023, the Reviewing Member requested, received, and reviewed the body-worn-camera video recording of the incident.

### **OPINION**

It is my opinion that, based on a thorough review of the Request for Review material, including the video recording of the incident, the Chief Administrator's findings and recommendation are reasonable. The Superintendent did not meet the burden of overcoming the Chief Administrator's recommendation for discipline. A full hearing before the Police Board is an appropriate next step that will allow the Board to thoroughly consider all relevant evidence regarding Officer Covarrubias's conduct.

No. 23 RR 17  
Police Officer Alberto Covarrubias  
Request for Review and Opinion

Therefore, pursuant to Section 2-78-130(a)(iii) of the Municipal Code of Chicago, the Chief Administrator's recommendation for discipline of Police Officer Alberto Covarrubias, Star No. 18769, shall be deemed accepted by the Superintendent.

DATED AT CHICAGO, COUNTY OF COOK, STATE OF ILLINOIS, THIS 29<sup>th</sup> DAY OF DECEMBER, 2023.

/s/ AJA CARR-FAVORS  
Member  
Police Board

Attested by:

/s/ MAX A. CAPRONI  
Executive Director  
Police Board