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Driver remorseful after tragedy

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Abstract (Summary)

Victoria police last week issued former Saanich police officer Ron Broda a \$368 ticket for careless driving from the incident, which initially left Brandon Williams of Victoria fighting for his life and currently sees him facing a long and arduous recovery to regain use of his legs.

While no criminal intent was found on the part of Broda leading up to the incident, police have forwarded a letter to the superintendent of motor vehicles, requesting that Broda's class 1 licence be reviewed, [Les Sylven] added.

Sylven said the notion that Victoria police treated this case differently and chose not to pursue criminal charges because of Broda's prior standing as a police officer is "absolutely baloney, absolutely wrong," and had absolutely no bearing on the way the case was handled.

Full Text (531 words)

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Driver receives traffic fine after driving over boy on sidewalk

No criminal charges will be laid in the case of a Van-Kam Freightways transport truck driver whose vehicle rolled over a six- year-old boy on the sidewalk at Bay and Blanshard streets May 29.

But Victoria police last week issued former Saanich police officer Ron Broda a \$368 ticket for careless driving from the incident, which initially left Brandon Williams of Victoria fighting for his life and currently sees him facing a long and arduous recovery to regain use of his legs.

For criminal charges to be laid, Victoria police Insp. Les Sylven said, there has to be a "wanton disregard for the safety of the public" on the part of the driver.

"If someone were to drive down the street at a high rate of speed, say 100 kilometres per hour, not signal, scream into the corner, go up onto the grass - those are the types of evidence that point to a criminal intent," he said.

Sylven relayed what is known about the May 29 incident: "He slows down, he signals, he enters into the turn slowly. The evidence we have is he misjudges the length of his vehicle and his back tires end up on the sidewalk, striking the boy."

While no criminal intent was found on the part of Broda leading up to the incident, police have forwarded a letter to the superintendent of motor vehicles, requesting that Broda's class 1 licence be reviewed, Sylven added.

Brandon was left with two broken legs and internal injuries from the collision and remains in the pediatric ward at Victoria General Hospital. He had been walking to Burnside elementary that fateful Monday morning with his two older brothers and his mother, who is expecting another child.

Sylven said the notion that Victoria police treated this case differently and chose not to pursue criminal charges because of Broda's prior standing as a police officer is "absolutely baloney, absolutely wrong," and had absolutely no bearing on the way the case was handled.

Broda, who is also the past-president of the Saanich Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils, indicated in an e-mail to the Victoria News that he is unable, based on company policy, to comment on "any of the particulars surrounding this tragic incident."

On a personal level, he wrote "since that horrible instant my thoughts and prayers have been with Brandon and his family. I know that many people are praying for Brandon and his family. I am confident that God's almighty healing power and his guided efforts of the skilled emergency services personnel, nurses and doctors who continue to care for Brandon will lead to a complete recovery."

Broda urged Black Press readers to show support for the boy and his family in every tangible way possible. Donations can be made at the Blanshard Community Centre, 901 Kings Rd. in Victoria.

The handing down of a traffic ticket does not necessarily end the case. Broda can dispute the ticket and the boy's family could take the matter to civil court seeking financial damages.

Victoria police have asked the provincial motor vehicle branch to review Broda's status as a commercial driver.

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