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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 7, 2025

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### Statement from the Columbus Police Department Regarding Incident on Broadway

On Friday, July 4, 2025, at approximately 11:00 p.m., Columbus Police Officers observed multiple fireworks—including large mortar-style fireworks and Roman candles—being discharged directly toward families and patrons dining outside at a restaurant on Broadway. Officers made contact with the individuals involved and detained two juveniles, ages 14 and 15, who were found in possession of backpacks containing a large quantity of fireworks. While detaining the juveniles, an adult female interfered with officers, physically resisted arrest, and was taken into custody without injury.

During the incident, two unrelated individuals began filming officers as they worked to manage the scene. Due to the presence of minors and officer safety concerns, they were instructed to keep a safe distance. Both individuals refused to comply and continued interfering. They were taken into custody.

Shortly after, several adults, identified as parents or relatives of the juveniles, arrived and were informed the juveniles would be released to their custody. However, when officers explained that the interfering adult female would be transported to jail, multiple individuals attempted to physically remove her from police custody. Several refused lawful commands and obstructed officers, resulting in additional arrests. Two individuals further escalated the situation by grabbing officers and attempting to interfere with active arrests. They were also taken into custody.

During the incident, discharged fireworks started a fire next to a downtown building, creating a fire hazard in a crowded area. The fire was quickly extinguished.

Earlier that evening, officers had responded to complaints of teenagers recklessly discharging fireworks near large crowds gathered for the city's fireworks display. A report of gunfire was also received in the Bay Avenue area, where a vehicle sustained damage. Later, the group of teens moved toward the Broadway area, continuing disruptive and dangerous behavior near restaurants and businesses.

The Columbus Police Department wants to make it clear that our primary goal on holidays such as the 4th of July is to maintain a safe and enjoyable environment for everyone. In this incident, the standard procedure for releasing juveniles to a guardian was in progress until adult interference escalated the situation. Seven adults now face charges including Disorderly Conduct and both misdemeanor and felony Obstruction. Two juveniles were charged with Reckless Conduct and Obstruction.

The Columbus Police Department also recognizes the efforts of at least two individuals (relatives of the juveniles) who assisted officers by working to calm the situation. Their cooperation is noted and appreciated.

This incident remains under investigation. Anyone with additional information is encouraged to contact Sgt. S. Hayes at 706-225-4268 or [shaves@columbusga.org](mailto:shaves@columbusga.org).

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