



Ohio Attorney General's Office
Bureau of Criminal Investigation
Investigative Report



2023-0556
Officer Involved Critical Incident – 23897 US Rt 23, Circleville
43113 (L)

Investigative Activity: Interview with Officer
Involves: Officer Tyler Hopkins (W)
Date of Activity: 03/14/2023
Activity Location: Circleville Police Department – Business – 151 East Franklin Street,
Circleville, OH 43113
Author: SA Kyle Douglass, #126

Narrative:

On March 14, 2023 at approximately 1056 hours, BCI Special Agents James Poole (SA Poole) and Kyle Douglass (SA Douglass) interviewed Circleville Police Department (Circleville PD) Officer Tyler Hopkins (Officer Hopkins). The interview took place at the Circleville PD station located at 151 East Franklin Street in Circleville, OH. Officer Hopkins was identified as being a police officer who responded to the Officer-Involved Critical Incident (OICI) involving Pamela Croston (Croston), who is now deceased. The purpose of the interview was to obtain all relevant information of the incident known or observed by this officer.

This interview was audio recorded, and a copy of the recording was saved electronically within the case file. Please refer to the recording for specific quotes. The following is a summation of the interview.

Officer Hopkins reported his badge number is 6121. Officer Hopkins currently works third shift – 2300 hours to 0700 hours, with Tuesdays and Wednesdays off. Officer Hopkins has received specialized training for active shooter response. On the date of the OICI, Officer Hopkins was carrying his department issued Glock 17 9mm pistol. Officer Hopkins reported his body worn camera (BWC) was powered on and functional during the incident.

On February 25, 2023, Officer Hopkins received a radio call from dispatch of a potential suicidal female, identified as Pamela (last name unknown at the time), possibly located at the Rodeway Inn. Officer Hopkins first checked the Holiday Inn, along with Circleville PD Officer Tate Van Fossen (Officer Van Fossen). Officer Hopkins described the Holiday Inn as being located across the street from Rodeway Inn.

When Officer Hopkins arrived at Rodeway Inn, Pickaway County Sheriff's Office (PCSO) deputies were already on scene. Radio dispatchers were still on the phone with Pamela, who indicated

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she was suicidal and in possession of a gun. Pamela's location was confirmed when radio dispatchers heard Officer Hopkins's cruiser sirens when he arrived at Rodeway Inn. Officer Van Fossen checked with the front desk at Rodeway Inn to see if anyone named Pamela had checked in. Officer Hopkins and PCSO deputies discovered Croston may have checked in under a Hispanic last name. Staff at Rodeway Inn reported an individual had checked into Room 104 under the name Pamela Garcia.

Officer Hopkins and Officer Van Fossen approach Croston's room to attempt to make entry. PCSO deputies and Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) troopers were also present. Upon their arrival, Officer Hopkins observed Croston through the room window. Croston tapped on the window with a gun. Officer Hopkins called out "gun" and all responding officers retreated for cover.

Once Officer Hopkins was behind cover, Officer Van Fossen began giving verbal commands to Croston in an attempt to de-escalate the situation. Officer Hopkins observed Croston standing at the window with a gun pointed at her own head. Croston walked out of sight for several minutes, then returned to the window with the gun pointed at her own head. Croston then exited the room with the firearm visible in her hand. Croston had the gun pointed at her own head, then lowered the gun to her hip. Officer Croston recalled Croston the raised the gun again and pointed it in the direction of PCSO deputies. Officer Hopkins then heard shots, but he was unsure at the time who had fired the shots.

After shots were fired, Officer Hopkins called out "shots fired" on the radio. Officer Hopkins and other responding officers secured the weapon which had been in Croston's possession, cleared her hotel room for safety, then began rendering medical aid to Croston. Officer Hopkins recalled Croston had multiple gunshot wounds, and he placed a tourniquet on one of her legs. EMS medics were requested via radio. Officer Hopkins stated he personally secure the weapon, with was loaded with a round in the chamber. Officer Hopkins believed the firearm was a Ruger 9mm pistol. Circleville PD command staff was notified and the scene was secured.

Officer Hopkins explained his cover position during the encounter was initially behind a white van located to the left of the hotel room's front door. Officer Hopkins then moved behind his cruiser, near the hood, with Officer Van Fossen near the rear of the cruiser.

Officer Hopkins did not recall the exact statement Croston made during the encounter, but said she appeared to be mentally distressed as though she had experienced a recent traumatic event. Officer Hopkins also believed Croston may have been under the influence of alcohol based on her behavior.

Officer Hopkins did not see Croston fire her weapon. Officer Hopkins recalled the shots he heard coming from his right, where PCSO deputies were positioned. Officer Hopkins did not observe who had fired due to his visual focus on Croston. Officer Hopkins estimated responding officers had spent at least five minutes giving Croston verbal commands and attempting to deescalate the situation before shots were fired. Officer Hopkins did not believe PCSO deputies had any other option besides lethal force.

Officer Hopkins did not recall having any previous encounters with Croston in his official capacity as a police officer prior to the OICI on February 25, 2023.

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Interview concluded at approximately 1111 hours.

Attachments:

Attachment # 01: Officer Tyler Hopkins Interview Audio 2023-03-13