



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



2023-0052

Officer Involved Critical Incident – 1785 Rt. 28, Lot 419, Goshen Township, OH 45122 (L)

Investigative Activity: Interview with Witness
Involves: Thomas Dewald, Jr. (S)
Date of Activity: 01/06/2023
Activity Location: TriHealth Bethesda North Hospital – 10500 Montgomery Road, Cincinnati, OH 45242, Hamilton County
Author: SA Steven Seitzman

Narrative:

On January 6, 2023, the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) was requested by the Goshen Township Police Department in Clermont County, Ohio, to investigate the facts and circumstances surrounding an Officer-Involved Critical Incident (OICI) that occurred at 1785 State Route 28, Lot 419 AA, Goshen Township, Ohio. During the OICI, Dewald reportedly committed suicide while Goshen Township police officers were attempting to apprehend him for a felony warrant.

On January 6, 2023, at approximately 1526 hours, BCI Special Agent Steven Seitzman conducted a voluntary interview with Goshen Township Police Detective Christopher McMillan (Det. McMillan), who was present during the OICI. The interview took place in SA Seitzman's BCI-issued vehicle in the parking garage of Tri-Health Bethesda North Hospital.

Det. McMillan advised that he has been employed by the Goshen Township Police Department for approximately one year. He had approximately eight years of prior law enforcement experience at the Batavia Police Department. On January 6, 2023, he was working his usual shift, which was from 0800 to 1600 hours.

Regarding the OICI, Det. McMillan advised the following:

Around lunchtime, Det. McMillan heard officers were dispatched to 1785 State Route 28, Lot 419 AA. The officers were dispatched there to locate Dewald, who had a felony domestic violence warrant. He believed a family member had contacted the Goshen Police Department to report that Dewald was back at the residence. Due to the warrant being classified as a felony, he responded to the address. He was one of the first to arrive at the scene, along with Detective [REDACTED] (Det. [REDACTED]). He advised that Officer Matthew Richwine and Sergeant Dillon West arrived shortly after him. Det. McMillan wore an external ballistic vest, clearly identifying

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him as a police officer.

Upon Det. McMillan's arrival at the mobile home, there were two female subjects who motioned the officers toward the residence. One of the subjects said something to the effect of, "He's in there. He's in there." He was not sure who they were, but he believed they had knowledge of the situation. He noticed that the front door of the residence was wide open.

Det. ██████████ and he entered the residence. Det. ██████████ announced, "Police Department!" They eventually entered the residence and turned to the left. They went through the family room and the kitchen. As the officers got to a hallway near the kitchen, Det. McMillan saw a male subject, who he thought may have been Dewald's brother-in-law. The male subject told the officers that Dewald was in the back bedroom.

Det. ██████████ proceeded down the hallway, at which point Det. McMillan heard Det. ██████████ yell, "Drop it! Drop it!" Det. McMillan then pulled his taser out. He got into a position to see inside the room and saw that Dewald was holding a boxcutter in his right hand and a large white butcher knife in the other. He joined Det. ██████████ in commanding Dewald to "drop the knife," to no avail. Within seconds, he saw Dewald bring the boxcutter to the right side of his neck and cut himself. He said Dewald continued to cut his neck, alternating between the right and left sides. Around the same time, Det. ██████████ deployed his taser, which Det. McMillan described as "having some effect," but Dewald was able to continue cutting his neck. Det. McMillan said that the events unfolded rapidly, so he was unsure whether Det. ██████████ deployed the taser before or after Dewald initiated self-harm.

Det. McMillan said that Officer Richwine switched positions with him. He then checked the areas behind them to ensure no bystanders were present. He then heard Sgt. West yell, "Kick the knife." Sgt. West then requested EMS via police radio. The officers then approached Dewald and administered medical aid. Det. ██████████ held pressure on the side of Dewald's neck due to the active blood loss. Det. McMillan ran outside to retrieve an AED, as Dewald's condition was worsening. The pads were placed on Dewald, and the AED announced, "Shock not advised." EMS arrived shortly thereafter.

While EMS initiated care, Det. McMillan observed a taser probe in Dewald's chest area. He removed the probe so EMS could provide proper care. He said Dewald was eventually loaded into the medic unit and transported to Bethesda North Hospital.

SA Seitzman asked Det. McMillan if Dewald said anything throughout the encounter. He said he did not hear Dewald say anything; however, he qualified that statement by saying everything happened quickly. SA Seitzman asked Det. McMillan which officers were inside the residence during the encounter. He advised that he was there with Det. ██████████ Officer Richwine, and Sgt. West.

The interview was concluded at 1548 hours. The audio recording is attached below.

[Agent's note: SA Seitzman contacted Det. McMillan on January 9, 2023, to inquire about body-worn cameras. He advised that, due to the nature of his assignment and the spontaneity of the call for service, he was not wearing a body-worn camera. He believed Officer Richwine, Officer Tyler Smith, and Sgt. West were wearing body-worn cameras.]

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Attachments:

Attachment # 01: 2023-01-06 / Interview with Goshen Twp Detective Chris McMillan

Exhibit 1

Included as a separate file.