



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



2024-1219
Officer Involved Critical Incident – 4632 East Main Street,
Whitehall

Investigative Activity: Interview with Officer
Involves: Deputy Chief Chad Wilder (W)
Date of Activity: 04/30/2024
Activity Location: Law Offices of Harshman, Wannemacher, Tipton & Lipperman –
4683 Winterset Drive, Columbus, OH 43220
Author: SA Chad Holcomb, #61

Narrative:

On Tuesday, April 30, 2024 at 1327 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Chad Holcomb (SA Holcomb) and SA Jimmy Poole (SA Poole) interviewed Whitehall Police Department (WPD) Deputy Chief Chad Wilder (DC Wilder), who was accompanied by his attorney, Kate Harshman, from the Fraternal Order of Police. The interview took place at 4683 Winterset Drive, Columbus, Ohio. The interview was audio recorded.

DC Wilder was identified as being a police officer who witnessed and/or had some level of involvement in the April 19, 2024 officer-involved shooting which occurred in the area of 4632 East Main Street, Whitehall, Ohio. Reportedly, DC Wilder did not discharge a firearm during the course of the incident. The purpose of the interview was to obtain all relevant information of the incident known or observed by this officer.

DC Wilder stated his badge number was 74. He has been employed by the Whitehall PD for about 22 years and has been a police officer for a total of 31 years. During the incident, DC Wilder wore grey BDU pants, black shirt and a marked external ballistic vest which had 'POLICE' affixed to it. He drove an unmarked grey Jeep Liberty.

DC Wilder's normal shift is 0700-1600, Monday through Friday but does shift his hours occasionally. On April 19, 2024, DC Wilder started work at 0900 hours and planned to work until 1700. There was a brand-new sergeant and a relatively new lieutenant on night shift. DC Wilder said they also recently went to 12-hour shifts, so he doesn't get to see the night shift all that often. DC Wilder decided to work later to see the supervision and patrol officers that night.

DC Wilder stated that he was at the intersection of Hamilton & Main Street and preparing to go home for the evening. While he was sitting there, he heard [REDACTED]

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state he heard gunshots. DC Wilder responded to the location where the gunshots were heard.

As DC Wilder was heading towards the direction of the gunshots, dispatch aired that ShotSpotter tracked the location to the area of Roses Department Store. As DC Wilder entered the shopping center he stated there wasn't much going on. He saw a semi-truck and two vehicles parked side-by-side which would contain the subjects that officers interacted with. One vehicle was dark and the other one was a lighter color vehicle which had its flashers on.

DC Wilder continued westbound and northbound through the parking lot. DC Wilder saw two WPD cruisers pull into the parking lot and state they were going to talk to the vehicle with its flashers on. The darker vehicle then proceeded to leave the area.

DC Wilder then heard [REDACTED] say on the radio that they had two people in the vehicle and there was a '33' [firearm] in the vehicle. DC Wilder then began to head back to the officers and the subject's vehicle. DC Wilder was approximately a few hundred yards away from the scene but couldn't see them. As he was driving towards the scene, rounding the corner where he could see the scene, he saw [REDACTED] on the passenger side of the subject's vehicle.

DC Wilder continued to drive towards the scene and heard approximately 4-8 gunshots. He did not see anyone shooting. He then aired "shots fired, 10-3" [officer in trouble] and kept driving towards the scene. As he was approaching the scene, he saw [REDACTED] in a "shooting position" with his arms locked out and back-peddling rapidly.

DC Wilder then parked his car and observed a person in the passenger seat and heard [REDACTED] shouting multiple commands. The male in the passenger seat was not moving. DC Wilder asked for medics to respond and asked [REDACTED] if the male was struck; [REDACTED] responded that he wasn't sure.

All officers then backed away from the vehicle and took cover behind a WPD vehicle. DC Wilder then got a ballistic shield from the trunk of his vehicle. A team consisting of [REDACTED] Ofc. Grace, Ofc. Stephens, and DC Wilder then approached the vehicle on the passenger side. They determined that there wasn't an immediate threat, medical attention was then provided to the male, later identified as Santiago Alfaromunoz (Alfaromunoz).

DC Wilder stated that Alfaromunoz was still breathing at this time. A medical bag was then obtained and Ofc. Stephens, who has advanced medical training, performed medical aid to Alfaromunoz. Alfaromunoz was removed from the vehicle by the medics who arrived "fairly quickly". After the male was removed from the vehicle, DC Wilder then set up a crime scene perimeter and called for additional resources.

SA Holcomb asked DC Wilder if he ever saw any firearms in the vehicle. He stated that initially he did not. After the scene settled down, he did a plain view search of the vehicle from the outside. He saw a handgun behind the front seat in what he would describe as a tool bag. The gun was described as a black 1911 style pistol. The hammer appeared to be de-cocked, and the firearm barrel was facing down and the grip was facing towards the passenger side of the vehicle. SA Holcomb asked, that based on the location of the firearm, could the driver and passenger easily obtain the firearm; he stated yes.

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SA Holcomb asked DC Wilder if he ever discharged his firearm; he stated he did not. DC Wilder said that when he got to the scene, it appeared the incident was over and he was not presented with any immediate deadly threat.

SA Holcomb asked DC Wilder that during his involvement with the incident if he believed that himself and other officers followed WPD policy; he stated yes.

The interview concluded at approximately 1343 hours.

The interview was audio recorded. The audio recording was attached to this report. Please see the attachment for further details.

Attachments:

Attachment # 01: 2024-04-30 – DC Chad Wilder Interview (2024-1219)