



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



2023-2057

Officer-Involved Critical Incident – 6900 Block of S. High St, Columbus

Investigative Activity: Initial Scene response

Activity Date: 8/5/2023

Activity Location: 6900 Block of S. High St.

Authoring Agent: SA Matt Collins #151

Narrative:

On Saturday, August 05, 2023 at approximately 0228 hours, the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) was requested by Sgt. Terry McConnell of the City of Columbus-Division of Police (CPD) to conduct an independent investigation of the facts and circumstances surrounding an officer-involved shooting which occurred in the 6900 block of S. High St. (St. Rt. 23). Special Agent Matt Collins (SA Collins) responded to the scene, arriving at approximately 0350 hours. Also responding from the BCI Special Investigations Unit were Special Agents Andrew Russell, Jonathan Scale and James Mulford. Additionally, the BCI Crime Scene Unit was requested to process the scene by documenting and collecting pertinent evidence.

When SA Collins arrived, he witnessed the roadway was blocked off north of interior scene. SA Collins witnessed a command bus parked in the southbound lane and CPD patrol SUV parked on the northbound side facing north. The CPD patrol SUV had crime scene tape around it and the surrounding area (interior scene).

SA Collins was briefed on what was known at the time. The shooting incident involved an unknown subject, later identified as Zachary Bryson (Bryson), and [REDACTED] of the CPD. The incident resulted in the death of Bryson. Bryson was pronounced deceased at 0155 hrs., at Grant hospital after being transported by Hamilton Township EMS.

There were four (4) listed “responding” officers who’d otherwise responded or arrived after the shooting incident. SA Russell and SA Scale were requested to conduct interviews with those officers (see IRs for further). SA Collins conducted a phone interview with the original 911 caller, Denny Pauly (see IR for further).

In the onset of CPD’s response and throughout the first couple days of the BCI investigation, Bryson’s identity was unknown. CPD responded to a subject in the roadway call and it was understood Bryson’s identity was not learned during his encounter with [REDACTED]. After the shooting incident, attempts to identify Bryson were made, i.e. no wallet or identification on his person, no vehicles in the area unaccounted for. SA Collins reached out to Franklin County SO,



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



2023-2057

Officer-Involved Critical Incident – 6900 Block of S. High St, Columbus

Pickaway County SO, Circleville PD, all in addition to communications with CPD, regarding any incidents/individuals who were gone upon arrival or otherwise being searched for.

SA Collins directed SA Russell and SA Scale to check with the businesses in the area, including Scioto Downs, to see if there were any incidents involving the unknown subject (Bryson).

At one point while on scene, SA Collins assisted in locating a cartridge casing believed to be fired from [REDACTED]. SA Collins was told evidence indicated there were three (3) shots fired by [REDACTED]. After viewing the BWC of [REDACTED] it was learned the cartridge casings would most likely be on the passenger side of the CPD Patrol SUV. SA Collins, along with other agents were searching that area when SA Collins found one (1) cartridge casing on the passenger's side of the patrol SUV approximately 15 feet from the passenger side front door. Please refer to Crime Scene Technician (CST) Amy Gill's measurements for accuracy. SA Collins was later told, two (2) additional cartridge casings were found in that area as well.

Criminal Intelligence Unit (CIU), Intelligence Analyst (IA) Stephanie Littell (IA Littell) conducted a facial recognition search. The only photo available was one of Bryson in the ER, post shooting incident. The photo included tubes and other evidence of medical treatment, which was believed would hinder the software's ability to accurately identify the subject. IA Littell advised she only had one subject profile return on her search and that subject was Zachary Bryson out of North Carolina. SA Collins wished to hold off on following up on that lead until after the fingerprints were collected and ran through AFIS as it was not known how reliable the "recognition" was due to the limited information in the photo.

There was a Budget Inn Motel north of the scene. SA Collins traveled through the parking lot of the motel and ran each vehicle's license plate to see if any of the registered owners fit the description or otherwise looked like Bryson. The search did not yield any applicable leads.

On Monday, August 7, 2023, SA Collins was advised the Franklin County Coroner's Office had made a positive identification. SA Collins was told Bryson's parents had reached out to the Franklin County Coroner's Office in search of their son. When the Bryson family provided a North Carolina driver's license, the coroner's office confirmed the identity of Zachary Bryson.

The request for BCI to investigate is based on an active MOU between the Ohio BCI and the City of Columbus. The MOU is on file within BCI.