



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



2022-1527

Officer Involved Critical Incident – 5760 US 62, Hillsboro, OH,
Highland County (L)

Investigative Activity: Interview with Officer
Involves: Richard Jean Poulin (S)
Date of Activity: 07/21/2022
Activity Location: Highland County Sheriffs Office – Business – Highland County
Justice Center, 130 Homestead Avenue, Hillsboro, OH 45133,
Highland County
Author: SA Steven Seitzman

Narrative:

On July 17, 2022, the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) was requested by Highland County Sheriff Donald Barrera to investigate an Officer-Involved Critical Incident (OICI) that occurred on US 62 near the Hillsboro Church of God (5760 US 62, Hillsboro, Ohio). The OICI entailed Highland County Sheriff's Office Sergeant [REDACTED] (Sgt. [REDACTED]) firing a single, fatal shot at Richard Jean Poulin (Poulin) at the end of a vehicle pursuit.

On July 21, 2022, at 1752 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agents Steven Seitzman (SA Seitzman), Richard Ward (SA Ward), and Kenneth Smith (SA Smith) interviewed Highland County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) Deputy Sarah McKenzie (Deputy McKenzie) regarding her involvement in the OICI on July 17, 2022. The interview took place at HCSO. She was represented by Fraternal Order of Police Senior Staff Representative Barry Gray. She confirmed that she was attending the interview voluntarily. The interview was recorded on a handheld digital recording device.

The information provided below summarizes key points from the recorded interview and is not a verbatim account. Further, this report was placed in a chronology to aid the reader's overall understanding of the information elicited during the interview and may not be reflective of the actual sequencing of questions. It is suggested that the full audio recording be reviewed to clarify the content of the interview.

Deputy McKenzie advised that she has been employed by HCSO for approximately one year. She was previously employed by the Brown County Sheriff's Office, the Higginsport Police Department, and the Georgetown Police Department. She began her law enforcement career in 2011. Her unit number is "thirty-six-fifteen (3615)," which is also her radio call sign. She said she was working her regular shift on July 16-July 17, 2022. Her duty hours were between 1500

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and 0300 hours. She said she was driving a marked HCSO cruiser on that date. She further advised that she was wearing her standard department-issued deputy sheriff uniform.

Regarding the OICI, Deputy McKenzie advised BCI agents of the following information:

Deputy McKenzie and Sgt. ██████ had just cleared a disabled vehicle call. Sgt. ██████ leared the call before she did. As she was leaving, she heard Sgt. ██████ call out a traffic stop over the police radio. Sgt. ██████ said he was stopping a vehicle on US-62 in the unincorporated Samantha community. She estimated that Sgt. ██████ attempted the traffic stop at 0030 hours.

Sgt. ██████ advised over the police radio that the vehicle fled. She advised that she was south of Sgt. ██████'s location on US-62. She stopped in the roadway and activated her overhead lights in an attempt to slow or stop the fleeing vehicle. The subject, later identified as Poulin, ignored her overhead lights and went around her vehicle. Poulin continued southbound on US-62, followed by Sgt. ██████. She joined Sgt. ██████ in the pursuit.

As the pursuit approached the Westview Motors business, HCSO Deputies Steven Alexander (Deputy Alexander) and Dylan Quenneville (Deputy Quenneville) deployed a tire deflation device. She believed Poulin struck the tire deflation device. The pursuit continued and a Hillsboro police officer [Officer Daniel Hopkins] joined. She said she could see smoke coming from Poulin's tires and debris falling from the vehicle as the pursuit approached Dunlap Road.

Poulin's vehicle eventually stopped on US-62 near Ervin Road. Sgt. ██████ stopped his vehicle behind Poulin's. Deputy McKenzie parked her cruiser to the right of Sgt. ██████'s cruiser, approximately a "car length" behind it. Deputies Alexander and Quenneville were the last to arrive and parked their cruiser to the left of Sgt. ██████'s cruiser. Sgt. ██████ gave verbal commands to Poulin, via the in-cruiser public address system, while she provided updates to dispatch over the police radio. Poulin's vehicle moved forward fifteen to twenty feet, where it came to final rest.

Deputy McKenzie was standing outside her cruiser with one foot inside. She recalled the street light illuminating Poulin's vehicle. She saw Poulin rest his arm on the armrest with a lit cigarette. She also observed him turning up the volume on his radio.

Deputy McKenzie radioed for a police canine; however, she was advised by dispatch that no canines were available. At that time, Sgt. ██████ made the decision to approach Poulin's vehicle. Sgt. ██████ went to the passenger side, and she stayed behind him. She heard Sgt. ██████ yelling for Poulin to "show his hands" and "exit the vehicle" as he made his approach. She said it was apparent that Poulin was not following Sgt. ██████'s commands. She remembered Poulin was looking straight ahead. She said Deputy Alexander and Deputy Quenneville were at the rear of Poulin's vehicle on the driver's side.

Sgt. ██████ struck Poulin's front passenger window at least twice with his collapsible ASP baton. The window eventually shattered. She said Poulin was distracted and was looking at the shattered window. She recalled Sgt. ██████ yelling at Deputy Alexander to remove Poulin from the driver's door. Deputy Alexander was unable to open the door.

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Deputy McKenzie said Sgt. ██████ went around the front of the vehicle to Deputy Alexander. She followed behind Sgt. ██████ and stopped in front of the vehicle and held Poulin at gunpoint. She said Sgt. ██████ broke the driver's window with his baton. She was uncertain how many times Sgt. ██████ had struck the window before it broke. She then heard a "pop," which she recognized as a gunshot. She recalled saying, "What the fuck was that?" She said she assessed the situation to determine whether Poulin shot at the deputies. She then looked over at Sgt. ██████ and saw the "look of panic" on his face. She realized it was Sgt. ██████ weapon that discharged.

Deputy McKenzie said the deputies holstered their weapons. She ran back to her cruiser to retrieve a trauma kit, but she realized she did not have one. Sgt. ██████ provided her with his trauma kit. At the same time, Deputies Alexander and Quenneville removed Poulin from his vehicle and began administering medical aid. She ran up with the trauma kit, and Deputy Quenneville used gauze and held pressure on Poulin's wound, which was on the left side of his neck. She inserted a nasal pharyngeal tube into Poulin's left nostril. She recalled lots of blood coming from the tube. She observed blood coming from Poulin's nose and mouth. At that point, the paramedics arrived and took over patient care.

Deputy McKenzie put on gloves and went to Sgt. ██████ She asked if he was okay, to which he responded by saying, "No." She said he then said something to the effect of, "I didn't shoot." She said he was "blabbering and panicking." She told him that she needed his gun. She removed his gun from the holster, ejected the magazine, and cleared the chambered round. She placed the items in a brown paper bag. She then locked the items in the rear of her cruiser. She later turned the items over to HCSO Sergeant Vincent Antinore (Sgt. Antinore) upon his arrival at the scene. She said she documented the transfer of custody from her to Sgt. Antinore.

Deputy McKenzie drew a diagram of the placement of the law enforcement cruisers in relation to Poulin's vehicle. She also drew a separate diagram containing a closer view of the deputies' placement around Poulin's truck. She signed the diagrams and provided them to BCI agents. The diagrams were later added to the permanent case file.

SA Ward asked Deputy McKenzie if she saw Sgt. ██████ strike the driver's window with his baton. She clarified that she saw Sgt. ██████ make a striking motion toward the window; however, she was focused on Poulin and did not actually see the baton strike the window. SA Ward also asked her if Sgt. ██████ had his pistol drawn. She answered in the affirmative, but she did not know with which hand the objects were in.

Deputy McKenzie said she did not have any further communication with Sgt. ██████ other than the aforementioned statement he made immediately following the shooting and the contact she had with him when she removed his firearm from the holster.

The interview was concluded at 1823 hours. The audio recording is attached below. Also attached are Deputy McKenzie's diagrams.

Attachments:

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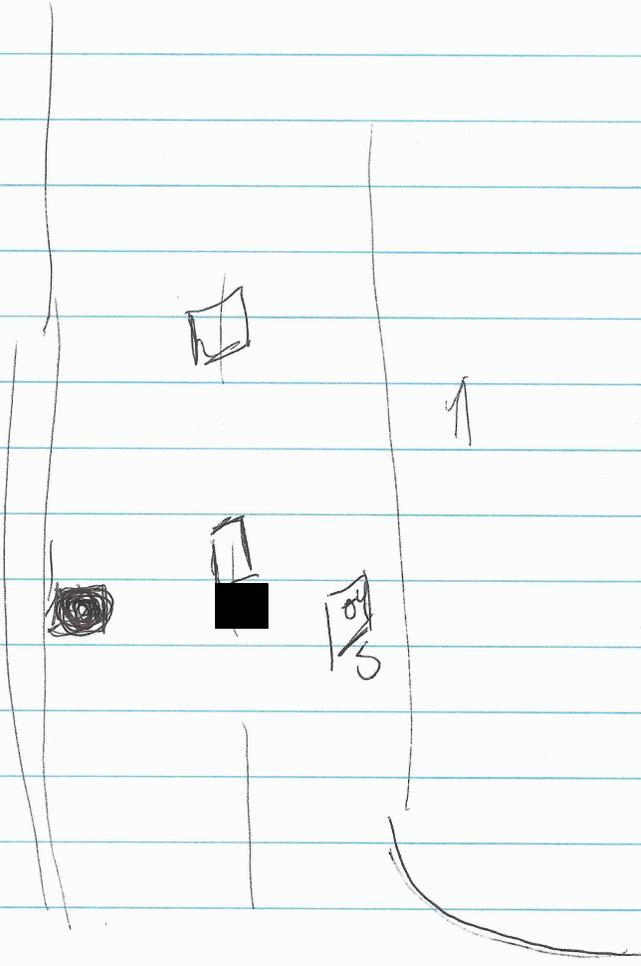
Attachment # 01: 2022-07-21 / Interview of HCSO Deputy Sarah McKenzie
Attachment # 02: Deputy Sarah McKenzie Drawing of Scene
Attachment # 03: Deputy McKenzie Diagram of Truck

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Exhibit 1

Included as a separate file.

Exhibit 2

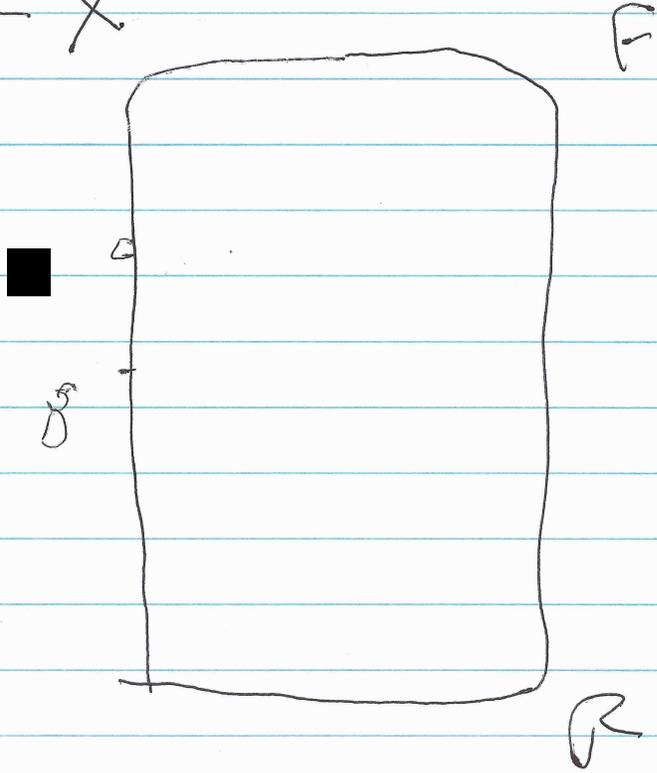


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Exhibit 3

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