



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



2024-3996
 Officer Involved Critical Incident - 780 Taylor Road,
 Gahanna, Ohio 43230 (L)

Investigative Activity: Interview with Involved Officer
Involves: ██████████, Gahanna Police Department
Activity Date: 01/17/2025
Activity Location: Gahanna Police Department – 460 Rocky Fork Blvd,
 Gahanna OH 43230
Authoring Agent: SA Kyle Douglass

Narrative:

On Friday, January 17, 2025, at 1109 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Kyle Douglass (SA Douglass) and SA James Gore (SA Gore) interviewed Gahanna Police Department (Gahanna PD) ██████████ who was accompanied by his attorney, Lathan Lipperman, from the Fraternal Order of Police. The interview took place at the Gahanna PD station. The interview was audio recorded.

██████████ understood, and signed the BCI Criminal Investigation Notification form.

This report only summarizes the information deemed by the author to be of the most relevance to the investigation and does not purport to contain all questions and answers from the interview. 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 recording be reviewed to clarify any content or contextual questions regarding the information from the interview.

Preliminary and Demographic Information:

Name: ██████████	Rank: ██████████
Badge Number: ██████	Normal Shift: ██████████
Assignment: ██████████	Length at Current Agency: ██████████
In-Car Camera: Operational & Utilized	Body Worn Camera: Present & Used
Shift Day of Incident: ██████████	Injuries: None

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Officer’s Firearm(s):

Weapon #1

Make: Glock	Model: 17
Caliber/Gauge: 9 mm	Serial: n/a
Type: Semi-Auto Handgun	Right/Left-Handed Carry: Right-Handed
Discharged During Incident? No	Number of Rounds Fired: n/a

Weapon #2

Make: Smith & Wesson	Model: M&P-15
Caliber/Gauge: .223 caliber	Serial: [REDACTED]
Type: Rifle	Right/Left-Handed Carry: Right-Handed
Discharged During Incident? Yes	Number of Rounds Fired: 1

Narrative:

In his statement to BCI, [REDACTED] wrote:

“Around 9:30 a.m., I was dispatched to the SpringHill Suites hotel located at 665 Taylor Road in south Gahanna on a report of credit card fraud. At that time, I was at GPD working on a report. I responded to the hotel with [REDACTED] Sgt. Millenbaugh also responded on the run. I arrived at the hotel and spoke with the manager: She told me that an individual had used someone else’s credit card and Marriot Bonvoy account to pay for his room. Sgt. Millenbaugh knocked on the door several more times and told the suspect to open the door. We waited a minute or two, but the suspect refused to open the door. The manager handed me a room key and gave me permission to open the door. I unlocked the door, and Sgt. Millenbaugh began to push it open and announced we were coming inside with the manager’s permission. The suspect had the door deadbolted, so it only opened a few inches. I could smell marijuana coming from the room. Sgt. Millenbaugh again instructed the suspect to open the door and told him we just needed to talk. The suspect responded that he needed to grab a few things first and put his computer away. I believed the suspect was trying to stall, and moments later I heard what sounded like a window open inside the room. I told the others that I thought he might have escaped through a window.”

[REDACTED] continued in his statement, [REDACTED] ran down the hallway towards the exit, and I stayed outside the room with Sgt. Millenbaugh. Seconds later, [REDACTED] aired “code 40, he’s got a gun— northside of the building.” I ran

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down the hallway and exited out of the, I believe, eastern side of the hotel. I ran north and looked around, but initially I did not see [REDACTED] or anyone with a gun. But a civilian flagged me down and pointed east saying, "He's over there! He's got a gun!" I ran east and seconds later saw the suspect in the parking lot adjacent to (and east of) the hotel: He was holding a pistol (what appeared to be a black semiautomatic handgun) in his right hand. He was a heavier set white male, possibly Hispanic, wearing a black shirt and light-colored pants. At that time, the suspect had the gun at his side, with the barrel aimed towards the ground. I was about 50-100 feet west of the suspect, and [REDACTED] was about 50 feet south of me. The suspect was walking north through the parking lot, towards Taylor Road. [REDACTED] was repeatedly yelling "drop the gun!" but the suspect would not drop the weapon. I took cover behind a backhoe and covered the suspect. I ordered him to drop his weapon, but he would not comply."

[REDACTED] discussed the attempt to gain compliance from Alex Russell (Russell) before the shooting encounter and wrote, "The suspect walked approximately 10-15 yards up the driveway before turning back to face me and the other officers, raising the gun to his head. He was saying something like "it's over." Officers ordered him to drop his weapon and tried to deescalate by telling the suspect it was not too late and that we only wanted to talk (or words to that effect). Just as I neared the other side of Taylor Road, I heard [REDACTED] yell "less lethal" and saw him deploy a bean bag round at the suspect (though I could not see the suspect through the brush). An instant later I heard several gunshots ring out in rapid succession. As I ran up the driveway, I saw one or two officers firing their weapons, but because I could not see the suspect, I was unsure if he was also shooting."

[REDACTED] explained his involvement in the shooting incident, "Just as I trained my rifle on him, he raised his weapon toward me and the other officers. I believed he intended to shoot me and the others, and it was then that I fired. I believe at least one other officer fired at nearly the same time. I fired only 1 round. Right after I fired that round, several officers stepped into my line of fire. As I stepped aside to get a better vantage, several officers fired at the suspect, stopping a moment later. The suspect had fallen to the ground and was on his (I believe) left side. Sgt. Millenbaugh aired for medics and yelled for an officer to grab a shield. I also said to grab a medkit. The other officers and I approached the suspect. He did not appear to be moving."

[REDACTED] wrote in his statement regarding his decision to fire his rifle, "At the time I fired my weapon, I believed the suspect intended to shoot me and that he posed a deadly threat to my life and to the lives of the other officers on scene. In the minutes

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before I fired, the suspect had refused to comply with our orders to come to the door and instead escaped from his hotel room before presenting officers with a firearm. He was given repeated, loud commands to drop his weapon by numerous officers, but he continuously refused to comply. When I cut around the shrubs a moment later, the suspect was standing about 20-30 yards to the east, facing and looking toward me and the other officers. He raised and levelled the barrel of his weapon at me and the other officers an instant later. I believed he intended to shoot me and the other officers. I feared that I and possibly one or more officers would be seriously injured or killed, and it was then that I fired my weapon. I did not believe I had any other reasonable alternative to protect my life or the other officers' lives from the deadly threat presented by the suspect's actions."

██████████ clarified his recall of the incident after reviewing video evidence, "After this incident, I had the opportunity to review BWC footage of the event. After doing so, I now realize that the suspect was already on the ground by the time I came around the thicket of brush. However, my recollection of the suspect aiming his weapon at me and the other officers just before I fired remains accurate."

██████████ was asked several follow-up questions regarding the incident. ██████████ used printed maps of the incident area to explain his path of travel and positioning throughout the encounter with Russell. ██████████ clarified unholstering his department-issued handgun and aiming it in Russell's direction during the encounter but confirmed he never fired it during the incident. ██████████ transitioned to his patrol rifle when he arrived at the area of 780 Taylor Road where Russell had stopped. ██████████ believed Russell had decided to make his "final stand" in the driveway area at 780 Taylor Road when he stopped, turned to face Gahanna PD officers and pointed his gun at himself. ██████████ said he was concerned about how quickly Russell might be able to go from pointing the gun at his own head to pointing the gun at Gahanna PD officers. ██████████ explained he was attempting to get a better position and clear line of sight when the initial gunshots occurred. ██████████ believed Russell had pointed his gun at Gahanna PD officers both while he was standing and again after he had gone to the ground. ██████████ confirmed he fired his rifle at Russell after he had gone to the ground and pointed his gun towards ██████████ and other Gahanna PD officers. ██████████ explained the details documented in his written statement about Russell having an arrest warrant out of Oregon was information he had received after the incident, and was not information known to ██████████ before or during the time of his encounter with Russell.

The interview concluded at approximately 1145 hours.

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The interview was audio recorded. The audio recording was attached to this report. The signed BCI Criminal Investigation Notification form is also attached to this report. Please see the attachments for further details.

References:

No references

Attachments:

1. 2025-01-17 [REDACTED] Interview Audio
2. [REDACTED] - Signed Statement+CIN+Maps

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STATEMENT OF OFFICER [REDACTED], BADGE NO. [REDACTED]

This statement regards my involvement in an incident that occurred on Thursday, December 19, 2024, between approximately 9:30 a.m. and 10:15 a.m. I am providing this voluntary statement as part of the investigation conducted by the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI).

I was hired by the Gahanna Division of Police ("GPD" or the "Division") on [REDACTED]. I was a lateral hire from the Metro Nashville Police Department, where I had worked as a police officer since February of 2020. I received my Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy certificate on [REDACTED]. I have not worked for any other law enforcement agency. I have never been enlisted in the military. I have never had a use of force that was deemed out of policy by either GPD or my prior agency.

I am assigned to [REDACTED]. My regular duty hours and days off have since changed, but when this incident occurred I was scheduled to work [REDACTED], with [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] I did not work any special duty or overtime on the day before or day of this incident. I arrived at the start of my shift well rested and in good spirits.

I was readily identifiable as a police officer. I was wearing the GPD patrol uniform: dark navy pants, a long-sleeved dark navy shirt, and a dark navy external vest carrier that displayed a cloth badge on the front and "GAHANNA POLICE" in large font on the back. I was also wearing a body worn camera (BWC) mounted to the inside of my vest, on the left side of my chest. My BWC recorded this incident.

I was equipped with my GPD-issued primary service weapon: a Glock 17 9mm handgun. I briefly unholstered that weapon, but I did not fire it. I was also equipped with a GPD-issued Smith & Wesson AR style rifle. That weapon was equipped with GPD-issued .223 ammunition

and a Trijicon red dot sight. The magazine has a 30 round capacity, but I only load it with 28 consistent with my training. My qualifications with that weapon were current. I did not have any backup firearm.

I was partnered with [REDACTED] There were also several other members of GPD present when this incident occurred: Sgt. Millenbaugh and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I was operating in Cruiser [REDACTED] a marked Ford Explorer.

I do not suffer from any disabilities, and I am in good health. I do not need eyeglasses or hearing aids as I have good vision and hearing. I was not taking any medications, prescription or otherwise, that could impair the performance of my duties. I did not drink any alcohol in the 24 hours before my shift.

Around 9:30 a.m., I was dispatched to the SpringHill Suites hotel located at 665 Taylor Road in south Gahanna on a report of credit card fraud. At that time, I was at GPD working on a report. I responded to the hotel with [REDACTED] Sgt. Millenbaugh also responded on the run. I arrived at the hotel and spoke with the manager: She told me that an individual had used someone else's credit card and Marriot Bonvoy account to pay for his room. The hotel had made a copy of that individual's driver's license, which had the name Matthew Martinez. She relayed that he was staying in Room 112 and that she believed he was still inside the room. She requested that we trespass him from the hotel. Neither the manager nor the clerk knew what the suspect looked like since they were not working when he checked in the night before.

I requested that [REDACTED] respond so there would be another officer present when we confronted the suspect, and so I could consult with him about what charge(s) best fit the suspect's actions. He arrived a brief time later and agreed that the suspect should be charged with

identity theft. The manager escorted me, Sgt. Millenbaugh and [REDACTED] to the suspect's room.

I took a position to the left of the suspect's door; Sgt. Millenbaugh stood on the right side of the door, and the other two officers and the manager were behind us. I knocked on the door several times and heard someone moving about the room. I knocked again and announced, "Gahanna Police." Moments later someone in the room said something like "I'm coming." No one opened the door, though. Sgt. Millenbaugh knocked on the door several more times and told the suspect to open the door.

We waited a minute or two, but the suspect refused to open the door. The manager handed me a room key and gave me permission to open the door. I unlocked the door, and Sgt. Millenbaugh began to push it open and announced we were coming inside with the manager's permission. The suspect had the door deadbolted, so it only opened a few inches. I could smell marijuana coming from the room.

Sgt. Millenbaugh again instructed the suspect to open the door and told him we just needed to talk. The suspect responded that he needed to grab a few things first and put his computer away. I believed the suspect was trying to stall, and moments later I heard what sounded like a window open inside the room. I told the others that I thought he might have escaped through a window.

[REDACTED] ran down the hallway towards the exit, and I stayed outside the room with Sgt. Millenbaugh. Seconds later, [REDACTED] aired "code 40, he's got a gun—northside of the building." I ran down the hallway and exited out of the, I believe, eastern side of the hotel. I ran north and looked around, but initially I did not see [REDACTED] or

anyone with a gun. But a civilian flagged me down and pointed east saying, "He's over there! He's got a gun!"

I ran east and seconds later saw the suspect in the parking lot adjacent to (and east of) the hotel: He was holding a pistol (what appeared to be a black semiautomatic handgun) in his right hand. He was a heavier set white male, possibly Hispanic, wearing a black shirt and light-colored pants. At that time, the suspect had the gun at his side, with the barrel aimed towards the ground.

I was about 50-100 feet west of the suspect, and [REDACTED] was about 50 feet south of me. The suspect was walking north through the parking lot, towards Taylor Road. [REDACTED] was repeatedly yelling "drop the gun!" but the suspect would not drop the weapon. I took cover behind a backhoe and covered the suspect. I ordered him to drop his weapon, but he would not comply.

An officer pulled into the lot and parked about 25-50 yards west of the suspect. I approached and took cover behind the driver's side of the cruiser. That officer asked whether I had a rifle. I told him I had one in my cruiser and ran west to grab that weapon since there were other officers covering the suspect. I got to my cruiser and quickly pulled out of the parking lot east onto Taylor Road. I drove a short distance and pulled south into the grassy right-of-way off the side of the road. I got out of my cruiser, went to the trunk, and quickly grabbed and readied my rifle. The suspect was about 30-40 yards west, moving northeast through a parking lot towards Taylor Road. He was still carrying the gun at his side.

The suspect walked north across Taylor Road and continued up a driveway. Several other officers also crossed Taylor Road, keeping about 15-20 yards south of the suspect. I posted up on the grassy hill just south of Taylor Road and covered the suspect from a kneeling position. The suspect walked approximately 10-15 yards up the driveway before turning back to face me and

the other officers, raising the gun to his head. He was saying something like "it's over." Officers ordered him to drop his weapon and tried to deescalate by telling the suspect it was not too late and that we only wanted to talk (or words to that effect). Around that time, [REDACTED] pulled up and parked off Taylor Road, grabbed a less lethal shotgun (that deploys bean bag rounds) and joined the other officers.

The suspect lowered the gun seconds later and turned around continuing north on the driveway. I moved north across the street to get a better vantage. By that time, the suspect had cut east around some shrubbery. Just as I neared the other side of Taylor Road, I heard [REDACTED] yell "less lethal" and saw him deploy a bean bag round at the suspect (though I could not see the suspect through the brush). An instant later I heard several gunshots ring out in rapid succession. As I ran up the driveway, I saw one or two officers firing their weapons, but because I could not see the suspect, I was unsure if he was also shooting.

A moment later, I cut east around the shrubs and saw the suspect about 20-30 yards away, facing me and the others (who were standing in a line to my right). Just as I trained my rifle on him, he raised his weapon toward me and the other officers. I believed he intended to shoot me and the others, and it was then that I fired. I believe at least one other officer fired at nearly the same time.

I fired only 1 round. Right after I fired that round, several officers stepped into my line of fire. As I stepped aside to get a better vantage, several officers fired at the suspect, stopping a moment later. The suspect had fallen to the ground and was on his (I believe) left side. Sgt. Millenbaugh aired for medics and yelled for an officer to grab a shield. I also said to grab a medkit. The other officers and I approached the suspect. He did not appear to be moving. I kept my rifle trained on him as we neared.

The suspect still had the gun in his hand. One of the officers grabbed it and threw it away from the suspect. I put down my rifle and gloved up. We quickly removed the suspect's shirt and assessed his injuries: He appeared to have one or two wounds on his torso as well as one on his leg. I applied two chest seals to the torso wounds. As I prepared a tourniquet, an officer started chest compressions. I tried applying the tourniquet to his leg, but it snapped. While preparing a second tourniquet, another officer relieved me and took over rendering aid. Medics arrived a short time later. This ended my involvement with this incident.

I was transported from the scene to GPD by Officer McConkey. There, I met with investigators from BCI who took photographs as part of the investigation. I informed them that I had left my rifle at the scene.

I fired only one round during this incident. I fired that round in an easterly direction. I would estimate that I was approximately 20-30 yards from the suspect when I fired. I fired from a standing position. I was not moving. I recall using my weapon's sights. I used a right shoulder grip. There were no officers or civilians in my line of fire. My backdrop was an open field of grass. (There was a house situated about 75-100 yards behind the suspect, but I believe it was north of my backdrop, out of my line of fire.) I did not see any civilians or officers in my backdrop when I fired.

There were several other officers present when I fired. Those officers and I were standing in a partial line. I recall standing either on the northernmost end of the line or near the end, slightly behind most of the other officers. I did not have any cover or concealment. The other officers also lacked any cover or physical barrier. It was overcast, but there was plenty of lighting since this occurred in the middle of the day.

At the time I fired my weapon, I believed the suspect intended to shoot me and that he posed a deadly threat to my life and to the lives of the other officers on scene. In the minutes before I fired, the suspect had refused to comply with our orders to come to the door and instead escaped from his hotel room before presenting officers with a firearm. He was given repeated, loud commands to drop his weapon by numerous officers, but he continuously refused to comply.

Initially, the suspect kept his weapon by his side, with the barrel aimed at the ground. But once he crossed Taylor Road, he turned to face me and the other officers and placed the gun at his temple while uttering suicidal statements. Even then, though, officers tried to reassure the suspect that they only wanted to talk and that he did not need to hurt himself. The suspect still refused to drop his weapon or give any sign of surrender.

As I moved across Taylor Road, I saw [REDACTED] deploy a beanbag round at the suspect. At that time, the suspect was behind a thicket of shrubbery, so I could not see him. But an instant later multiple gunshots were fired in rapid succession. I could see at least two officers firing. I still could not see the suspect, but I believed he may have been firing at the officers given the number of rounds being shot and the fact multiple officers were firing. I also believed he may have been firing given his suicidal actions just seconds prior.

When I cut around the shrubs a moment later, the suspect was standing about 20-30 yards to the east, facing and looking toward me and the other officers. He raised and levelled the barrel of his weapon at me and the other officers an instant later. I believed he intended to shoot me and the other officers. I feared that I and possibly one or more officers would be seriously injured or killed, and it was then that I fired my weapon. I did not believe I had any other reasonable

alternative to protect my life or the other officers' lives from the deadly threat presented by the suspect's actions.

After this incident, I learned the suspect's real name: Alex Russell. I do not know the suspect. I do not believe I have ever previously met him. I also learned that he reportedly had an arrest warrant out of Oregon that was issued when he fled the state on felony charges related to purchasing sex from a minor and providing drugs to a minor. I was not aware of that prior to this incident, however.

I did not touch the suspect's weapon during this incident. As I recounted to the BCI investigators, I left my rifle at the scene and did not touch it once I put it down to begin rendering aid.

After this incident, I had the opportunity to review BWC footage of the event. After doing so, I now realize that the suspect was already on the ground by the time I came around the thicket of brush. However, my recollection of the suspect aiming his weapon at me and the other officers just before I fired remains accurate.

This concludes my statement.





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Criminal Investigation Notification

1. This investigation is being conducted in order to determine whether any criminal laws have been violated on the part of those involved in this incident. Specifically, to collect facts and information to be provided to the prosecutor and/or grand jury in order for them to determine whether the conduct involved is authorized or prohibited by criminal statutes.
2. Your participation in this interview is voluntary and you may decline to answer or cease the interview at any time. You are entitled to have an attorney present if you wish.
3. The criminal investigation is separate from any internal, administrative investigation which your employer may or may not be independently conducting. You are not being compelled to give any statement or answer any questions. This is not a "Garrity" interview (where you could be required to answer).

[Redacted Name] _____
Printed Name of Interviewee

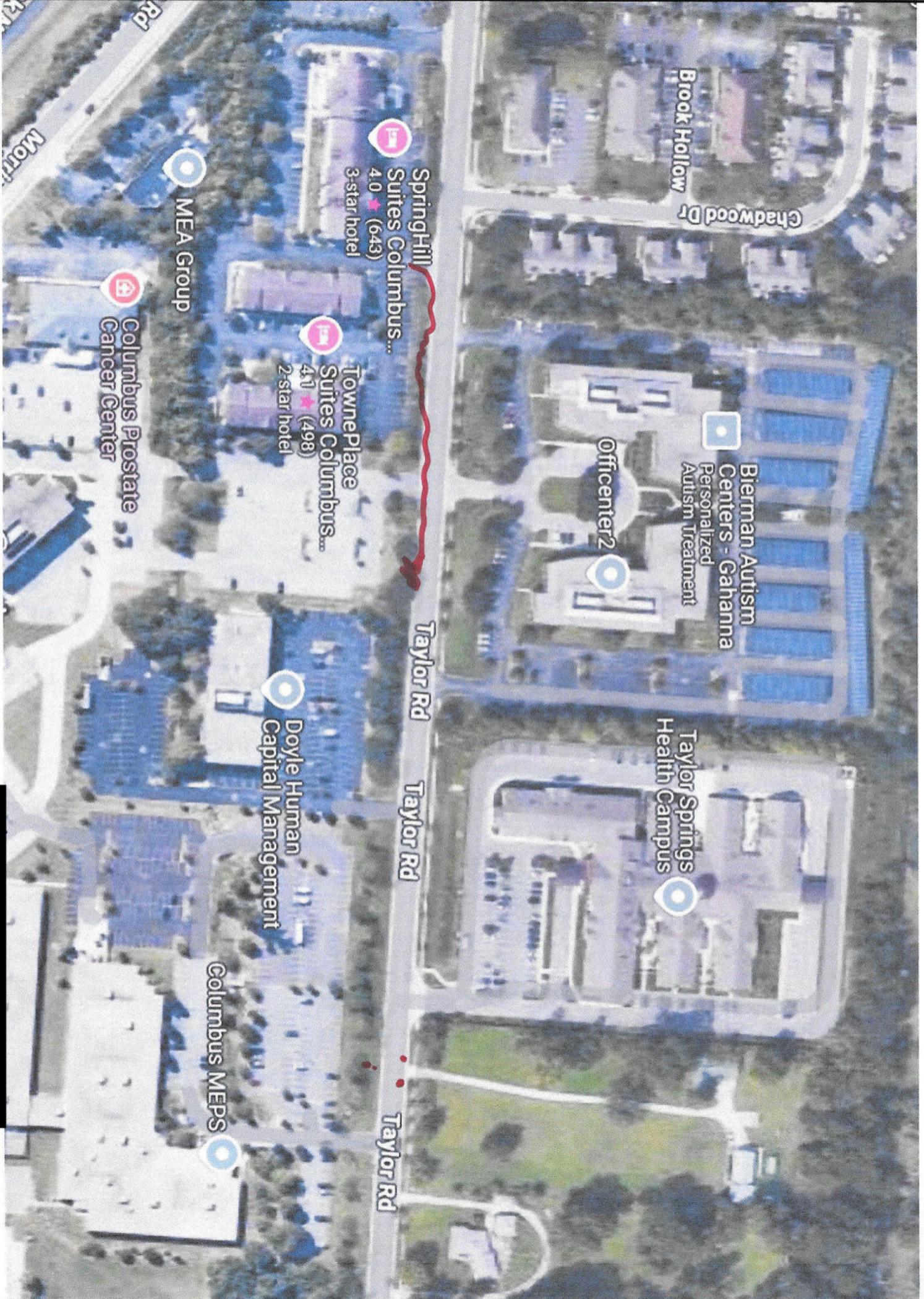
1/17/25 11:11a
Date / Time

[Redacted Signature] _____
Signature of Interviewee

Kyle Douglass
BCI Agent (Printed)

Lathan Lippman
[Signature]

[Signature]
BCI Agent (Signature)



Brook Hollow

Chadwood Dr

Spring Hill
Suites Columbus...
4.0 (643)
3-star hotel

TownePlace
Suites Columbus...
4.1 (498)
2-star hotel

Bierman Autism
Centers - Gahanna
Personalized
Autism Treatment

Offcenter 2

Taylor Springs
Health Campus

Taylor Rd

Taylor Rd

Taylor Rd

Doyle Human
Capital Management

Columbus MEPS

MEA Group

Columbus Prostate
Cancer Center





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