



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



2024-1814
Officer Involved Critical Incident – 8401 South Dixie Highway,
Rudolph, Ohio 43462

Investigative Activity: Interview with Witness
Involves: Matt Patton (W)
Date of Activity: 06/16/2024
Activity Location: Taylor, George Eric – Home – 8401 South Dixie Highway, Rudolph, OH 43462
Author: SA Joshua S. Rammel, #175

Narrative:

On June 16, 2024, Special Agent (SA) Josh Rammel (Rammel) conducted an interview with Matt Patton (Patton) regarding the Officer Involved Critical Incident (OICI) involving the Wood County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) and deceased individual George Eric Taylor (Taylor).

The interview took place at the location of the OICI, 8401 South Dixie Highway, Rudolph, Ohio. The interview was recorded using a digital audio recorder. A copy of the recording was attached to this investigation.

SA Rammel made contact with Patton and identified himself and inquired if Patton would be willing to speak with SA Rammel regarding the interaction between Taylor and WCSO.

Patton advised he would be willing to speak with SA Rammel. Patton identified himself as Taylor's best friend and that they had been friends for over 40 years. Patton provided basic identification information such as his date of birth and phone number.

Patton stated that Taylor has had health issues since Taylor's last tour in Iraq. Patton described Taylor as "not the same person he (Patton) knew when we (Patton and Taylor) were kids". Patton informed SA Rammel that Taylor was diagnosed with [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. Patton mentioned multiple instances in the past when Taylor had interaction with law enforcement due to the [REDACTED]

Patton told SA Rammel that Taylor just got married in October of 2023, but that the marriage was not good. Patton said that Taylor got kicked out of his wife's house, in Greenville, in May 2024, and that they're relationship had been bad since. Patton indicated that on the previous Friday, June 14, 2024, Taylor was supposed to "go away" with his wife for her birthday to a campground in Mercer County, but they got into a fight which eventually led to Taylor coming back to his residence at 8401 South Dixie Highway on June 15, 2024. Taylor's wife was

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Approved By SAS Scott A. Stranahan on
07/09/2024

identified as Jessica Taylor (Jessica). Taylor told Patton that Jessica told him that they "were done". Patton went to pick Taylor up in Piqua due to Taylor have issues with his motorcycle.

Patton advised that he picked up Taylor around noon in Piqua on June 15, 2024, before they went to get Taylor's car at Jessica's house in Greenville. Patton mentioned that Taylor left "a note" in the house that had Jessica's information on it and other statements that appear to be a suicide note.

Patton told SA Rammel that Taylor and Patton worked on multiple vehicles and other equipment throughout the day and that Taylor "broke down" multiple times regarding Jessica. Patton indicated that he finally went home around 9:30–10:00 p.m. and at that time Taylor told Patton he was going to "take a bath and go to bed". Patton mentioned that he told Taylor to "call me" if Taylor needed anything prior to Patton leaving for the night. At this point in the interview Patton became very emotional and walked away from SA Rammel for a few moments.

Patton stated that Taylor agreed that he would call Patton if needed. Patton said he went to bed around midnight and was woken up by a call from his ex-wife Christine Korb (Korb), who is a member of the Weston Emergency Medical Services (EMS), telling Patton that something was wrong with Taylor and that he needed to get to Taylor's house because WCSO and EMS were being dispatched there. Patton stated he got dressed quickly and came immediately to Taylor's house.

Patton informed SA Rammel that when he arrived at Taylor's there was a Deputy from WCSO on-scene, but that Taylor and that Deputy did not get along and the Deputy left Taylor's house when Sergeant Chris Reynolds (Reynolds) arrived on scene and made the Deputy leave. The Deputy was identified as Michael Shaffer (Shaffer).

Patton indicated that Taylor was "drunk" and "riding a major roller coaster, up and down between clarity and being overwhelmed". Patton stated that he and the WCSO were able to get into Taylor's house because Patton had the codes for the door and garage. They were able to enter after Taylor locked the doors and did not respond to the WCSO Deputies when they were trying to make initial contact.

Patton advised that as he entered Taylor's house through the garage, Taylor was sitting on his couch with his "Ka-bar" in his hand and a note pinned to the hoodie that Taylor was wearing. Patton told SA Rammel that Reynold's called Jessica's voicemail and read her the contents of the note that was pinned to Taylor's hoodie per Taylor's request during the time WCSO was speaking with Taylor.

Patton described Taylor's interaction with WCSO and Patton to be "up and down" with Taylor responding positively to some conversation's while ignoring others. Patton informed SA Rammel that the Deputy who shot Taylor, identified later as Samuel Miller (Miller), was not Shaffer; but that Miller and Reynolds were communicating with Taylor for a long time and appeared to be building a good report with Taylor.

Patton advised that the interaction eventually left the living room and made it to the garage. Patton knew that Taylor had a "pistol" and when Patton asked Taylor where the pistol was at,

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Taylor told him "not to worry about it". At that time Taylor made motions to appear that he was rummaging through a storage area in his couch before getting up and closing the doors on Patton, Reynolds, and Miller due to them all slowly leaving the residence as Taylor got closer to them.

Patton stated that this led to Taylor coming to the house door entrance into the garage with a shotgun in his hands. Patton advised that Miller had his gun drawn and pointed towards Taylor during this timeframe. Patton indicated that Reynold's never drew his gun or taser the entire time he was speaking with Taylor. Patton mentioned that he tried to convince Reynolds and Miller to use their tasers on Taylor in order to get him down, but Reynolds informed Patton that they could not do that because "they did not want to miss".

Patton advised that Taylor made the comment that he would come outside if the Deputies would put their guns down, but Miller did not put his gun down and the WCSO Deputies did not want to go into the house again while Taylor was armed. Patton was able to go up to Taylor and take possession of the shotgun. After taking possession of the shotgun Patton placed it in front of the truck parked in the driveway near Reynolds. After giving Patton the shotgun, Taylor went back inside the house and closed the door to the garage. Taylor then returned back through the house door and "acted like he had a weapon" and was "making it clear that he (Taylor) wanted them (WCSO) to shoot him (Taylor)". Patton stated that Taylor made comments that he wanted to be shot.

Taylor returned back into his house and came back to the doorway with either an "AR or AK". Patton mentioned that he walked away from the garage towards the truck where Reynolds was positioned. Miller, at this time was diagonally away from Taylor on the other side of the driveway with his gun pointed towards Taylor. Patton stated that Miller and Reynolds were yelling at Taylor trying to get him to cooperate and that was when Patton heard a gunshot. Patton indicated that "to my (Patton) knowledge" it was only one gun shot. Patton advised he started screaming when it happened, and that he was initially unsure as to who had shot, except that it was not Reynolds. Patton commented that Taylor did "three tours in Iraq, won the Bronze Star...came home to be shot by a cop".

Patton informed SA Rammel that he never met Jessica, and that when Taylor and Jessica got together, he "went ghost" before spending most of his time in Greenville with Jessica. Patton stated that Taylor just recently transferred his Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) job from Miami County up to Wood County. Patton mentioned that he attempted to call Jessica after Taylor had been shot, but there had been no contact with Jessica that he knows of.

Patton described the location in the house of the possible suicide note to SA Rammel. Patton informed SA Rammel that he believed Taylor had several more guns, but it had been a long time since he had been in Taylor's bedroom and Patton did not know if the guns were still there.

Patton did not know how Miller reacted after the shooting and kept saying that "I lost my shit". At that time Patton's brother Tom Patton (Tom) approached Patton and SA Rammel due to Patton getting very emotional and was able to provide SA Rammel with a few contact numbers for Taylor's family. Patton stated that he and Tom were "Taylor's family", and that Taylor was not close to any of his biological family. Patton was able to show SA Rammel the Facebook

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page for Taylor's ex-wife, Christina Taylor (Christina), in North Carolina. Patton also mentioned that Taylor has two adult daughters, but Patton did not know where they lived or what they were doing.

Patton confirmed that it was only him, Miller, and Reynolds present with Taylor during the actual shooting, and that Shaffer was no longer on-scene.

Patton informed SA Rammel that in his opinion the "officers did nothing wrong", and that Reynolds took care of having Shaffer leave when it became apparent that Taylor wanted him gone.

At that time the conversation with Patton was concluded. SA Rammel provided Patton with his contact information and thanked Patton for speaking with him.

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.

Attachments:

Attachment # 01: matt patton interview 2024-06-16