



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



2021-0957

Officer-Involved Critical Incident- 3171 Legion Ln, Columbus

Investigative Activity: Interview with Witness

Involves: Witness; Jhamia Towler

Activity Date: 5/25/2021

Activity Location: 3223 Rabbit Hill Ln, Columbus, OH

Authoring Agent: SA Matt Collins, #151

Narrative:

On Tuesday, May 25, 2021, at 1212 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Matt Collins (SA Collins) and SA John Butterworth (SA Butterworth) interviewed Jhamia Towler (Towler), relative to the officer-involved shooting which took place on Tuesday, April 20, 2021. The interview took place at 3223 Rabbit Hill Ln., Columbus, OH. The purpose of the interview was to obtain all relevant information of the incident known or observed by this individual. SA Collins and SA Butterworth previously made contact with Towler at her residence on May 5th. However, Towler was not available for an interview on that particular day.

When SA Collins and SA Butterworth made contact with Towler on May 25th, they were invited into her apartment. Towler indicated she was calling her "Mom," to be included in the conversation. SA Collins learned later in the interview that it was Towler former foster mother, Michelle Baker (Baker).

SA Collins explained they were investigating the incident that occurred on April 20, 2021, and involved members on the Columbus Police and Ma'Khia Bryant. Towler stated she recalled the events from that date. Towler stated she received a Facetime call from her neighbor, Shai-Onta Craig (Craig) around 1500 hours. Towler said Craig told her she was about to go over to "Angie's house" because the girls are about to jump Tionna Bonner (Bonner). Towler stated she did not think much of it at the time, as she referenced the girls as just kids. Towler said she was still on the phone with Craig, when Craig arrived on Legion. Towler described hearing a lot of yelling. Since she did not know who all was over there, Towler said she ended up calling Baker at around 1552 hours. Towler asked Baker if she knew whether Angie was home or not. Baker told Towler, Angie was at work. Towler told Baker that people were over at Angie's house yelling, arguing and out of control. Towler had first asked Baker to go over there, however, Baker could not at the time.

Towler said Craig ended up calling her back and Towler learned Bonner and Craig were near Craig's car in the driveway and "the grandmother" was getting the girls and taking them out of



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there. Towler said she told Craig to come get her because she believed "there's too much going on" in reference to all the commotion at Angie's house and Angie not being there.

Towler said she went to the house with Craig and Kennedy Watkins (Watkins). Towler stated she'd sent Baker a text message at 1643 hours, stating she was at Angie's. Towler said she did not know the police had been called or that the "dad was coming" (Myron Hammonds (Myron)). When they pulled-up into the driveway, Towler said she initially stayed in the car because she was still on the phone and had her headphones on. When she did get out of the car, she witnessed Bonner with her dog and they greeted one another. Towler approximated it was only a few seconds later, Myron arrived, exited his car and looked at she and Bonner. Myron said, "I don't know who said they're gonna put their hands on my mom..." Towler said she was confused because she did not know what all was going on at that point.

Towler further explained, Myron had approached the front porch and then everyone came out of the house. Towler said, *"She come out, she's walkin' towards Shai with a knife. So, at this point I'm still by the car, like I'm just you know, confused at this point. Trying to just be aware, cause now I'm like, okay, she got a knife. So, literally, I see Shai fall—I thought she stabbed Shai. I thought that Shai had got stabbed twice. Then I seen her body like come towards where me and Tionna was, so in my head, I'm like let me move. So, I backed away from the car a little bit. As that happened then the officer came—Like I said, I never knew police was comin'. It was just happen so fast outta nowhere. So then the police came, next thing you know, I turned and all I hear is pop, pop, pop, pop. So I duck, and get scared and I throw my hands up. So after that, I'm just like, what are you doin'? What are you doin'? What are you doin'? Cause now I see the little girl's on the ground, she's shot. So then the officer walks up to me and then he tells me to put my hands on the car and stuff."*

Towler said she got on the phone with Baker and told her what was going on. Towler said there was an officer who told her to stay there but after a while, they were trying to get people back out of the crime scene tape.

As SA Collins was asking Towler some clarification questions, the topic was on Towler speaking with Craig and Baker either while arriving or just before she arrived. Baker, who was on the phone during the interview, said, "You's on the phone with me. You called me, sayin' 'Please hurry-up, they out of control. They tearing miss Angie's house up'."

Towler was asked if there was more than one person with a knife and she stated no. She described Ma'Khia as the only person having a knife. Towler had described herself being next to Bonner and she was "I had the all black on" in the video. As Towler continued, she described



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Ma'Khia saying something about stabbing someone. SA Collins made a point to clarify some things himself because Towler mentioned seeing a video and continued to describe events. SA Collins explained he only wished to have information which Towler witnessed because she was there and not because of what she'd seen in a video. Towler again stated she witnessed Ma'Khia say, "I'm gonna stab the fuck outta you." Towler said once she saw Craig go to the ground (she believed Craig was stabbed twice), Ma'Kia then came in the direction of she and Bonner. Towler said he backed up towards the rear of the car. Towler was asked what she felt during that time. She said she was not sure what was going on and she wondered if she was going to be attacked next. SA Collins asked Towler if she could describe the knife. Towler described Ma'Khia having a steak knife in her right hand.

Towler was asked who all she knew, who was present on Legion Ln. Towler listed Craig, Watkins, and Bonner as the only subjects whom she knew. However, she did know of Janiah Bryant.

The interview concluded at approximately 1242 hours.

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