



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



2022-1090

Officer-Involved Critical Incident-Cora Baughman (S)

Investigative Activity: Interview with Officer [REDACTED]
Involves: Portage County Sheriff's Office, Officer-Involved Incident
Activity Date: 5/14/2022
Activity Location: 8643 Werger Rd., Garrettsville, Ohio
Authoring Agent: Arvin E. Clar #127

Narrative:

On Tuesday, June 7, 2022, at 1340 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Arvin Clar #127 (Clar) and SA Jonathan Lieber #50 (Lieber) interviewed Portage County Deputy Sheriff [REDACTED] # [REDACTED] (Deputy [REDACTED]). Deputy [REDACTED] was accompanied by his attorney, George Gerken, from the Ohio Patrolmen's Benevolent Association (OPBA). The interview took place at 10147 Royalton Rd., North Royalton, Ohio. The interview was audio recorded.

Deputy [REDACTED] read, understood and signed the BCI Criminal Investigation Notification form.

During the course of the interview, agents utilized tactics designed to illicit truthful responses and to test the veracity of information provided. As many of the details of the investigation into the incident were publicly available, it was necessary to utilize alternative tactics (beyond the typical methodology of retaining confidential "holdout" information regarding the incident and then comparing/contrasting witness statements with information that could only be known by those with actual knowledge of the incident). These tactics include developing rapport and potentially providing information known to be erroneous. Therefore, misstatements of facts or evidence in the recorded interview by the interviewing agents are intentional and align with the strategy for the overall investigative plan.

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.



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Preliminary and Demographic Information:

Name: Austin I. [REDACTED]	Rank: Deputy (Dep.)
Badge Number: [REDACTED]	Cruiser/Vehicle Number: [REDACTED]
Radio Call Sign: [REDACTED]	Immediate Supervisor: Sgt. Keith Wilson
Radio Channel Utilized: PCSO	Mobile Data Terminal: Present & Utilized
Cruiser Description: Chevrolet Tahoe, Marked	Occupants of Cruiser and Seating Positions: Sole Occupant
Assignment: Center Sector	Normal Shift: Day 0700-1900
In-Car Camera: Not Present	Spotlight: Present; Not utilized
Emergency Lights: Present & Utilized	Siren: Present; Not Used
Shift Day of Incident: First	Duty Status: On-Duty
Days Off: Rotation	Prior Overtime or Extra Details within Preceding 48 Hours: No
Hours of Sleep Prior to Incident: Adequate	Consider Self Well Rested? Yes
Total Length as Officer: 4	Length at Current Agency: 7 months
Physical Disabilities (to include hearing aid): None	Corrective Lenses: Glasses
Uniform Worn: Gray slacks, black Sherriff shirt with patches and outer vest carrier	Equipment and Less-Lethal Options Carried on Person/Belt/Vest: Standard issued weapon and taser.
Ballistic Vest: External Armor	Body Worn Camera: Not Present
Other Recording Devices: No	Partner: No
Injuries: No	Equipment Damage: No
Training or Areas of Specialty: Taser	OPOTC Certification: Yes
Military Experience/Training: No	Use-of-Force Training: (OPOTA)
Prior Shooting Incidents: No	Prior Discipline or Use-of-Force Complaints: No
Medications, Prescriptions, or Drugs that might Impair Your Duties at Time of Incident: No	Medications, Prescriptions, or Drugs that might Impair You Now for Interview: No
Alcohol in Past 24 Hours? No	Last Consumed Alcohol Prior to Incident: Does not recall



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Officer's Firearm(s):

Weapon #1

Make: S&W	Model: MP 9
Caliber/Gauge: 9 mm	Serial: [REDACTED]
Type: Semi-Auto Handgun	Method of Carry: Sidearm holster
Magazine Capacity: 17	Total Rounds as Carried (including chamber): 18
Extra Magazines: 2	Number of Rounds in Extra Magazines: 17
Discharged During Incident? No	Primary or Backup Weapon: Primary
Rounds Remaining After Incident: Unknown	Number of Rounds Fired: Unknown
Right/Left-Handed Carry: Right-Handed	Ownership: Department Owned
Last Qualification Date: 8/31/2021	Type of Holster, if any: Safari land level 2

Narrative:

On June 7, 2022, at the office of the Ohio Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, located at 10147 Royalton Rd., North Royalton, Ohio, BCI SA Clar and SA Lieber conducted an audio-recorded interview with Portage County Sheriff's Deputy (PCSO) Deputy [REDACTED]

Also attending the interview, representing Deputy [REDACTED] were attorneys from the Ohio Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, George Gerkin and Daniel Leffler.

The interview began at approximately 1320 hours.

Deputy [REDACTED] started the interview by explaining his assignment for the day and explaining the equipment and employment history with the Sheriff's Office. Deputy [REDACTED] said he began his tour on May 14, 2022, assigned to the "Center North" district of the county and began his shift at 0700 hours.

Deputy [REDACTED] also said that his vehicle was not equipped with an onboard camera, nor did he [REDACTED] wear a body-worn camera (BWC).

Deputy [REDACTED] has prior law enforcement experience, as he served as a deputy sheriff with Trumbull County in 2018, prior to gaining employment with Portage County Sheriff's Office in 2021.

Deputy [REDACTED] has not been involved in a prior officer-involved incident, nor has he had any allegations of use of force complaints.

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Deputy ■■■ does not recall the number of shots he fired during the incident.

Deputy ■■■ said that on May 14, he received an assignment to respond to Werger Rd., reference a "Neighbor dispute." Deputy ■■■ then said while he was responding, he received additional information that the suspect is in the garage and trying to gain entry into the house. The suspect ["she"] also reportedly has a weapon.

Deputy ■■■ said he received additional assistance ["mutual aid"] from a Garrettsville police officer and was advised that additional units from the PCSO would be responding.

Deputy ■■■ said he was "running lights and sirens," responding to the location, but discontinued the activity when he reached Werger Rd.

Deputy ■■■ said that he responded to the call at 8643 Werger Rd. and deactivated his siren when he approached Werger Rd.

Deputy ■■■ again, said that he activated his overhead lights as he responded to the incident on Werger Rd.

Deputy ■■■ said when he arrived at the incident location, 8643 Werger Rd., he was being assisted by Garrettsville Police Sgt. Keith Whan (Whan).

Deputy ■■■ then said he parked his vehicle at the end of the driveway, meeting Werger Rd. Deputy ■■■ said he parked his vehicle on one side of the driveway, while Sgt. Whan parked his vehicle on the other side of the driveway.

Deputy ■■■ said he can see the house and the attached garage doors. Deputy ■■■ said one garage door, closer to the house, is open.

Deputy ■■■ then said, as he exited his vehicle and began to approach the house and garage, he can see the subject come out of "the darkness" of the garage, holding a black gun in her right hand.

Deputy ■■■ attempted to gain the identity of the female subject to determine if she was the homeowner.

Deputy ■■■ then said the female would not respond to him.

Deputy ■■■ said he drew his gun and began to give the female commands to drop the gun.

Deputy ■■■ then said he observed a truck parked in the driveway, as he was seeking to use the vehicle to gain cover. Deputy ■■■ said that he was becoming closer to the subject and continued



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to give commands to the subject to drop the gun. Deputy [REDACTED] said the female did not drop the weapon. Deputy [REDACTED] said he told the subject, "Drop the gun or you will be shot."

Deputy [REDACTED] said after informing the subject that she would be shot, the subject then raised both hands in the air, still holding the gun in her right hand.

Deputy [REDACTED] instructed the subject to drop the gun again. At this time, the subject "yells no." Deputy [REDACTED] said the subject then said, "I am going to go inside and I'm going to kill them." The subject then walks back inside of the garage.

Deputy [REDACTED] observes a large SUV parked in the garage, closest to the door leading into the house. Deputy [REDACTED] said he was still outside of the garage but could see that the subject was at the front of the SUV, on the driver's side.

Deputy [REDACTED] said that he continues to give the command to the subject to drop the gun. The subject again said, "No." Deputy [REDACTED] said that the subject pointed the gun at his direction.

Deputy [REDACTED] said that is when he fired his weapon at her. Deputy [REDACTED] also said he was in fear for his life, the life of the officer with him and "potentially" the people inside of the house.

Deputy [REDACTED] said after he shot, he quickly responded to his dispatcher of the shooting incident. Deputy [REDACTED] also said that he and Sgt. Whan immediately began to administer first aid to the subject.

Deputy [REDACTED] visibly appeared to become emotional during the interview. SA Clar asked Deputy [REDACTED] if he was okay; Deputy [REDACTED] said it has been difficult.

SA Clar asked Deputy [REDACTED] how many times did the subject say "no." Deputy [REDACTED] replied that he was not certain.

Deputy [REDACTED] said that when he first arrived on the scene, he could observe people inside of the house through the front bay window.

Deputy [REDACTED] then said that when the subject pointed the gun at him, he was at the rear of the vehicle on the driver's side and was closest to the outside; the subject was at the front of the vehicle, inside of the garage.

SA Lieber asked Deputy [REDACTED] if he has responded to the address on Werger Rd. in the past for any calls of service. Deputy [REDACTED] could not recall being at the address on any prior occasions or being involved with the subject, Cora Baughman.



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Deputy [REDACTED] said he ceased firing his weapon when he felt there was no longer a threat. Deputy [REDACTED] also said that once the subject fell to the ground, he moved the gun from the immediate area of the subject.

Deputy [REDACTED] also said he viewed the body-cam video of Garrettsville Police Sgt. Whan on one occasion.

The interview concluded at approximately 1540 hours.

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.



DAVE YOST

OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL



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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).



 Printed Name of Interviewee

6/7/22 @ 1315


 Date / Time



 Signature of Interviewee

ARUN E. CLAR

 BCI Agent (Printed)



 BCI Agent (Signature)