



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



2022-0826

Officer-Involved Critical Incident - W. 46th Street, between Collins Blvd. and Valley View Blvd.

Investigative Activity: APD Ofc. Sheri Allen Body Camera Review
Activity Date: 6/7/2022
Activity Location: Area of 46th Street, Ashtabula, Ohio
Authoring Agent: SA Jon Lieber #50

Narrative:

On Wednesday, April 27, 2022, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Jon Lieber (Lieber) received video footage from the Ashtabula Police Department (APD). SA Lieber was informed that the video contained footage from the body camera worn by Officer (Ofc.) Sheri Allen (Allen), badge P8.

SA Lieber reviewed the video recordings and noted the following:

The video is 1 hour, 40 minutes and 58 seconds in duration. The date stamp at the beginning of the video is 04/13/2022, at 00:20:00 hours. Note that this footage contains video but no audio during the times that Allen did not have her body camera activated. When Allen activated her body camera, audio is present. APD Lt. Doug Hollis confirmed that the body cameras will passively record video only and no audio when the cameras have not been activated. Once an officer activates the camera, both audio and video are recorded.



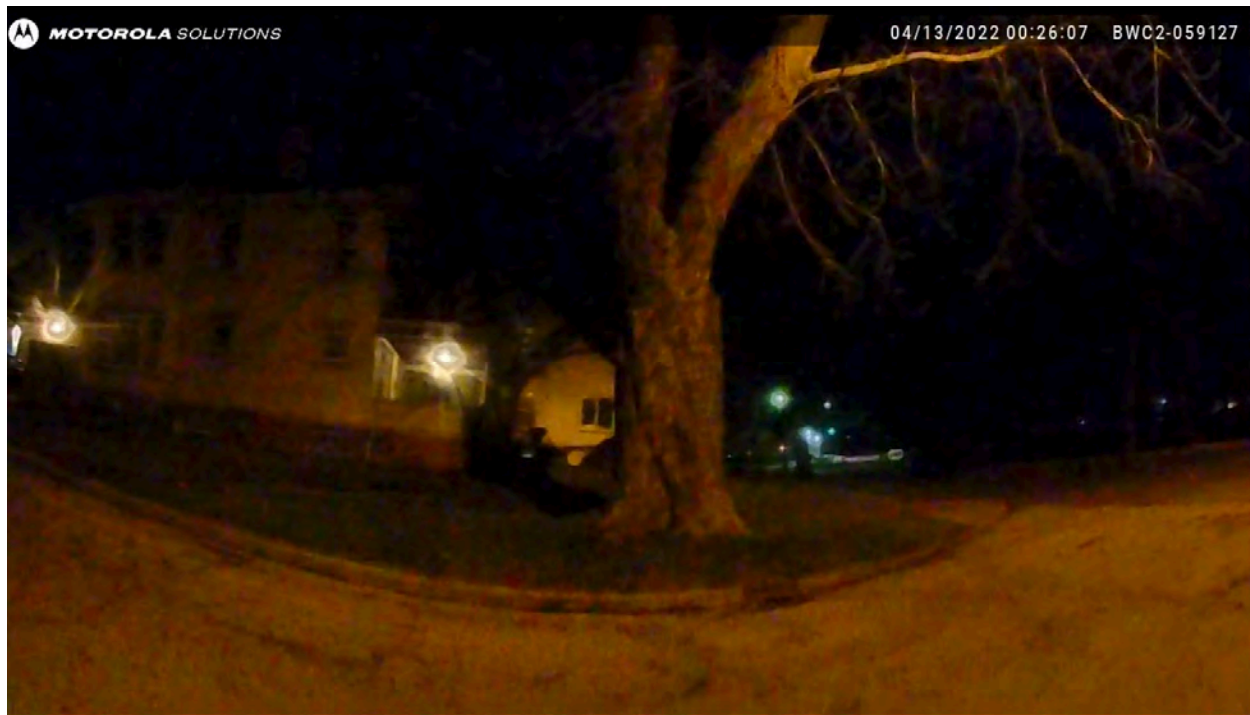
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The video begins showing Allen driving her police cruiser. At 00:26:04, Allen exits her cruiser. It is believed that she parks her cruiser at the intersection of East 45th Street and Valley View Boulevard. The east side entrance/exit area of the W. 46th Street bridge (also known as the Spring Street bridge) can be seen in the distance. See screenshot below:



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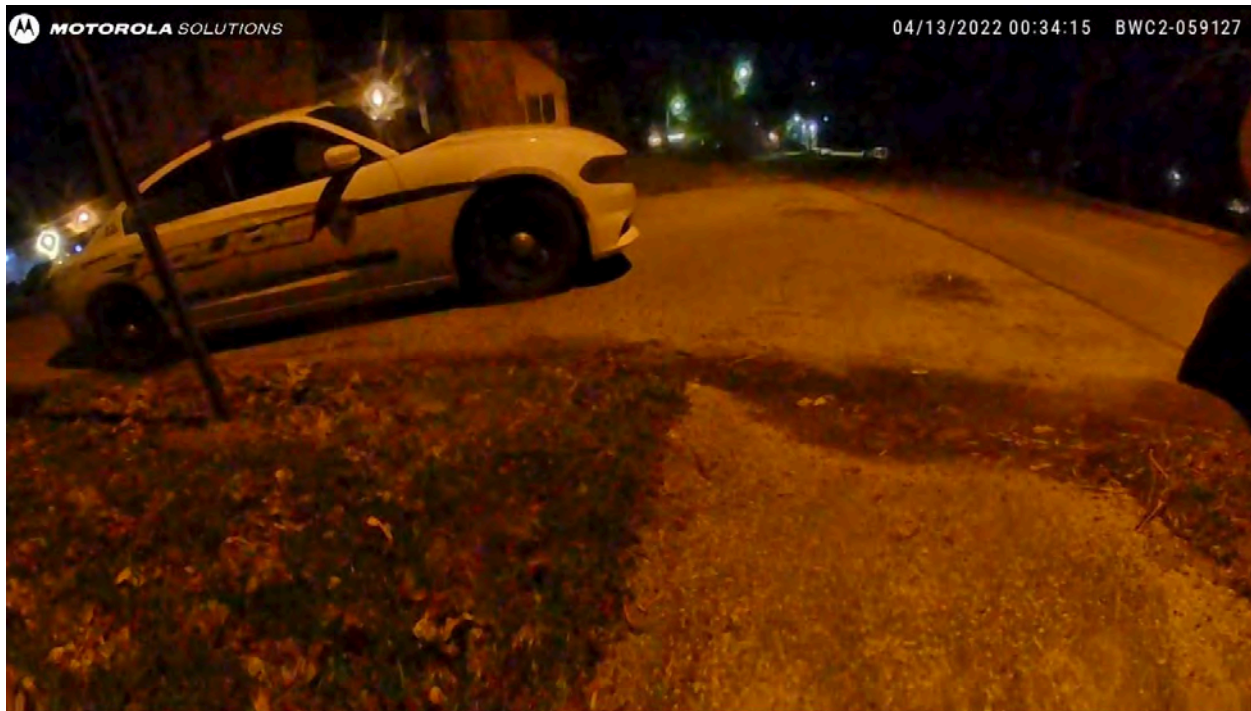
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At 00:26:23, Allen stops a vehicle driving down the street and appears to motion for them to turn around. At 00:27:26, another officer in a marked police cruiser arrives. At 00:28:17, Allen retrieves what appears to be a thermal imaging binocular from her trunk and uses them to look toward the bridge. At 00:34:15, Allen is standing near E. 45th Street and Valley View Blvd., facing the east side of the bridge. See screenshot below:



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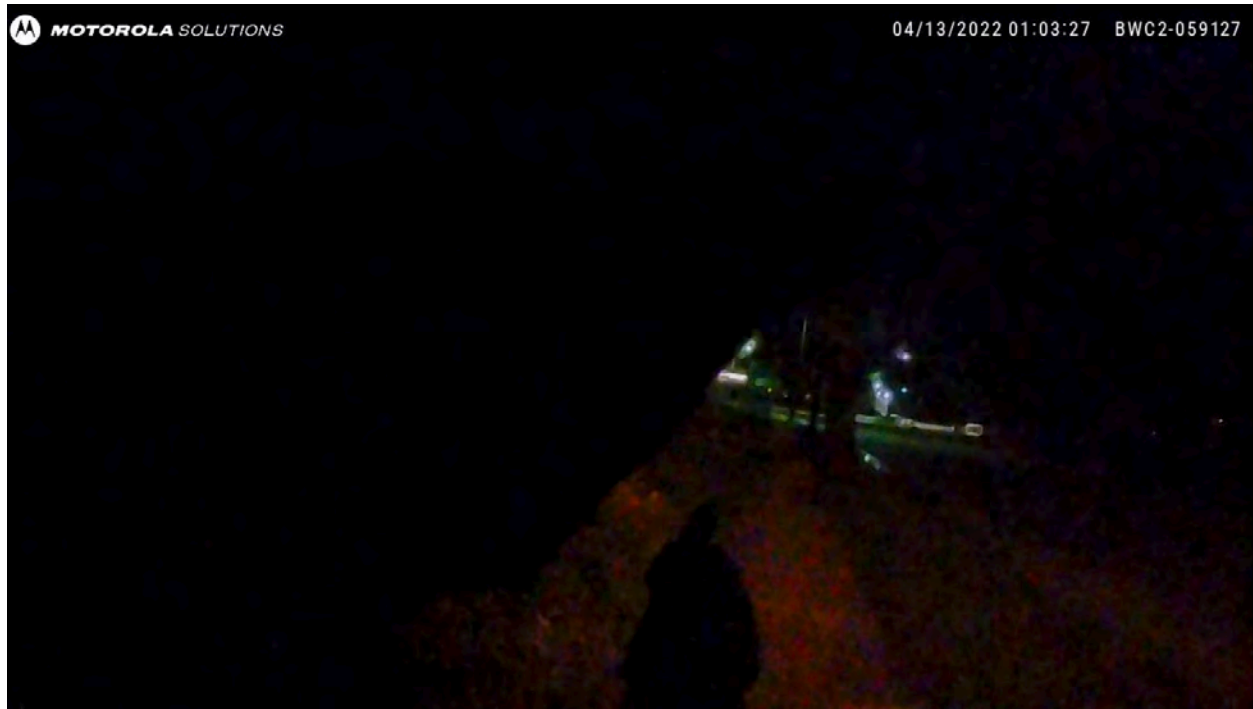
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At various times, Allen appears to be holding a cell phone up to or near her head/face area. At 01:03:27, Allen walks down Valley View Blvd., toward the bridge but stops. Allen is still a considerable distance from the bridge. See screenshot below:



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At 01:11:10, red and blue flashing lights can be seen in the distance. See screenshot below. Note that SA Lieber added the arrow to assist with locating the flashing lights.



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At 01:26:05, Allen gets into her vehicle and drives to the entry point of the drive on the east side. Two other police vehicles arrive with their emergency lights activated. Allen gets back into a police vehicle and drives down the bridge. As she exits the vehicle, two officers can be seen walking on the sidewalk area of the bridge. See screenshot below. Note that Ward can be seen lying on the ground in front of the officers.



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At 01:28:28, audio can now be heard on the recording. The lead officer (Lt. William Parkomaki) approaches Ward and moves a shotgun from its location on the sidewalk, next to Ward, to the street. See screenshots below showing the location of the shotgun both before and after it was moved.



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At 01:28:50, handcuffs are placed on Ward. Ward is then rolled onto his back and officers begin to provide medical aid. At 01:30:05, Ashtabula Fire Department (AFD) personnel arrive on scene. Ward is loaded into the ambulance and his handcuffs are removed.

At 01:34:25, Allen says, “Diagnosed with stage 4 skin cancer. Two gallons of vodka didn’t help.” An officer, believed to be Ofc. Cody Caruso (Caruso), says to Allen, “You talked to him for quite a while.” Allen replies, “He saw them. At first he thought it was just me. Then he saw the trooper.” They briefly talk about Ward not seeing Allen; Allen says that Ward saw the trooper and that’s why he walked in that direction. Allen says, “He said he wasn’t going to force me to do it.” Allen says that Ward was drunk and that one minute he’d be fine and the next minute he would flip. Allen said, “Cause he said they’re screaming at me, they’re screaming at me, I don’t care, I don’t care.” Allen said that the reason that Ward stood on the bridge for so long is because Ward thought it was just Allen near the scene. Ward told Allen that he saw the trooper and said that he was going to walk to him.

At 01:37:10, the audio turns off. At 01:38:30, audio can again be heard. Allen stays on the bridge during this time. At 01:42:22, the audio turns off.

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At 01:58:12, audio can again be heard. At this time, Allen is on the east side of the bridge and she begins talking to several occupants in a vehicle. Allen asks the front seat passenger (David Ward Sr.), "Whose gun is it?" Ward Sr. replies that it should be in his name. Ward Sr. said it is a 20-gauge shotgun with a slug barrel. Ward Sr. said that there were probably no shells in it because he doesn't use the gun, and he doesn't know where the ammunition is at. Allen asks if Ward (Jr.) had a girlfriend. Ward Sr. and the female in the driver seat (Cheri Stuper) say that Ward Jr. had a girlfriend off and on. Ward Sr. said that Ward Jr. had a girlfriend but she left him because Ward Jr. doesn't have a very good work habit. Ward Sr. said that Ward Jr. has been working with Ward Sr.'s brother (seated in the passenger side rear seat of the vehicle) for two months and that's the longest job Ward Jr. has had. He also said that Ward Jr. is 23 years old. Ward Sr. said that Ward Jr. was let go from his job this past Friday. Allen asked if Ward Jr. drank alcohol. Ward Sr. said that Ward Jr. did drink and that there was a half of a bottle of vodka gone. Ward Sr. said, "He needs help. No, he really does, this ain't his first-time trying stuff like this. I mean it's never been this big but he needs help." Ward Sr. said that he doesn't want Ward Jr. released because he needs help. Ward Sr. indicated that they are going to go to the hospital to see Ward Jr.

The video ends at 02:00:59.

The DVD containing the video footage was submitted to the physical BCI case file as item A.