



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



2023-1535

Officer Involved Critical Incident - 311 25th Street SW, Canton, Ohio

Investigative Activity: Witness Interview - Sandra Suiste
Activity Date: June 14, 2023
Activity Location: BCI - Richfield
Authoring Agent: SA Matthew Armstrong #146

Narrative:

On June 14, 2023, at approximately 1520 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Matthew Armstrong (Armstrong) and SA Nick Valente (Valente) interviewed Sandra Suiste (Suiste). Suiste was the mother of Jeffrey Neff (Neff). The interview was audio recorded and took place in a conference room at the Canton Police Department (CPD). Suiste went to the CPD on June 13, 2023 and informed Det. Sgt. Bryan McWilliams she believed she had information relevant to the shooting incident involving her son, Neff.

The following is a summary of 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. The information 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.

Throughout the interview, Suiste provided the following information:

Suiste explained Neff began using marijuana in his mid-teens and had abused drugs regularly since that time. She did not think he was using heroin or methamphetamine, but she suspected he was currently using crack cocaine. For the past 10 years she noticed he had become extremely paranoid. He thought everyone was watching him including the neighbors. He had been a habitual drug abuser since his teens with only brief periods of sobriety.

Neff believed he was bi-polar but was never diagnosed with any mental illnesses because he was not willing to see a medical professional for mental illness. As a child, and throughout his life, he would threaten suicide when things did not go his way.

Over the past three months he said he would not go back to jail. He had previously been in jail for a domestic in another relationship and he always said he would never go back to jail. He talked to her about how miserable he was with his wife Domnita. He said he didn't have a job or anything in life and felt like he had nothing to live for.

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In April 2023, he told her he needed help getting off the drugs and getting away from his wife Domnita. In an attempt to become sober, he went to stay with his sister Jessica Neff in Dairy, Pennsylvania. After 10 days he left and drove back home. She believed he came back to use drugs. After some time, she drove him back to Pennsylvania and dropped him off without a vehicle. He was there for 16 days.

On June 1, 2023, she talked to him on the phone. He said he needed to come back home because his grandfather had a heart attack that morning. Suiste said his grandfather was medically fine and did have a heart attack but it was not that day. She believed Neff was making an excuse to come back to use drugs. While on the phone, he said "Mom, sorry, if you're coming here for a visit I won't be here" and he said "I probably won't talk to you again" (4:30). Neff told her "If he seen the cops come to his house, he would take off running and that he would shoot so he would have to be shot" (20:52). She told him he couldn't do that and asked why he would talk that way and he told her "If you think I'm afraid to do it, I'm not" (21:26). Suiste said she never thought he would actually do it.

During her last two conversations with Neff, he told her over and over again that he was either going to kill Domnita and himself in a murder/suicide or if the cops showed up for a domestic he would run and shoot until they had to kill him. She estimated he had told her this more than 20 times over the past three months.

Neff had a 17-year-old son named Chase Neff that he had not seen for 9 or 10 years. Neff had reached out to him before returning from Pennsylvania and because he wanted to see him for Father's Day. Chase told him he did not want to see him. She believed that was another factor causing Neff to feel like there was no reason to live.

When Suiste's dad passed away Neff stole his gun. She knew it was a revolver but did not know any other details about it. She believed he carried it everywhere with him. Neff had told her he carried it in his waistband. She believed he had pulled the gun out on people in the past but did not know if he had ever fired it. She recalled one instance when he told her he pulled it out and put it to Domnita's head while they were arguing.

Neff hated the police and always verbalized how much he hated the police. She explained whenever he saw an officer he would make comments about hating the police, but he never talked about killing the police.

Attachments:

2023-06-14 Interview - Sandra Suiste

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