



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: Body Camera Review
Involves: Michael Shaffer (W)
Date of Activity: 07/22/2024
Author: SA Joshua S. Rammel, #175

Narrative:

On July 22, 2024, Special Agent (SA) Josh Rammel (Rammel) reviewed the body camera footage (footage) belonging to Deputy Michael Shaffer (Shaffer) of the Wood County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) pertaining to the Officer Involved Critical Incident (OICI) that resulted in the death of George Eric Taylor (Eric).

The first segment of the footage was identified as "MShaffer_1766_061624032226_4" and began recording at 01:31:14 on June 16, 2024. The duration of the video footage is ten (10) minutes 30 seconds long. The footage begins with Shaffer running up towards the front entrance of Eric's residence located at 8401 South Dixie Highway, Rudolph, Ohio.

At 01:31:30, Shaffer makes contact with Deputy Samuel Miller (Miller) just inside the garage door house entrance. Eric is seen sitting on a couch in the living room with a large knife in his hand. Eric is conversing with Miller and Matt Patton (Patton). Patton is identified throughout the incident as Eric's best friend. Patton is present during the course of the footage.

At 01:31:34, Eric directly asked Shaffer "want to fight" to which Shaffer responded back "I do not".

At 01:31:40, Eric stands up from the couch and a piece of paper is seen attached to the front of Eric's hoodie. The knife is still held in Eric's hand. Shaffer informed dispatch that Eric had a knife. Patton tells Eric not to do this, and that it "won't end well".

At 01:31:59, Eric accuses Shaffer of being a "tough guy" due to Shaffer having his gun pointed towards Eric. Shaffer informed dispatch that he had "one at gun point".

At 01:32:20, Shaffer began a dialogue with Eric pertaining to Eric being a veteran. The dialogue continued for several minutes which included issues Eric had with the WCSO.

At 01:32:50, Eric began to argue with Shaffer about "reactionary gap" and why Shaffer did not need his gun out due to Eric having a knife.

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Approved By SAS Scott A. Stranahan on
07/29/2024

At 01:34:16, Shaffer informed Eric that if Eric put his knife down then Shaffer would put his gun away. Shaffer told Eric that he did not want to shoot him.

At 01:34:38, Eric stated that he did not invite the WCSO into his house and that since it was his house, he was allowed to have the knife. Eric continued to argue with Shaffer as to why Shaffer was pointing a gun at him. Shaffer again told Eric that he was going to put his gun away if Eric dropped the knife. The argument continued.

At 01:35:41, Eric angrily called Shaffer a "piece of shit and a liar" when discussing the reasons as to why Eric should put down his knife. Eric kept justifying his anger and holding a knife solely due to Shaffer's presence in his house.

At 01:36:01, Eric told Shaffer he would "fuck him up" if Shaffer did not put down his gun. Miller asked Shaffer to take a step back, which Shaffer advised he was not going to do because Miller also had his gun out and Shaffer did not want to walk through the line of fire.

At 01:36:04, Shaffer put his weapon at the low-ready position. Miller explained to Eric why they had their weapons out. Miller continued to talk with Eric as to why they are concerned about Eric having a knife out.

At 01:37:44, Miller and Eric are heard talking about Eric's father's death and it being Father's Day. Patton mentioned that Eric and his father were very close. Patton also mentioned that Eric and his wife, Jessica Taylor (Jessica), just separated and Eric was having a very bad and long day.

At 01:38:07, Patton looked directly at Shaffer and told him that Shaffer was not helping the situation in any way.

At 01:38:15, Eric told Shaffer that "you (Shaffer) and I (Eric) are going to go fucking rounds". Eric asked Shaffer if he was ready. Miller continued to try and get Eric to talk with him and put the knife down and not focus on Shaffer.

Patton and Eric had a conversation about how Jessica was not worth any of this and how Eric's life is better off without her, and that Patton is there for Eric. Patton attempted to convince Eric to put the knife down and not to "do this to me" (Patton).

At 01:39:55, Shaffer radioed for Sergeant Chris Reynolds (Reynolds) and requested that Reynolds take Shaffer's place inside the residence due to Eric's reactions towards Shaffer.

At 01:40:50, Shaffer told Eric he was leaving once Reynolds arrived and that Shaffer really did mean to help.

At 01:41:28, Reynolds arrived inside the house and Eric commented "I'm inviting you (Reynolds) in".

At 01:41:32, Shaffer exited Eric's residence through the garage and took position in the driveway outside.

The footage ends at 01:41:43, as Shaffer's hand is seen turning the body camera off.

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The second segment of the footage was identified as "MShaffer_1766_061624032228_5" and began recording at 01:41:58 on June 16, 2024. The duration of the video footage is 52 minutes long. The footage begins with Shaffer walking up towards the garage door of Eric's residence.

At 01:42:00, Shaffer took position next to a white truck parked in the driveway and on the end of the left side of the driveway.

As Shaffer held this position the individuals inside the residence can be heard talking, but all of it is unintelligible.

At 01:49:50, Patton can be heard yelling at Eric to "put the knife down" and "don't fucking do this to me".

At 01:54:35, Shaffer confirmed with dispatch that Emergency Medical Services (EMS) was staged near the residence.

At 01:55:18, Shaffer returned back to his cruiser and retrieved a trauma kit from the trunk of his vehicle before returning back to the driveway.

At 02:02:37, Reynolds comes out of the residence and garage and informed Shaffer that Eric wanted to talk to him again. Shaffer expressed his concerns regarding returning back inside the house. Reynolds told Shaffer to just "let him (Eric) say what he needs to say".

At 02:02:57, Shaffer returned back into the living room of Eric's residence.

Eric began to engage in a conversation with Shaffer and inquired as to what Shaffer had been doing. Shaffer told Eric he was outside with a trauma kit in case something happened during the incident.

At 02:03:52, Shaffer explained to Eric why he had his gun drawn during his initial entrance into Eric's residence. Shaffer told Eric that he had his gun drawn because Eric had the knife pointed towards Shaffer.

At 02:05:15, Shaffer told Eric about being on the Special Response Team (SRT). Eric attempted to argue and ridicule Shaffer for having his gun drawn. Eric made comments about "respecting" Shaffer, but that Shaffer did not respect him.

At 02:07:20, Eric continued to ridicule Shaffer about how he initially entered into his house as Eric continued to hold his knife up to his own throat.

At 02:08:15, Shaffer defended his actions and why he left the residence in order for Reynolds to take his position.

At 02:09:38, Eric asked Shaffer again "are you (Shaffer) ready?". Eric made multiple comments that he "was ready". All deputies present kept telling Eric not to do anything that could harm himself or others.

At 02:10:19, Patton is seen walking out of the living room towards the direction of the house

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door into the garage.

At 02:10:34, Shaffer exited the residence through the garage door again at Reynolds' command. Shaffer remained in the garage just outside the entrance into the residence.

At 02:10:54, Shaffer asked Patton if Eric had anyone in particular at the Veterans Association (VA) whom Eric liked to talk to. Patton walked right past Shaffer and asked Eric about the VA. Eric is heard continuing to ask "are you ready" to the WCSO deputies still in the residence. Miller and Reynolds are heard trying to convince Eric to put the knife down and go to the hospital.

At 02:12:47, Patton retrieved the letter previously attached to Eric's hoodie and returned back to the garage door entrance. A discussion can be heard from all individuals in the house regarding the note and its contents.

At 02:14:45, Reynolds exited the residence through the garage with the note in order to contact Jessica. Reynolds can be heard off camera making a phone call before returning back into the residence and informing Eric that he left a voicemail.

Shaffer continued to remain in the garage as Miller, Reynolds, and Patton continued to speak with Eric and convince him to put away his knife and go to the hospital. Shaffer would respond and clear all safety checks from the WCSO Dispatch during this time.

At 02:25:56, Patton walked out of the residence into the garage and pulled Shaffer to the side in order to tell Shaffer that Eric has weapons in the house and usually keeps a firearm in the storage compartment of the couch Eric was currently sitting on, or in Eric's waist band. Patton also informed Shaffer that there is a "boat load" of guns in the house. Patton stated that earlier in the day a gun was on the kitchen counter, but it was no longer there.

At 02:28:00, Shaffer retrieved his cell phone from his cruiser and sent a text to Reynolds informing him of the guns in the residence.

At 02:32:54, Patton attempted to get Eric to agree to leave with EMS and go to the hospital. Eric inquired if Shaffer was still outside. Eric is heard telling Reynolds to have Shaffer leave his property. Eric can also be heard insulting Shaffer from inside the residence.

At 02:33:46, Reynolds tells Shaffer to "go down the road" to the location where EMS was staged. Shaffer began to walk out of the garage heading towards his cruiser.

The footage ends at 02:33:57, with Shaffer deactivating his camera as he is heading towards his cruiser.

The body camera footage described in this report is only the events deemed important to the investigation. The footage provided by the WCSO regarding Shaffer was placed on an external USB drive attached to this investigation. The footage was labeled Attachment C. See the attachment for the complete body camera footage.

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