



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



2023-0556
Officer Involved Critical Incident – 23897 US Rt 23, Circleville
43113 (L)

Investigative Activity: Interview with Witness
Involves: Deputy Seth Thomas (W)
Date of Activity: 02/25/2023
Activity Location: Rodeway Inn – 23897 US Route 23, Circleville, OH 43113, Pickaway County
Author: SA Ryan D. Scheiderer, #89

Narrative:

On February 25, 2023 at approximately 0422 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCI) Special Agent Ryan Scheiderer (SA Scheiderer) obtained a recorded statement from Pickaway County Sheriff's Office (PCSO) Deputy Seth Thomas (Deputy Thomas) regarding the February 25th shooting incident between PCSO deputies and Pamela Croston (Croston) that occurred at the Rodeway Inn located at 23897 US Route 23 in Circleville, Ohio (Pickaway County). Croston was fatally shot by deputies after a brief standoff. The following is a summation of the contact with Deputy Thomas and additional details can be found in the attached audio recording.

Deputy Thomas (Unit #65) has been employed by PCSO since October 2019 and his current assignment is K-9/Patrol 15:00 to 01:00, Tuesday through Friday. On this date, Deputy Thomas had finished his assigned shift and was on his way home when he heard radio traffic from PCSO Sergeant Joseph Hugus (Sgt. Hugus) advising he was enroute to the Rodeway Inn. Deputy Thomas checked his Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) and observed a call for service at that location involving a female with a firearm to her head. Deputy Thomas marked Sgt. Hugus on the radio and inquired if his assistance was needed. Sgt. Hugus advised two Circleville Police Department (CPD) officers were already on scene (Rodeway Inn is located within Circleville city limits) and at that time additional assistance wasn't needed. Deputy Thomas arrived at this residence and was caring for his K-9 partner when he was contacted by PCSO Dispatch and advised to respond to the Rodeway Inn. Deputy Thomas left his partner at his residence and responded to the scene.

When Deputy Thomas arrived on scene, the two CPD officers, Sgt. Hugus, PCSO Deputy Alfredo Magana (Deputy Magana), PCSO Corporal Jon Campbell (Corporal Campbell), as well as Trooper Benjamin Jenkins (Trooper Jenkins) and Trooper John Moore (Trooper Moore) of the Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) were already on scene. Deputy Thomas retrieved his patrol rifle and took

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up a position at the rear of a trooper's patrol cruiser. A female, later identified as Croston, was inside Room 104 and pacing near the window with a pistol positioned to her head. Officers were issuing commands to Croston in attempt to get her to drop the pistol and surrender peacefully. Croston opened the door and exited her room with the pistol positioned to her head. Croton pointed the pistol towards the troopers, but then "fumbled" it and positioned it back to her head. Croston pointed the gun towards officers a second time and that's when Deputy Magana and Corporal Campbell discharged their firearms at Croston, striking her. Deputy Thomas retrieved his medical bag and officers began first aid on Croston until medics arrived. Croston was then transported to Grant Medical Center. Deputy Thomas believed he was on scene five (5) to ten (10) minutes before deputies shot Croston.

Deputy Thomas advised he only heard Croston say "You don't know me. You don't know what's going on" during the incident. Deputy Thomas confirmed officers made several pleas with Croston requesting she disarm and surrender. Deputy Thomas believed CPD Dispatch had been communicating with Croston via telephone during the incident. Deputy Thomas clarified that Deputy Magana discharged a patrol rifle and Corporal Campbell discharged a pistol at Croston. There were not any certified negotiators on scene during the incident and the PCSO Special Response Team had not been activated.

Deputy Thomas denied discharging his firearm during the incident and denied using any less-lethal weapons during the incident. Deputy Thomas was not wearing a Body Worn Camera (BWC) at the time because he had left his BWC docked at the office due to him ending his shift and starting his days off. Deputy Thomas advised a male in the room next to 104 exited after the incident. Deputy Thomas did not interview the male, but detectives from CPD may have. Deputy Thomas did not have any additional information.

Attachments:

Attachment # 01: PCSO Deputy Seth Thomas Audio Interview 2.25.2023