



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



2022-1190
Officer Involved Critical Incident – 1551 Meadowlark Lane,
Marysville, Ohio 43040 (L)

Investigative Activity: Interview with Witness
Involves: Cheryl Watts (W), Brittany Harding (W)
Date of Activity: 05/31/2022
Activity Location: Marysville Police Department – Business – 1250 West 5th Street,
Marysville, OH 43040
Author: SA Perry K. Roeser, #114

Narrative:

On May 30, 2022, the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) received a Request for Assistance from the Marysville (Ohio) Police Department, Chief Tony Brooks, regarding an Officer-Involved Critical Incident (OICI) at 1551 Meadowlark Lane, Marysville, Ohio. Chief Brooks explained a 911 call for service arrived, which described a man with a gun was threatening family members during a child custody exchange.

BCI Special Agent (SA) Perry Roeser was assigned as the lead investigator for the OICI. After SA Roeser arrived on the scene, he was told of two witnesses present at the shooting. The two witnesses, Cheryl Watts (Watts) and Brittany Harding (Harding), were at Marysville Police Headquarters awaiting contact. SA Roeser and BCI Special Agent Doug Eveslage traveled to 1250 W. 5th Street, Marysville, Ohio, and met with both individuals in a conference room. Before the contact, SA Roeser was told Watts was the mother to Harding and Harding was the girlfriend to the deceased involved subject, Matthew Todhunter. SA Roeser was also told that while the two females were at the scene, they were extraordinarily distraught and uncooperative. The interview with both witnesses began on May 31, 2022 at 0010 hours. Both witnesses would have been interviewed separately, but SA Roeser conducted the dual interview due to the circumstances.

Harding was crying when the interview began. After SA Roeser explained the function of BCI, Harding settled down and was cooperative. After SA Roeser gained personal information for the report/interview, both Watts and Harding agreed to the voluntary interview.

SA Roeser first asked Harding what her relationship was with Todhunter. Harding said they had been together for two-and-a-half years as boyfriend and girlfriend, and Todhunter lived with her and Watts. Todhunter was still legally married, but separated from Lindsey Todhunter. Harding was asked what Todhunter did for a living. Harding said he was a

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mechanic/supervisor at Virginia Tech, a company near Honda of Marysville. Harding described the relationship with Todhunter as on and off over the last couple of years. Harding then told SA Roeser that her relationship with Todhunter's wife was not good. Lindsey Todhunter's brother lives at the incident address, 1551 Meadowlark Lane, and Harding said Lindsey was over there all the time. Harding explained the history to SA Roeser of the turbulent relationship between Todhunter and Lindsey regarding their biological child, a four-year-old son, Maddox, the drinking, drugs, and the pending divorce. While Harding spoke, Watts added information to support Harding's testimony.

SA Roeser then asked Harding to explain what occurred this evening that led to the OICI. Harding said Lindsey showed up at her home, intoxicated, at approximately 1830 hours, looking for her son, Maddox. Harding said the two exchanged words, with Harding ordering her off the property. Harding said Lindsey sped off in her vehicle when she could not find Maddox. Soon after, Harding called Todhunter and told him what had just occurred. Harding said Todhunter had dropped Maddox off at Lindsey's brother's house earlier in the day.

Harding said Todhunter arrived at her home "pissed" mad at Lindsey and then sped off toward Lindsey's brother's house, about three blocks away. After Todhunter left Harding, Watts used her phone to listen to the police scanner. They heard over the scanner the police were dispatched to Lindsey's home on a report of a man with a gun. Watts and Harding headed toward 1551 Meadowlark Lane to settle Todhunter down. Harding said she was on the phone with Todhunter, and he said, "you don't want to see this."

Harding said they arrived before the police got on the scene. Harding said she was standing beside Todhunter's truck when law enforcement arrived. Harding said Todhunter's hands were on the steering wheel and out the window as he heard police orders to exit his vehicle. Harding explained as the police officer had his gun drawn on Todhunter, she was yelling back at the police, "he's got a BB gun; it's not real." Harding said, "Matt drew the BB gun and pointed it at the officer." SA Roeser asked Watts and Harding if Todhunter usually carried the BB gun. They said, "not normally, only once" because "he is afraid of her." SA Roeser then asked if Todhunter had been drinking or using drugs that day. They said, "no", but explained he was taking Buspar for anxiety.

SA Roeser then pressed Harding about her statement telling the police he had a BB gun. Harding explained she knew Todhunter did not have a real gun, only the BB gun, and wanted the police to hear that piece of information. Harding then disclosed she received a text message from Todhunter while enroute to Lindsey's brother's house, saying, "don't come; I have a gun." SA Roeser asked Harding why she thought Todhunter sent her that text message. She said, "it was suicide by cop because he was mentally done with everything." SA Roeser then asked, do you believe Todhunter wanted to die. She said, "yeah, at that point, because of her."

SA Roeser asked, do you think Todhunter knew what he was doing when he exited his truck, pointing the gun at the officer. Harding said, "yes". SA Roeser asked if Todhunter had ever attempted suicide in the past. Last year, in February of 2021, Harding said that after Todhunter got into trouble with a DUI, he had a gun and wanted to shoot himself. Watts said Todhunter had the weapon in his hands, and she took it from him. Harding said that she got Todhunter mental health support and medication for his depression after that event.

Watts and Harding said they heard three shots fired by the police. Harding said after Todhunter was on the ground, she attempted to stop the bleeding but was pulled off of him by law enforcement.

Harding was asked if Todhunter had a Facebook account. She indicated, "yes", but Lindsey hacked into it. Harding then provided agents with Todhunter's password to his phone, [REDACTED]. The interview concluded at 0054 hours.

The interview between SA's Roeser and Eveslage with Harding and Watts was audio-recorded and can be reviewed for additional details. See attachment #1 for a copy of the audio recording.

Attachments:

Attachment # 01: 2022-05-31 / Brittany Harding and Cherly Watts interview

Exhibit 1

Included as a separate file.