



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



2024-3996
 Officer Involved Critical Incident - 780 Taylor Road,
 Gahanna, Ohio 43230 (L)

Investigative Activity: Interview with Witness Officer
Involves: Sergeant Reuben Hendon, Gahanna Police Department
Activity Date: 01/17/2025
Activity Location: Gahanna Police Department – 460 Rocky Fork Blvd,
 Gahanna OH 43230
Authoring Agent: SA Kyle Douglass

Narrative:

On Friday, January 17, 2025, at 1252 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Kyle Douglass (SA Douglass) and SA James Gore (SA Gore) interviewed Gahanna Police Department (Gahanna PD) Sergeant (Sgt.) Reuben Hendon (Sgt. Hendon), who was accompanied by his attorney, Kate Harshman, from the Fraternal Order of Police. The interview took place at the Gahanna Police station. The interview was audio recorded.

Sgt. Hendon was identified as being a police officer who witnessed and/or had some level of involvement in the December 19, 2024 officer-involved shooting which occurred in the area of 780 Taylor Road in Gahanna, Ohio. Reportedly, Sgt. Hendon did not discharge a firearm during the course of the incident. The purpose of the interview was to obtain all relevant information of the incident known or observed by this officer.

Sgt. Hendon stated his badge number/radio call sign on December 19, 2024, was 122. He has been employed by Gahanna PD since January 30, 2009, for a total of more than 15 years of service. Sgt. Hendon has prior law enforcement experience with The Defiance Police Department (OH). Sgt. Hendon also served in the Marine Corps Reserves. Sgt. Hendon's current assignment is [REDACTED] patrol supervisor, his normal working hours are [REDACTED]. Sgt. Hendon confirmed he was working his normal shift on the date of the incident. During the incident, Sgt. Hendon wore his standard police uniform with a metal police badge affixed to it. He was also wearing a ballistic vest and duty belt. He drove Gahanna PD cruiser #136, marked with Gahanna PD emblems and emergency lights, and was by himself. He considered himself to be well-represented as a police officer during the incident. Sgt. Hendon was carrying his department issued Glock 17 9mm handgun, as well as a patrol shotgun and a patrol rifle in his cruiser.

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On December 19, 2024, Sgt. Hendon was in route to another call for service when he heard radio traffic codes of a person with a gun and officer in trouble. Sgt. Hendon was aware other Gahanna PD officers had been dispatched to SpringHill Suites earlier. Sgt. Hendon was concerned Gahanna PD [REDACTED] who was in training, had been separated from his partner, [REDACTED]

Sgt. Hendon arrived on Taylor Road and retrieved his patrol rifle. Sgt. Hendon observed a male matching the subject's description crossing Taylor Road. Sgt. Hendon arrived at the driveway area of 780 Taylor Road and saw several other Gahanna PD officers but could not see the subject, who was later identified as Alex Russell (Russell).

Sgt. Hendon observed [REDACTED] was armed with a less than lethal shotgun. Sgt. Hendon was moving to find a position with other officers as he heard them giving Russell verbal commands. Sgt. Hendon then heard multiple gunshots, the first of which he believed was a less lethal shotgun bean bag round from [REDACTED] followed by several shots which he identified as handgun shots. Sgt. Hendon ran up to find a better position with his rifle when Sergeant Pat Millenbaugh (Sgt. Millenbaugh) moved in front of Sgt. Hendon. "That's when the gun came up," Sgt. Hendon stated, regarding the gun in Russell's possession. Sgt. Hendon moved past Sgt. Millenbaugh and pulled his rifle trigger to engage Russell, but Sgt. Hendon's rifle did not fire due to the safety mechanism being on. Sgt. Hendon described a second volley of gunshots as he tried to fire his rifle. Sgt. Hendon retrieved a ballistic shield, Gahanna PD officers then approached and secured Russell before they began rendering first aid. Sgt. Hendon performed chest compressions before being relieved by another Gahanna PD officer.

Sgt. Hendon believed he saw Russell fall to the ground as the first series of gunshots occurred. Sgt. Hendon observed Russell was still moving around on the ground as Gahanna PD officers gave verbal commands to Russell to drop his gun. Sgt. Hendon explained Russell, who was on the ground, pointed his gun at himself then quickly pointed it towards Gahanna PD officers when the second series of gunshots occurred. Sgt. Hendon said he knew Gahanna PD [REDACTED] had fired his duty weapon but was unsure who else had fired during the incident.

Although his rifle did not fire, Sgt. Hendon decided to pull his rifle trigger after he had observed Russell point his gun towards Gahanna PD officers while he was laying on the ground. Sgt. Hendon believed his response was justified based on the circumstances. "If he presents, I gotta take that shot," Sgt. Hendon stated. Sgt. Hendon also believed the lethal force response from other Gahanna PD officers was reasonable based on his observation of Russell pointing his gun at them at least once.

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Sgt. Hendon reported he had ejected a live round from his rifle after the gunfire exchange had concluded.

On his way to the incident location, Sgt. Hendon had heard on the radio that Russell was in possession of a gun and had "racked the slide," and also heard Sgt. Millenbaugh announce Russell had pointed his gun at his own head and was making suicidal threats.

Sgt. Hendon was provided with printed overhead maps of the incident area, which he used during the interview to explain his positioning.

The interview concluded at approximately 1313 hours.

The interview was audio recorded. The audio recording was attached to this report. Please see the attachments for further details.

References:

No references

Attachments:

1. 2025-01-17 Sergeant Reuben Hendon Interview Audio

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