



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



2024-1385
Officer Involved Critical Incident – 121 W. Perry St.

Investigative Activity: Neighborhood Canvass
Involves: Eric Baker (W), Kevin Dyer (W), Noelle Gonzalez (W), Heather Ratliff (O), Racheal Elchert (W)
Date of Activity: 05/03/2024
Activity Location: – 121 W. Perry Street, Tiffin, OH 44883
Author: SA Tiffany Najmulski, #49

Narrative:

On 05/03/2024, Special Agent (SA) Tiffany Najmulski (Najmulski) responded to the 100 Block W. Perry Street, Tiffin, Ohio, in reference to an officer involved critical incident. When SA Najmulski arrived, she was asked by Acting Special Agent Supervisor (SAS) Chris Hamberg (Hamberg) to go door to door for a neighborhood canvass of possible witnesses. The following is a summary of the interviews which were digitally recorded and are attached to this report and the case file.

107 W. Perry Street–Noelle Gonzalez said she was inside her upstairs apartment when she heard 3 shots fired. She came out on her deck and saw a man lying on the ground with what looked like two gunshots to the head and blood coming out of his mouth. Gonzalez saw the officer with a gun in his hand. Gonzalez heard a woman screaming saying "My baby" and "Why did you shoot him? Why didn't you taser him?". Gonzalez said she has seen the man before in the neighborhood but did not know if he knew anyone in the area. Gonzalez wanted to make SA Najmulski aware she just got married and her maiden name is Berthiaume. Gonzalez had no other pertinent information, at the time, and the interview concluded.

A short time later Gonzalez pulled SA Josh Rammel (Rammel) aside and told him she forgot to tell SA Najmulski she had heard the man telling the officer to shoot him before he was actually shot.

118 W. Perry Street–Kevin Dyer said he was not home when the incident occurred but said he has a camera and will check it when his wife gets home. On 05/06/2024, SA Najmulski conducted follow up with Dyer who said his camera did not pick up any footage of the incident. Dyer told SA Najmulski the camera actually sits inside the house and was angled at the porch wall during the incident.

134 W. Perry Street– Heather Ratliff answered the door and said that she was not home during

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the incident

135 W. Perry Street–Eric Barker advised he did not witness the incident unfold but heard two gunshots while inside his home. Barker stepped outside and saw a police officer standing in the alley with his gun drawn and "the boy" laying in the street. Barker heard a woman screaming "something about a welfare check". Barker said he has a camera but did not think it would have caught the incident seeing that his house sits back farther than the other houses. Barker said he would check his camera and get back with SA Najmulski. On 05/06/2024, SA Najmulski stopped to speak with Barker to see if his camera caught video or audio of the incident and Barker said it did not.

141 W. Perry Street–SA Najmulski spoke to a juvenile who said she just got home and was unsure if anyone was home during the incident. On Monday 05/06/2024, SA Tiffany Najmulski went back to follow up with the residents to see if they witnessed the incident. SA Najmulski spoke to Racheal Elchert (Elchert) who said she and her 17-year-old daughter, Aleah Smith (Smith) were home when the incident took place. Elchert said Smith yelled that there was a gun, and a dead body and Smith ran out the front door. Elchert, who had heard two gunshots, followed Smith out the door. When Elchert made it outside, she saw the officer with his gun drawn. According to Elchert, another officer took the first officers gun from him and the first officer fell to his knees and started crying. Elchert said she would have her daughter call SA Najmulski but expressed concern of her daughter talking to SA Najmulski since she was under age. Elchert had nothing more pertinent to add and the interview concluded. Elchert nor Smith ever contacted SA Najmulski. SA Najmulski attempted to make contact via phone but was unsuccessful.

If SA Najmulski receives any further information from witnesses that is helpful to the case, she will document the information through another report.

This report only summarizes 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 audio recording. Further, this report 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 or responses. It is suggested that the full audio recording be reviewed to clarify any content or contextual questions regarding the information from the audio recording.

Attachments:

- Attachment # 01: 135 W. Perry Street
- Attachment # 02: 134 W. Perry Street
- Attachment # 03: 118 W. Perry Street
- Attachment # 04: 107 W Perry street
- Attachment # 05: 141 W. Perry Street

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