



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



2021-0888
Officer Involved Critical Incident – 500 South Cleveland Ave.,
Westerville, Ohio 43081 (L)

Investigative Activity: Interview with Witness
Involves: Officer Zachary Lee Powell (W)
Date of Activity: 04/12/2021
Activity Location: Mount Carmel St. Ann's Hospital – Business – 500 S. Cleveland Ave., Westerville, OH 43081, Franklin County
Author: SA James H Gore, #168

Narrative:

On the evening of April 12, 2021 at approximately 1950 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) James Gore conducted an interview of Security Officer Zachary Powell, of Mount Carmel Saint Ann's Hospital. The purpose of the interview was to ascertain Ofc. Powell's involvement in the Officer-Involved Critical Incident (OICI), which took place earlier on the same date at Saint Ann's. The interview took place on site at Saint Ann's Hospital in Conference Room B, which was within the hospital's main pavilion on the first floor.

Ofc. Powell stated that he has been employed as an Armed Safety and Security Officer at Saint Ann's for approximately three and a half years. Ofc. Powell said his normal work schedule at Saint Ann's is 1st Shift, 0600 to 1430 hours, with Tuesdays and Wednesdays as his days off. Powell mentioned that he was previously employed as an Armed Court Security Officer in Delaware County, Ohio, and prior to that, he served as a Military Police Officer (MP) in the United States Army. Powell stated that his position as an Armed Security Officer required certification from the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy (OPOTA).

Ofc. Powell explained that on April 12, 2021 at 1400 hours, he was attending a shift briefing at the hospital's security office (located on the ground floor, approximately 50 yards from the Emergency Department). According to Ofc. Powell, the shift briefings are an opportunity for the outgoing shift to pass on relevant security and safety information to the oncoming shift. During this particular briefing, Powell said, the only information regarding the Emergency Department passed on to the 2nd Shift was that officers from Columbus Police were tending to an individual with a warrant; however, there were no known problems at the time.

Ofc. Powell said he was alerted to trouble in the Emergency Department at approximately 1420 hours by Ofc. Stanley Miller, who broadcast over the radio that they (security officers) needed to get to Bed 9. Powell said that Ofc. Miller did not elaborate what the problem was,

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and he recalled hearing a Security Supervisor, Chad Taylor, requesting further information on the radio, but there was no response.

Ofc. Powell explained that he re-donned his vest and duty belt and proceeded to the Emergency Department. Powell recalled that as he arrived, he observed that the fire alarm was sounding, and groups of employees were gathered outside of the fire doors. Powell advised that as employees pushed the fire doors open for him, he heard someone state that shots had been fired.

Ofc. Powell added, as he and Security Officer Eric Matheny, entered the Emergency Department, they ran toward Room 9. Powell stated that he took up a position near rooms 17 and 18, and he was the only officer in that area. Powell explained that he helped to evacuate staff and patients from within Rooms 17 and 18, but he was unable to evacuate Room 10 until the incident was concluded.

From his vantage point near Rooms 17 and 18, Ofc. Powell reported seeing into Room 9, where he observed a police officer whom he said looked "like he was being held hostage." Powell also reported that his view of a male subject in Room 9 was obstructed, and he could only see the left portion of his torso. The Columbus Police officer, Powell said, was in the corner behind the male subject. Powell described the male subject as a black male wearing a red shirt, but he could not tell from his perspective if the male was armed with any weapons.

Powell estimated that there were at least 6 or 7 officers outside of Room 9, and they were all yelling commands of, 'Put your hands up!' and 'Let go of the gun!' to the subject for 3 to 5 minutes. Powell said he witnessed female Columbus Police officer arrive at Room 9, and she deployed her Taser at the suspect. Because of all of the noise from the fire alarm and the verbal commands from the officers, Powell stated that he did not hear the actual report of the Taser being discharged, but he did observe the Taser's wires on the floor.

Powell said after the Taser was deployed, there were one or two gunshots that happened from within Room 9. Powell described seeing a muzzle flash from within the room, and then there was a response of gunfire from several officers who were standing outside of the room. Ofc. Powell was uncertain of exactly which officers responded by shooting.

After the shooting, Powell said, he assisted with the evacuation of a nurse who had been hiding behind him at a desk, and he also evacuated the patients from Room 10.

Powell was asked to describe the security protocol for persons arriving at the hospital under police custody or supervision. Powell explained that if a subject arrives in police custody, then generally he or she will remain under the supervision or control of police unless additional services or resources are requested from the Security Department. Ofc. Powell said he did not know the circumstances surrounding the arrival of the male subject in Room 9.

An audio copy of Ofc. Powell's interview is available for further review as an attachment to this report.

Attachments:

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Attachment # 01: Zachary Powell Interview – Gore 4-12-2021

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