



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



2022-1356

Officer-Involved Critical Incident – 1659 S. Main Street, Akron, Ohio
 44301

Investigative Activity: Interview with Law Enforcement
 Involves: Captain Mitchell Houser (O), Euclid Police Department (O),
 BCI (O)
 Activity Date: 7/5/2022
 Activity Location: Euclid Police Department –
 545 East 222nd Street, Euclid, Ohio 44123
 Authoring Agent: SA Charles Moran #67

Narrative:

On July 5, 2022, at 1329 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Chuck Moran (Moran) and SA Cory Momchilov (Momchilov) interviewed Euclid Police Department (EPD) Captain Mitchell Houser (Houser).

SA Moran asked Captain Houser about what he recalled from the police officer candidate interview with Dupri Whatley (Whatley) that occurred on June 29, 2022, involving an interview team consisting of the EPD Chief, three other captains and one lieutenant.

Captain Houser said Whatley informed them that his long-time best friend, Jayland Walker, was shot and killed in Akron. Captain Houser said Whatley told them that near the end, Jayland Walker's life "had had been going through some very difficult times" and some "emotional problems" or other problems.

Captain Houser said Whatley told them that he tried to reach out to Jayland Walker to help and support him but he wasn't interested. Captain Houser said Whatley stated, "You can only do so much for somebody."

Captain Houser said Chief Meyer asked Whatley if he believed Jayland Walker's death was suicide-by-cop. Captain Houser stated, "And Whatley both nodded his head and said, 'Yeah, I think there's a really good chance of that.' Or something to that effect. Like, that very well may have been it."

Captain Houser said he was not fully paying attention to exactly what Whatley said about his friend's death because he was focused on the job interview questions and process with Whatley. Captain Houser said he believed Whatley was being "genuine and honest" when he spoke about Jayland Walker's death likely being a suicide-by-cop situation.

Captain Houser explained that the interview with Whatley was a lateral police officer candidate interview. It was meant to gauge the candidate's knowledge of Euclid and what type of person and officer they are. Captain Houser recalled being a "little annoyed" because the first minutes of

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the interview opened with Whatley talking about the incident unrelated to the EPD and they were on a schedule.

SA Momchilov asked Captain Houser if Whatley mentioned anything about Jayland Walker's fiancée being killed in a car accident. Captain Houser said Whatley told them about it and how Jayland Walker was very upset about her death and if he had been there to drive, she may not have been killed. Whatley also told them that he did not know Jayland Walker to possess a gun nor own a gun.

SA Momchilov asked Captain Houser if he recalled Whatley telling them about Jayland Walker asking about police tactics. Captain Houser replied, "Not particularly. No. Sorry."

Captain Houser explained that he has a process for the interviews and he pays attention to the candidate's body language. SA Momchilov asked Captain Houser if it was fair to say that he was not paying full attention to what Whatley was saying. Captain Houser stated, "That's correct. Yeah, that would be fair to say. He hit the high points. I think I remember him stopping taking a pause, taking a breath. It did seem genuine to me. I think he really believed that his friend was in need and needed help and ultimately didn't get it." Captain Houser said he gave Whatley a favorable interview grade and that it must have been difficult to talk about the incident in job interview setting.

The interview with Captain Houser ended at 1335 hours. It was audio recorded.

Attachments:

The audio recorded interview with Captain Houser was attached to this report.

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