



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



2022-2876

Officer Involved Critical Incident – 256 N. Swain, LaRue, Ohio (L)

Investigative Activity: Neighborhood Canvass
Date of Activity: 12/20/2022
Author: SA Tiffany Vollmer, #49

Narrative:

On 12/20/2022, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agents (SA) Tiffany Vollmer (Vollmer) and James Chandler (Chandler) conducted a neighborhood canvass in the area of the railroad tracks near the intersection of School Street and Section Street in LaRue, Ohio. The purpose for the canvass was to identify and interview potential witnesses to the officer-involved shooting on 12/20/2022. During the neighborhood canvass, Special Agents Vollmer and Chandler made or attempted contact with the residents at the following addresses:

174 Marsh

Special Agents spoke to Richard Rudd (Rudd), who did not witness the incident. Rudd advised there is a camera on the residence, however, the camera only captures as far as the neighbor's house in front of his and not to the railroad tracks where the incident occurred. Rudd said he would review the camera and if he found footage of the incident, he would contact agents.

185 Marsh

Special Agents spoke to Jeff McCleese, who said he did not witness the incident but heard sirens. His residence does not have a camera.

211 N. Marsh

Special Agents spoke to Wendy Crabtree, who said she was at work when the shooting occurred and does not have security cameras.

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236 N. Marsh

Agents spoke to a child at this address, who advised his mom and stepdad were at work. He gave agents their names and phone number. On 12/28/2022, SA Vollmer spoke to Jessica Tuttle (Jessica) on the phone. She advised her husband, Jimmy Tuttle, let the dogs outside in the morning and came back into the house telling her there was yelling outside between the police and the neighbor who lives in what is known in the neighborhood as the "meth trailer." Jessica assumed it was a drug raid. She could not see out the window facing the railroad tracks because of the bed headboard. She could hear the police yelling, saying to stop and they did not want to hurt Travis Hellinger (Hellinger), but Jessica never heard Hellinger saying anything to them. As the police got further from her residence, she heard shots fired. Jessica did not witness the shooting since she and her husband never went outside.

184 N. Section

Special Agent Vollmer spoke to Tracy Crabtree who was sleeping when the shooting occurred. She heard yelling and then at least five shots being fired. Out of fear and safety for her children, she hit the ground and did not see what was happening.

215 N. Section

SA Vollmer contacted Clarence Friend III (Friend) by phone after SA Dave Horn spoke to Friend's parents and learned Friend witnessed what happened before going to work. Friend, who also goes by Kip, advised he heard a bunch of noise and opened the door to see officers coming down the tracks. He could hear "hollering and screaming" and saw someone walking backwards away from the officers. Officers were telling the man to stop but he kept going. The K9 was deployed and ran towards the man and Friend heard gunshots. Friend said he thought the K9 was deployed about where the railroad crossing was. Friend thought he heard six to eight shots but did not know who they were coming from because the man was out of Friend's view.

321 Price

Agents spoke to April Russell, who advised she was sleeping when she was awoken by gunshots. She looked out the window and saw "a bunch of cops and drones." Russell did not witness the incident as it occurred. The house has cameras but they are not operational.

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350 Price

Agents spoke to Mike Cress who said he was sleeping and did not see the incident occur, nor did he hear gunshots. He awoke around 6 AM and saw law enforcement in the area. He does not have security cameras.

375 Price

Agents spoke to Brook Price (Price) through her Ring doorbell. She advised she did not witness the incident. Her doorbell faces the opposite direction the shooting occurred and would not have picked up video footage. Price advised her backyard neighbor at 243 Swain has cameras and to speak with him. (This interaction was not recorded.)

243 Swain

Agents received no answer and left a business card. Jeremiah Haile (Haile) called and spoke with SA Vollmer later that day. Haile lives across the street from Travis Hellinger. SA Vollmer asked Haile if his cameras, which faced the railroad tracks, were operational. He said they currently were not working because someone kept shooting them, which damaged the recording capabilities. Haile said he gets notifications on his phone if there is activity and did today before the shooting incident unfolded.

Haile said he got an alert and his phone saw activity behind the barn at Hellinger's property. Shortly after, Haile saw a military-style vehicle show up and saw Hellinger head towards the tracks with law enforcement following. Haile thought he heard someone say to put the gun down. Haile could see Hellinger had a flashlight in one hand and heard him tell the police he did not do anything wrong and walked backwards away from the police. Haile lost visual when everyone went out of camera view then Haile heard gunfire going off.

Haile said he has seen Hellinger with multiple firearms, and he is "always shooting them out back by the railroad tracks."

The interviews conducted were digitally recorded and a copy of the audio recordings is attached to this Investigative Report. A copy of the audio recordings has also been placed in this case file.

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

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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: 174 Marsh
- Attachment # 02: 184 N. Section
- Attachment # 03: 185 Marsh
- Attachment # 04: 211 N. Marsh
- Attachment # 05: 215 N. Section St
- Attachment # 06: 321 Price
- Attachment # 07: 350 Price
- Attachment # 08: 243 Swain
- Attachment # 09: 236 Marsh

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