



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



2022-1527

Officer Involved Critical Incident – 5760 US 62, Hillsboro, OH,
Highland County (L)

Investigative Activity: Interview with Officer
Involves: Richard Jean Poulin (S)
Date of Activity: 07/21/2022
Activity Location: Highland County Sheriffs Office – Business – Highland County
Justice Center, 130 Homestead Avenue, Hillsboro, OH 45133,
Highland County
Author: SA Steven Seitzman

Narrative:

On July 17, 2022, the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) was requested by Highland County Sheriff Donald Barrera to investigate an Officer-Involved Critical Incident (OICI) that occurred on US 62 near the Hillsboro Church of God (5760 US 62, Hillsboro, Ohio). The OICI entailed Highland County Sheriff's Office Sergeant [REDACTED] (Sgt. [REDACTED]) firing a single, fatal shot at Richard Jean Poulin (Poulin) at the end of a vehicle pursuit.

On July 21, 2022, at 1710 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agents Steven Seitzman (SA Seitzman), Richard Ward (SA Ward), and Kenneth Smith (SA Smith) interviewed Highland County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) Deputy Steven Alexander (Deputy Alexander) regarding his involvement in the OICI on July 17, 2022. The interview took place at HCSO. Deputy Alexander was represented by Fraternal Order of Police Senior Staff Representative Barry Gray. The interview was recorded on a handheld digital recording device.

The details below summarize the pertinent portions of the recorded interview and are not a verbatim account. 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. It is suggested that the full audio recording be reviewed to clarify the content from the interview.

While the terms "suspect" or "subject" may have been used by Deputy Alexander during the interview to identify Poulin, for clarity, knowing that Poulin had been identified earlier in the investigation, his name will be utilized in this report.

Deputy Alexander advised that he was attending and speaking with BCI agents voluntarily. [Agent's note: Deputy Alexander made this statement after the recording had ended. He made

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the statement to SA Seitzman, SA Ward, SA Smith, and Barry Gray].

Deputy Alexander advised that he has been employed by HCSO since 2005. He did not have any prior law enforcement experience prior to working for HCSO. His unit number is "thirty-six-eleven," which is also his radio call sign. He advised that he is currently assigned to the road patrol. His duty hours are between 1900-0700 hours.

Deputy Alexander advised he was wearing his department-issued uniform during his shift on July 16, 2022 through July 17, 2022. He advised that his uniform consisted of a black short-sleeve shirt with deputy patches on each shoulder sleeve. He wore a load bearing external ballistic vest which had the word "Sheriff" visible on the front. He was wearing standard Ohio deputy gray pants.

Regarding the OICI, Deputy Alexander advised BCI agents of the following information:

Sometime during the early morning hours of July 17, 2022, Deputy Alexander was at HCSO with his recruit, Deputy Dylan Quenneville (Deputy Quenneville). He was on the phone with Sgt. [REDACTED] and Sgt. [REDACTED] said something to the effect of, "Hey, I have to go. I have to make a traffic stop. I'll be there [HCSO] in a few minutes." A few minutes later, his dispatcher said over the department's PA system that Sgt. [REDACTED] was in pursuit. Deputy Alexander heard via the police radio that Sgt. [REDACTED] was pursuing the vehicle southbound on US 62 just north of Hillsboro. Deputy Quenneville and Deputy Alexander left together, with Deputy Quenneville driving.

Deputy Alexander deployed a tire deflation device near Westview Motors. As Poulin's vehicle passed, it ran over the tire deflation device. After Poulin's vehicle passed, he observed Sgt. [REDACTED] and Deputy McKenzie in pursuit. Deputy Quenneville and Deputy Alexander joined the pursuit. Deputy Alexander recalled a Hillsboro police cruiser behind them, making it a total of four marked cruisers in the pursuit.

Deputy Alexander advised that a Hillsboro police officer deployed a tire deflation device on US 62 near Frisch's Big Boy. He believed the deployment was successful. The Hillsboro police officer at Frisch's Big Boy joined the pursuit, making the total number of pursuing vehicles five. Poulin continued southbound on US 62 and ran a red light in the middle of downtown Hillsboro. Deputy Alexander said Poulin was "all over the road" as it continued southbound. He further said he saw Poulin "veer to the left in front of oncoming traffic."

Deputy Alexander remembered that the Hillsboro police officers left the pursuit as it left the Hillsboro city limits. He said Poulin continued for a short period of time. He remembered that Poulin's vehicle eventually stopped near the Hillsboro Church of God. Deputy Quenneville parked their vehicle to the left of and slightly behind Sgt. [REDACTED]'s. Deputy McKenzie parked her vehicle to the right of and slightly behind Sgt. [REDACTED]'s. Deputy Alexander ran around to the passenger door of Sgt. [REDACTED]'s vehicle. He heard Sgt. [REDACTED] shouting various commands, such as, "Driver, shut off the vehicle. Driver, get out of the vehicle. Show us your hands."

Deputy Alexander said that the only time he observed Poulin was while he was at the passenger door of Sgt. [REDACTED]'s vehicle. He said it looked like Poulin had his right hand up in the air with his elbow resting on the arm rest. He said it looked like Poulin had "something in his hand,"

though he said it did not seem "malicious." After medics later treated Poulin, he saw a cigarette on the step bar of Poulin's vehicle. He assumed the item Poulin may have been holding was a cigarette.

Deputy Alexander radioed for the Hillsboro Police Department's canine at Sgt. [REDACTED] request; however, the Hillsboro Police Department did not have a canine working. Shortly after, he recalled hearing Poulin loudly playing his music, which he described as an "AC/DC" song being blasted. He had not heard music prior to that point. He next remembered hearing Poulin revving his engine and attempting to flee again. He ran back to his vehicle to be with his recruit. He estimated that Poulin's vehicle moved approximately fifteen or twenty feet forward, then stopped again.

Sgt. [REDACTED] had moved to the front passenger side of his vehicle. Deputy Alexander went to rejoin Sgt. [REDACTED] but this time he went to Sgt. [REDACTED] driver's side. Sgt. [REDACTED] moved up to the passenger side of Poulin's vehicle. Deputy Alexander moved up to the driver's side. He heard Poulin's window break and heard Sgt. [REDACTED] say, "Show me your hands!" He then remembered hearing Sgt. [REDACTED] say, "Stevie [referring to Deputy Alexander], get him." He tried to open the door, but the door handle did not work. He then tried to shatter the driver's window with the end of his gun magazine. He was unable to shatter the window.

Deputy Alexander recalled Sgt. [REDACTED] coming around the front of Poulin's vehicle to join him. He looked down in an attempt to find his magazine, which had ejected from his gun when he tried to shatter the window. He remembered Sgt. [REDACTED] striking the window with his ASP collapsible baton. He also observed that Sgt. [REDACTED] had his firearm in his hand. He was uncertain in which hand Sgt. [REDACTED] had the ASP collapsible baton and which hand he had the firearm. He saw that the ASP collapsible baton "cut through like butter." As Deputy Alexander was standing back up, he saw Sgt. [REDACTED] strike the window a second time and heard a "pop." He saw glass flying back at Sgt. [REDACTED] but he did not know what happened. He did not see a muzzle flash. He said the glass was "spider webbed," so he knocked out some of the glass near the bottom right corner of the window.

Deputy Alexander reached into Poulin's vehicle and opened the door from the inside handle. He heard Sgt. [REDACTED] continuing with commands. He then observed blood on Poulin's left sleeve. Poulin was not saying anything and was leaning to his right. He felt that something was wrong. He said, "He's shot." Sgt. [REDACTED] replied, "I don't know what happened. I didn't pull the trigger." He then saw what appeared to be a bullet wound on the left side of Poulin's neck. He placed pressure on the wound. He remembered Sgt. [REDACTED] calling for a "bird" and a "squad."

Deputy Alexander conferred with Deputy Quenneville and they decided to remove Poulin from the vehicle. Deputy McKenzie ran up with a first aid kit. Deputy Quenneville held pressure on the neck wound. Deputy McKenzie stabilized Poulin's head. Deputy Alexander quickly checked Poulin's vehicle. He did not observe any weapons. He then observed blood coming out of Poulin's mouth and also saw that his tongue appeared to be swelling. The deputies placed a nasal phalangeal airway to assist with breathing.

Deputy Alexander approached Sgt. [REDACTED] who had walked away. He asked Sgt. [REDACTED] he had contacted the sheriff. Sgt. [REDACTED] indicated that he had not, and further told Deputy Alexander that he was now in charge and to place the call.

Deputy Alexander said that he spoke with Hillsboro Police Officer Daniel Hopkins. He told Officer Hopkins that "it was an accident." SA Ward interjected and asked Deputy Alexander if he surmised that the shooting was an accident, which he answered in the affirmative. He said he never saw Sgt. ██████ raise his firearm and "level it off at the suspect."

Deputy Alexander advised BCI agents that he took photographs of the scene prior to Detective Sergeant Vincent Antinore's arrival.

Deputy Alexander drew a diagram of the placement of the police cruisers in relation to Poulin's vehicle. He signed the diagram and provided it to BCI agents. The diagram was added to the permanent case file.

The interview was concluded at 1747 hours. The audio recording is attached below. Also attached is Deputy Alexander's drawing.

Attachments:

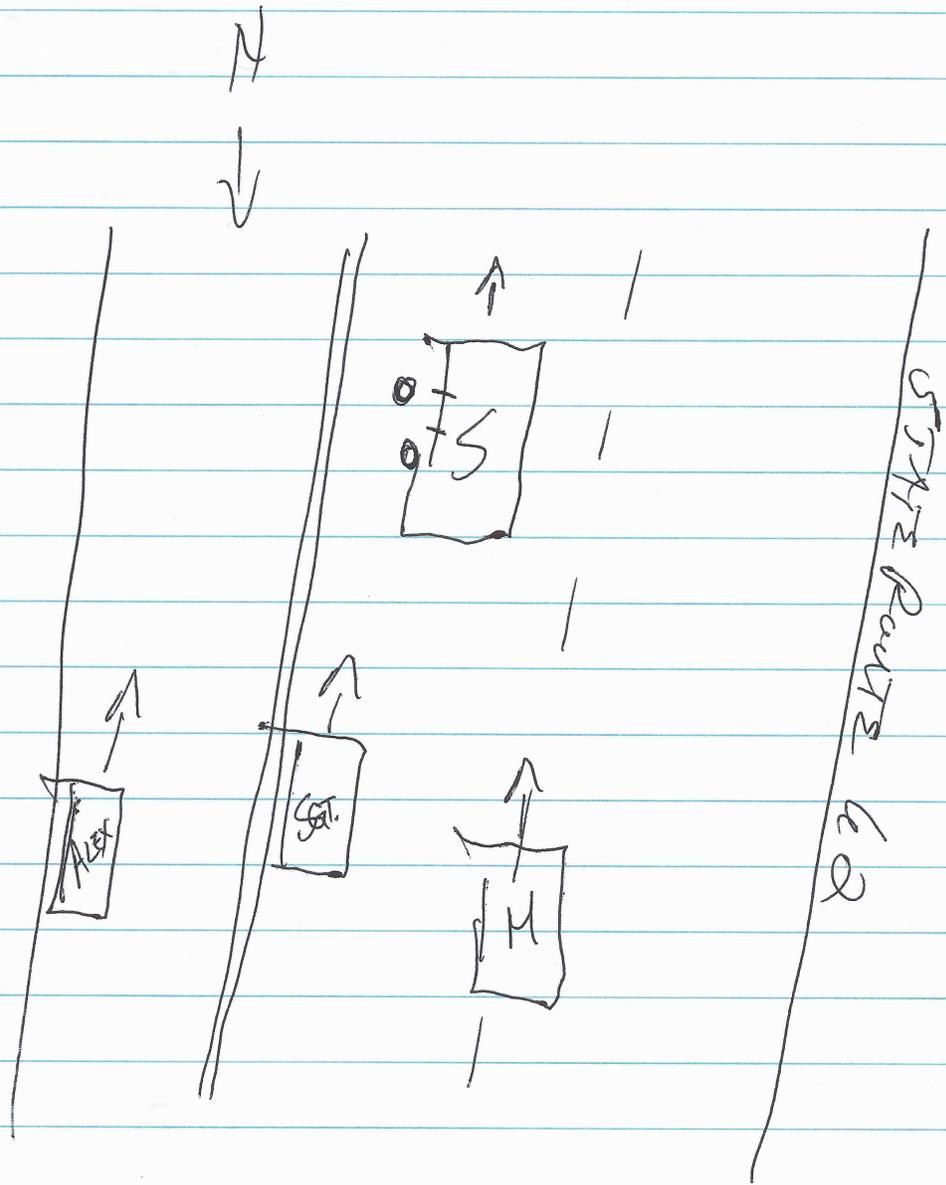
Attachment # 01: 2022-07-21 / Interview of HCSO Deputy Steven Alexander

Attachment # 02: Deputy Alexander Drawing of Scene

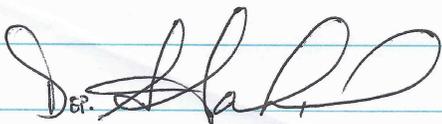
Exhibit 1

Included as a separate file.

Exhibit 2



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