



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



2024-3294
Officer Involved Critical Incident - Portage Hike and Bike
Trail near North Freedom Street, Ravenna, Ohio 44266

Investigative Activity: Review of Body Worn Camera Footage
Involves: ██████████ (S), Matthew Fries (S)
Activity Date: 11/27/2024
Activity Location: BCI - Richfield
Authoring Agent: SA Allison Fletcher

Narrative:

On Wednesday, October 23, 2024, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Allison Fletcher (Fletcher) received video footage from Ravenna Police Department (RPD) Captain Jason Smallfield. SA Fletcher was informed that the video contained footage from the body camera worn by RPD ██████████

Note that the video times referenced in this report will refer to the elapsed time of the video.

Two video files containing video footage from ██████████ BWC were provided. The file names have been listed below:

- ██████████_62542_102224164308_3 - ██████████
- ██████████_62542_102224164310_4 - ██████████ *after incident*

SA Fletcher reviewed the video recordings and noted the following:

Throughout this report the percussion sounds consistent with the sound of gunfire may be referred to as gunshots or gunfire. It should be noted those references are based on the totality of corroborating information and evidence gathered throughout this investigation. It in no way suggests that the percussion sounds referenced could not have originated from some other unknown source. Screenshots were taken of relevant moments in the video.

ADDITIONAL FACTORS: FOR EVALUATING THE VIDEO RECORDINGS

There are numerous other factors that need to be considered when reviewing and evaluating the videos and audio recordings of this incident. Those factors are:

A. Video recording devices record within the video and sound capabilities available, and they record objectively. Video recordings lack the history, perspective, and interest



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of the people involved. The positions, angles, obstacles, lighting, and distance from the incident are also factors that need serious consideration.

B. Video recording devices also record more information about a particular scene or incident than the person(s) involved in the incident can process during the critical incident. Video recording devices rarely record an event from the same perspective of the officer. It captures the action but not the perception, decision making, focus, or intent of the officer. Video recordings often miss tactile cues or other actions of a subject.

C. The speed of the incident is remarkable. The speed and complexity of rapidly evolving situation(s) that occur during use of force encounters are difficult concepts to comprehend by only watching the video.

██████████ 62542_102224164308_3 - ██████████

The video was 1 hour and 0 minutes in duration. The video began with the camera upside down and no audio. At 00:10, audio began, and ██████████ appeared to move the camera, so it was no longer recording upside down. Approximately the first 20 minutes of the video contained footage of an unrelated call for service.

At 20:50 relevant video footage began. ██████████ could be heard speaking with a store employee regarding the previously mentioned unrelated call for service. During their conversation, a radio transmission could be heard stating there was a possible stabbing victim on the hike and bike trail near North Freedom Street. Additional radio traffic stated the victim was possibly stabbed in the arm and no other subjects had been observed in the area. ██████████ walked out of the store and began walking towards her marked police cruiser.

At 22:00 sirens could be heard in the background. ██████████ entered her police cruiser and began driving to the location.

While responding, dispatch provided additional information via the radio stating the stabbing victim was located close to Freedom Street.

At 24:20 ██████████ used her in-car radio and notified dispatch ██████████ out with 26." This was likely when ██████████ and Officer Twigg arrived on scene.

At 24:59 ██████████ parked and exited her police cruiser. She began walking and a second marked police cruiser could be observed parked with its emergency lights activated. Two women could also be observed standing on the hike and bike trail looking at ██████████.

██████████ began walking on the hike and bike trail.



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At 25:11 [REDACTED] continued walking on the hike and bike trail. Two dark figures could be observed in the distance on the trail. This was likely Officer Twigg speaking with the stabbing victim, Larry Burghy (Burghy) [REDACTED] BWC 1). Sirens could be heard in the background.

At 25:31 [REDACTED] continued to walk on the hike and bike trail. Officer Twigg, the 911 caller/witness (Jack Chandler), and Larry Burghy could be observed in the distance [REDACTED] BWC 2).

At 25:35 radio traffic could be heard that a male was now walking down the bike path towards officers, Burghy, and Chandler.

At 25:40 Officer Twigg could be observed walking around Burghy and then continuing down the hike and bike trail.

At 25:44 Officer Twigg appeared to reach towards his right side [REDACTED] BWC 3).

At 25:54 [REDACTED] used her portable radio and stated, "I got one walkin' up here."

At 26:03 a small figure could be seen in the distance on the hike and bike trail [REDACTED] BWC 4).

At 26:16 Officer Twigg can be clearly seen with his arms forward. His back was towards [REDACTED] camera. [REDACTED] stated, "he's got a sword?" ([REDACTED] BWC 5).

At 26:18 Officer Twigg yelled, "sir, get on the ground." A small figure could be observed in the distance on the hike and bike trail (this was the involved subject, Matthew Fries (Fries) walking towards officers) [REDACTED] BWC 6).

Officer Twigg continued giving the command "get on the ground" to Fries.

At 26:27 Officers Twigg and [REDACTED] stopped walking. Officer Twigg announced the subject (Fries) had a "knife" or "sword of some kind." Multiple small figures could be observed on the hike and bike trail in the distance ([REDACTED] BWC 7).

At 26:41 Officer Twigg was walking on the right side of the hike and bike trail near the train tracks. Two small figures could be observed on the trail. One was likely a bicyclist who was riding west on the trail. The second small figure was likely Fries in the distance. [REDACTED] continued walking behind Officer Twigg and said, "he's got a hatchet" [REDACTED] BWC 8).



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26:47 Officer Twigg continued giving the commands "get on the ground" and "drop it." His arms were not visible and appeared to be forward [REDACTED] BWC 9).

Additional commands to "stop", "put the axe down", and "get on the ground" could be heard. A second male voice could also be heard giving commands. This was likely when Officer Matthew Meyers (Meyers) arrived at the location.

At 26:54 officers continued giving commands. Fries continued to get closer to officers on the trail [REDACTED] BWC 10).

Officers continued giving commands to Fries. Fries could be heard in the background yelling "fuck off" and other expletives towards officers.

At 26:56 [REDACTED] arm became visible in the video. This was likely when she drew her firearm. Officers continued giving multiple commands to Fries, who was not visible in the camera.

At 27:10 officers could be heard giving multiple commands to Fries. Fries could be heard yelling "fuck off." [REDACTED] and Officer Twigg appeared to begin moving backwards.

At 27:20 [REDACTED] could be heard stating "were going to have to engage." She and Officer Twigg appeared to still be moving backwards.

Officers continued giving commands to Fries to "get on the ground" and "put it down."

At 27:26 the first gunshot could be heard. [REDACTED] arm appeared to be moving up and down. This was likely due to the recoil of her gun as she fired her pistol.

At 27:28 the last gunshot could be heard. Approximately thirteen (13) gunshots were fired.

Someone said, "shots fired" and the officers could be heard communicating with one another to "move over." Moaning could be heard in the background and officers continued to give commands to Fries.

At 27:56 [REDACTED] turned and Fries could be observed lying on his back on the hike and bike trail with his head on the axe. [REDACTED] firearm could be observed in her right hand pointed towards Fries. Another officer could be observed on the left with their gun drawn and pointed towards Fries [REDACTED] BWC 11).

Someone requested fire personnel to respond to the location.



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At 28:16 Officers Twigg and Meyers could be observed approaching Fries who was lying on the ground with the axe under his head. Blood could also be seen on the ground and on Fries' back (██████████ BWC 12).

At 28:33 Officer Twigg could be seen moving a large double-side axe with a red mark on the handle (likely blood) (██████████ BWC 13).

At 28:42 (██████████) reached down towards the ground to move a curved knife with a silver blade, black handle, and red stain on the tip (██████████ BWC 14). (██████████) moved the knife further away from Fries.

The remainder of the video included the rendering of aid to Fries, the management of the scene after the critical incident and (██████████) being driven to the hospital for evaluation by a supervisor.

(██████████)_62542_102224164310_4 - (██████████) *after incident*

The video was 1 minute and 23 seconds in duration. The footage showed (██████████) being transported to University Hospitals. No relevant information to the shooting incident was observed in the video.





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██████████ *BWC 1*



██████████ *BWC 2*



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██████████ BWC 3

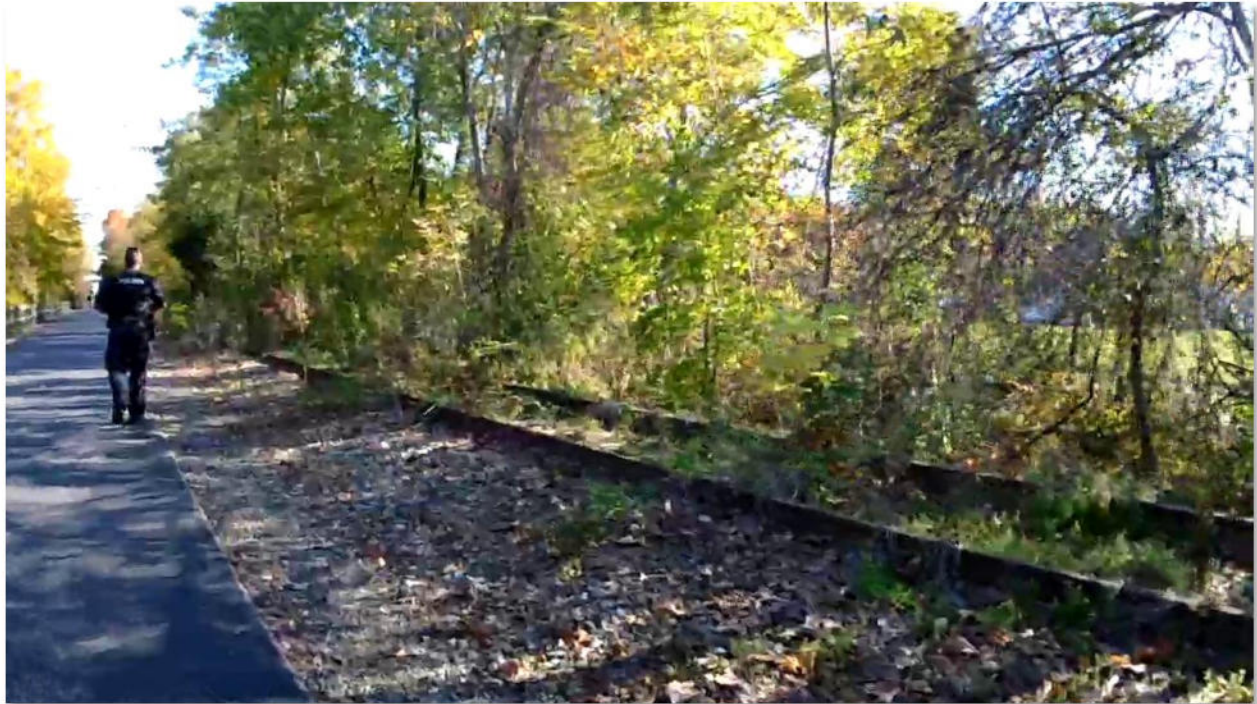


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██████████ BWC 4



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██████████ BWC 5



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██████████ BWC 6



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██████████ BWC 7



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██████████ BWC 8



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██████████ BWC 9



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██████████ BWC 10



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██████████ WC 11



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██████████ BWC 12

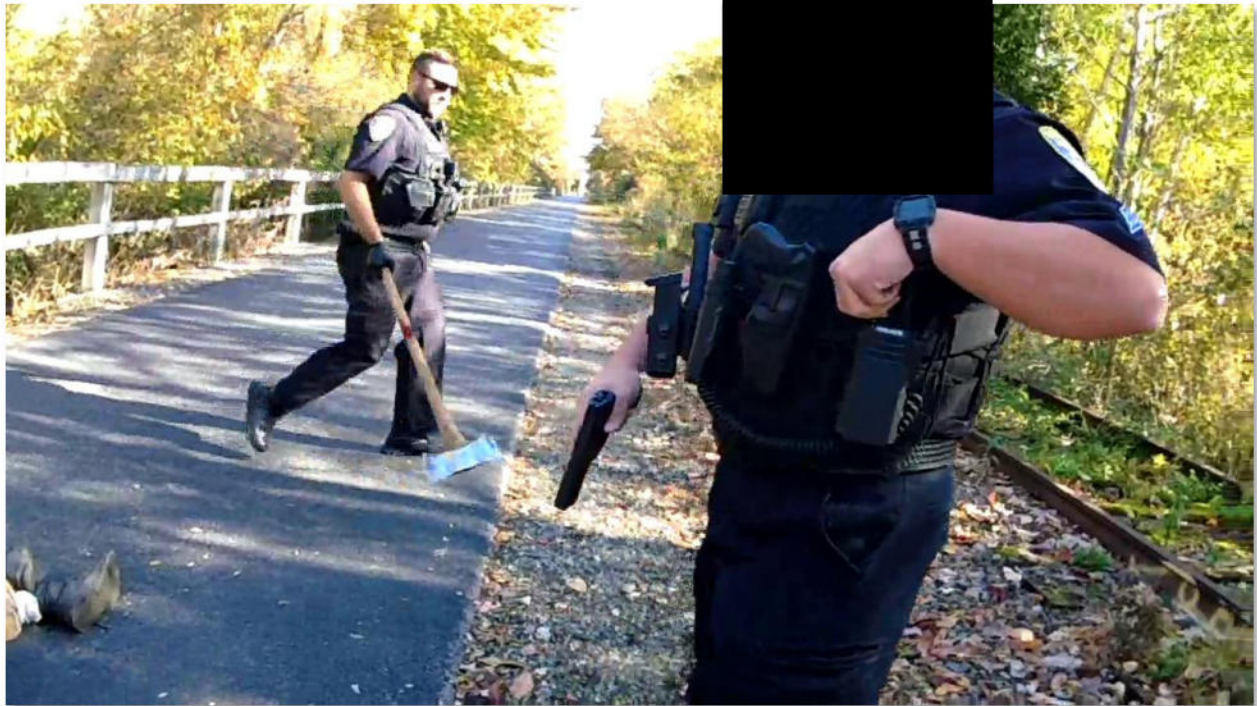


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██████████ BWC 13



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██████████ BWC 14

The thumb drive containing the video footage was submitted to the physical BCI case file as item E for reference only.

References:

Reference Item E - BWC Ravenna PD

Attachments:

1. ██████████ C 1-14