



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



2024-1584
Officer Involved Critical Incident, 27695 Tracy Road, Walbridge,
OH 43465, (L)

Investigative Activity: Interview with Officer
Involves: Tyler Gearig (W)
Date of Activity: 06/07/2024
Activity Location: Gearig, Tyler – Business – 26711 Lime City Road, Perrysburg, OH 43551
Author: SA Christopher Hamberg, #69

Narrative:

On June 7, 2024, at approximately 1025 hours, The Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agents (SA) Tiffany Najmulski (Najmulski) and Chris Hamberg (Hamberg) interviewed Perrysburg Township Police Officer Tyler Gearig (Officer Gearig) regarding the Officer Involved Critical Incident (OICI) of Beau Purtee (Purtee) on May 23, 2024.

The interview took place in the conference room of the Perrysburg Township Police Department (PTPD). Present for the interview was SA Najmulski, SA Hamberg, Officer Gearig and Yvonne Trevino the Attorney for the Ohio Patrolmen's Benevolent Association (OPBA).

The interview was digitally recorded. The audio file is attached to this investigative report.

Agents explained to Officer Gearig that the interview was criminal in nature and were only gathering the facts surrounding the OICI. The interview was voluntary, and he could stop the interview at any time he desired. SA Hamberg provided Officer Gearig the Criminal Investigation Notification form and asked him to review the form and if he would like to continue with the interview to sign the form. Officer Gearig read the form and stated he understood the form and signed the form. The Criminal Investigation Notification Form is attached to this report.

Agents asked Officer Gearig how long he had been at the PTPD and what prior law enforcement experience he had prior to the PTPD. Officer Gearig stated he has been with the PTPD since May of 2018 and prior to that he worked for the Swanton Police Department in 2011. Officer Gearig was asked what shift he was working on May 23, 2024. Officer Gearig stated he was working a twelve (12) hour shift and his shift began at 1800 hours on May 23, 2024, and his shift would have ended at 0600 hours on May 24, 2024. Officer Gearig stated that Thursday was his last scheduled shift for the week, where he would be off Friday,

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Saturday and Sunday. Officer Gearig stated they have a rotating schedule: where they work two (2) days on, have two (2) days off, three (3) days on, and two (2) days off.

SA Hamberg asked Officer Gearig who he was working with that shift and who his supervisor was. Officer Gearig stated that he was field training Officer Hunter Johnson (Officer Johnson) and Officer Johnson was in the car with him. Officer Gearig stated he was also working with Officer James Brazeau (Officer Brazeau) and Sergeant Ross Wheatley (Sgt. Wheatley) was his supervisor for the shift.

Officer Gearig was asked to describe what they were doing prior to the 911 call being placed to Friendly Trailer Park. Officer Gearig stated that they were all at an alarm at Kohl's Department store. Officer Gearig stated after they verified everything was ok at Kohl's, a few minutes later, dispatch advised them of a 911 call at Friendly Trailer Park, near lot 321, which is near the Tracy Road side of the Park. The call was regarding a possible male having some mental issues; whereas the male stated that someone was after him and he had a gun. Officer Gearig stated that they all headed to Friendly Trailer Park. Officer Gearig stated they were responding to the call with emergency lights and siren; however, when they got onto Tracy Road, they turned off their siren, as there was no vehicular traffic on Tracy Road.

Agents were told that as Officer Gearig and Officer Johnson got on Tracy Road and were driving northbound, dispatch advised them that the male is no longer talking to the dispatcher, but the dispatcher could hear the male yelling and screaming in the background, and then the dispatcher heard a gunshot over the phone. Officer Gearig stated his initial thought was that the male either shot himself or he shot someone else. Officer Gearig stated that they pulled into the trailer park off to the left of Tracy Road and came in "black or dark", as they did not want the subject to see them and make them a target. Officer Gearig added it was for their safety, why they did that, as they did not want to make themselves a target.

Agents provided Officer Gearig an overview diagram of the scene that was conducted by the Crime Scene Unit of BCI, in order for Officer Gearing to illustrate where he was at, when the OICI occurred.

SA Hamberg asked Officer Gearig who pulled in behind them. Officer Gearig stated he believed that Officer Brazeau pulled in after him and Sgt. Wheatley pulled in after Officer Brazeau as they were arriving on the scene within ten (10) to fifteen (15) seconds of each other. Officer Gearig told Agents that they all immediately began checking around lot 321. Officer Gearig pointed to the diagram and stated that lot 321 was up to the left of the tree and to the top of the tree, [which would place it off the diagram].

Officer Gearig stated they were checking lot 321 and everything was quiet. SA Hamberg asked Officer Gearig if he had a description of the male. Officer Gearig stated no, other than it was a male with a gun and that someone was after him. Officer Gearig stated that they then heard someone yelling off in a distance. Officer Gearig referred to the diagram and pointed to the only trailer that was on the diagram and stated he thought that was lot 521 but did not know the exact number. Officer Gearig stated the yelling sounded like it was coming from the area to the north of the trailer along the wooded area, near the ditch.

Officer Gearig stated they started to make their way around the trailer looking for the male

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when they heard the first gunshots. Officer Gearig pointed to the area on the diagram to show the agents. Officer Gearig was asked if he could write the number one (1) in the area of the diagram to indicate the area he was at when he first heard the gunshots. Officer Gearig wrote the number one (1) on the diagram.

SA Hamberg asked Officer Gearig if he could give an estimate of how many gunshots he heard. Officer Gearig stated approximately four (4) to five (5) and the gunshots were coming toward their direction. Officer Gearig stated the shots were coming from the ditch area. Officer Gearig added that the ditch had a steep decline that was approximately eight (8) to ten (10) feet down, which made it hard to see the area and the subject.

SA Hamberg asked Officer Gearig where Officer Johnson was at when the gunshots went off. Officer Gearig stated that Officer Johnson was approximately ten (10) feet in front of them. Officer Gearig stated after the gunshots he yelled for everyone to get back, take cover, and to get their patrol rifles. Officer Gearig stated that Officer Johnson and Sgt. Wheatley went back to their marked patrol vehicles, which were Dodge Durango's, and they retrieved their patrol rifles.

Officer Gearig stated that he, Officer Brazeau and Sgt. Wheatley were seeking cover along the corner or edge of the trailer at lot 527, while Officer Johnson was taking cover behind the large tree. Officer Gearig added that he thought the subject was in the ditch area to the north of them approximately forty (40) yards away, but due to the steep decline of the ditch and with it being completely dark it was hard to know for sure.

Officer Gearig told agents that while they were seeking cover, vehicles were driving up and down Tracy Road, and that was when Officer Gearig heard additional gunshots going off toward the vehicles. Officer Gearig stated he feared that someone in a vehicle could be shot at too. Officer Gearig stated he got on the radio and notified dispatch that they had been shot at and needed additional units to block off Tracy Road to keep vehicles from driving up and down the road. SA Hamberg asked Officer Gearig how many gunshots he heard that time. Officer Gearig stated possibly three (3) to four (4).

Officer Gearig stated that when he was scanning the area, he could see a light or a flashlight moving back and forth down in the ditch area. Officer Gearig stated it looked like a flashlight on a cell phone, as it was moving back and forth. Officer Gearig stated he had no idea at that time, that it was a flashlight that was affixed to the subject's Glock 9mm handgun, until after the incident was over and they located the subject in the ditch.

Agents were told that as the light kept moving back and forth, the light would go on and off, which happened several different times. Officer Gearig stated that Officer Johnson had the best vantage point behind the tree, in order to look for the subject in the ditch. Officer Gearig stated that Officer Johnson utilized his flashlight that was affixed to his patrol rifle to try and locate the subject. Officer Gearig stated that Officer Johnson told them he could see the subject moving around in the ditch area. Officer Gearig stated a few seconds after that, the subject started shooting toward Officer Johnson at the tree. Officer Gearig stated that they could hear the bullets striking the tree that Officer Johnson was using for cover. Officer Gearig stated that around that same time is when Sgt. Wheatley moved up from the corner of the trailer at lot 527 and began firing his patrol rifle at the subject. Officer Gearig looked at the

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diagram and placed Sgt. Wheatley near the area of the placards of A, 5-8.

SA Hamberg asked Officer Gearig how many gunshots he heard during that time frame. Officer Gearing stated he thought that the subject fired maybe three (3) to five (5) rounds, and Sgt. Wheatley maybe fired his patrol rifle two (2) to three (3) times, but he was not sure on that. Officer Gearig stated after Sgt. Wheatley fired his patrol rifle the gunshots stopped and everything was quiet. Officer Gearig stated that he checked on Officer Johnson, who stated he was okay and was not hurt.

Officer Gearig told Agents that the light was still on in the ditch, and they were not sure if the subject was still down there, or if he took off running away from the area. Officer Gearig said they checked their perimeter to make sure the subject did not double back on their left side. Officer Gearig stated after that Sgt. Wheatley got into his marked patrol vehicle and drove down Tracy Road utilizing his spotlights to illuminate the ditch area and they located the subject. Officer Gearig stated they made their way to the ditch where they located the subject lying face down in the ditch, with the Glock 9mm having a flashlight affixed to the barrel of the Glock, and the Glock still being in the subject's right hand. Officer Gearig stated that Sgt. Wheatley made his way down the ditch, while he and the other officers gave Sgt. Wheatley cover. Officer Gearig stated that Sgt. Wheatley removed the Glock from the subject's hand and checked for a pulse, which he did not find one.

Officer Gearig stated they notified dispatch to have the paramedics come to the location, which they did and confirmed that the subject was deceased. Officer Gearig added that he moved the Glock 9mm approximately ten (10) feet away from the subject in the ditch, so the paramedics would not have to walk near the gun, in order to check on the subject.

SA Hamberg asked Officer Gearig to place a number two (2) on the diagram to indicate his location when the subject began to shoot at Officer Johnson at the tree. Officer Gearig placed the number two (2) on the diagram. SA Hamberg had Officer Gearig sign and date the diagram. The diagram is attached to this report.

SA Hamberg asked Officer Gearig if he fired his duty weapon, and Officer Gearig stated no. SA Hamberg asked

SA Hamberg asked Officer Gearig if they had dash cameras and body worn cameras (BWC). Officer Gearig stated they do not have a dash camera, but they do have BWC and it is called Watch Guard from Motorola. Officer Gearig added that they have to manually start the camera to record, and after they start it, there is a thirty (30) second look back, that will have video, but no audio. SA Hamberg asked Officer Gearig if he was wearing his BWC and if he had it recording the OICI. Officer Gearig stated he did, and he was recording the OICI.

SA Hamberg asked Officer Gearig if he or any other officers gave verbal commands to the subject identifying themselves as police officers and for him to stop shooting at them. Officer Gearig stated no. Officer Gearig added that they did not want to give away their position to the subject, as the subject was shooting at any light that he saw, and officers had already received gunshots and "fire" from the subject. Officer Gearig added that yelling at and giving verbal commands to the subject would have caused more danger for them, as the subject was already shooting at them. Officer Gearig was asked if they located anyone else in the area,

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other than the subject. Officer Gearig stated no.

Officer Gearig had no additional information to share regarding the incident and the interview concluded at approximately 1104 hours.


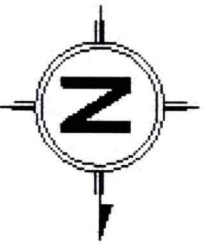
This report only summarizes the information deemed by the author to be of the most relevance to the investigation and does not purport to contain all questions and answers from the audio recording. Further, this report was placed in a chronology to aid the reader's overall understanding of the information elicited during the interview and may not be reflective of the actual sequencing of questions or responses. It is suggested that the reader refer to the audio recording in its entirety.

Attachments:

Attachment # 01: Diagram for Tyler Gearig

Attachment # 02: Interview of Tyler Gearig




 6-7-24


Evidence Legend	
1	Glock Model 34 GEN 5 Handgun
2	Cellphone
3	Flashlight
4	AR Rifle 556
5-8	Fired Cartridge Casing (556 Hornady)
9	Fired Cartridge Casing (SIG 9mm Luger)
A	Fired Cartridge Casing (556 Hornady)

2024-1584		Location Roadway - 27695 Tracy Rd, Walbridge OH		Perryburg Township Police Department		Date Drawn 05/31/2024		Drawn By Emily Miller		Section / Unit BCI-Crime Scene - North		Not to Scale	
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