



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



2024-2614

Officer Involved Critical Incident - 1309 Yellowstone Road,
Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44121

Investigative Activity: Witness Officer Interview
Involves: Officer Joseph Elbiri (W)
Activity Date: 08/30/2024
Activity Location: 1300 block of Yellowstone Road, Cleveland Heights, OH
44121
Authoring Agent: SA Nicholas Valente #139

Narrative:

On August 30, 2024, at approximately 0150 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Nick Valente (Valente) conducted an interview with Cleveland Heights Police Department (CHPD) Officer Joseph Elbiri (Officer Elbiri). The interview took place on the roadway of the 1300 block of Yellowstone Road in Cleveland Heights, Ohio. The interview was recorded on SA Valente's body worn camera and was saved as Reference Item F.

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 the questions and answers from the interview. It is suggested that the full recording be reviewed to clarify any content or contextual questions regarding the information obtained during the interview.

Throughout the interview, Officer Elbiri provided the following information:

Officer Elbiri was on duty and operated a marked CHPD patrol vehicle at the time of the incident. Officer Elbiri wore a standard issue CHPD uniform at the time of the incident.

Officer Elbiri reported he has been employed as a Cleveland Heights Police Officer for approximately three months and is currently in the Field Training Program. Officer Elbiri had no prior police experience at the time of the incident. His [REDACTED] at the time was [REDACTED].

Officer Elbiri stated he was not dispatched to the call for service at 1309 Yellowstone Road but came to assist the officers that were there.

Officer Elbiri had not previously responded to a call for service at 1309 Yellowstone Road and had no prior interactions with the subject, Christian Thomas.

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Officer Elbiri was in the jail, booking in an inmate, when the call was dispatched. He did not recall what was specifically said on the police radio, regarding the original information officers were given. He did recall officers requested additional assistance, so he and [REDACTED] responded to the call. Officer Elbiri drove to the scene and parked south of the subject residence on Yellowstone Road.

As Officer Elbiri approached the scene on foot, he heard a commotion in the front yard of the subject residence. While walking to the front yard of the subject residence, Officer Elbiri was told by [REDACTED] to return to the patrol vehicle and retrieve the rifle from the vehicle. As he was going back to the car to get the rifle, the shooting took place.

After the shooting stopped, Officer Elbiri worked his way back to the subject residence, while utilizing the cars parked along the roadway as cover, as he made his way closer to the scene.

When asked how many shots he thought he heard, Officer Elbiri stated (3:37) "I'm not sure. Um, kinda all just happened pretty fast and all at once." When asked how much time he believed transpired from the first shot he heard to the last shot he heard, Officer Elbiri stated (3:50) "It felt like forever, but it was probably like three, I want to say three to five seconds, something like that."

Officer Elbiri stated at the moment the shots were fired he was not facing the scene but the opposite direction. Upon hearing the shots, he immediately turned around to assist. However, Officer Elbiri did not see the suspect himself running or during the actual shooting. Officer Elbiri did see flashlights (of other officers) all pointed in the same direction. When he made his way closer to the scene, he observed officers rendering aid to the subject. Officer Elbiri believed he observed officers performing CPR on the subject.

When asked if he heard any of the officers give commands to the subject, Officer Elbiri reported that he did hear officers give commands to the subject before the shooting took place. Officer Elbiri could not recall any specific commands given by the officers. Officer Elbiri did not hear the subject ever make any statements.

When asked if anything he saw the other officers do was questionable, inappropriate or potentially criminal, Officer Elbiri stated (6:43) "Not at all, no."

References:

Reference F – USB Flash drive of Video Recorded Interview of Officer Joseph Elbiri

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Attachments:

None

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