



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



2024-1015  
Officer Involved Critical Incident – 100 Block 8th Street, N.E. New  
Philadelphia, Ohio 44663 Tuscarawas, County

**Investigative Activity:** Interview with Witness  
**Involves:** John Robert Staley (W), Colleen C. Fitzgerald (W)  
**Date of Activity:** 03/31/2024  
**Activity Location:** [REDACTED]  
**Author:** SA Charles H. Snyder, #90

**Narrative:**

**Background:**

On Sunday, March 31, 2024, at 2221 hours, Ohio Attorney General’s Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) was dispatched through the Who’s Responding notification system to a Critical Officer Involved Incident involving reported gunshot injuries, at 834 East High Street and Tell Avenue SE, in New Philadelphia (Tuscarawas County) Ohio. Personnel from the Tuscarawas County Sheriff’s Office (TCSO) were indicated as involved. Initial reporting indicated at least one citizen and one law enforcement officer were injured and en route to hospital(s) for treatment. BCI Special Agent Charlie Snyder was dispatched to assist the on-call team at 2224 hours.

**Action Taken:**

On Sunday, March 31, 2024, at 2247 hours, Snyder initiated an audible recorded interview with John Robert Staley (Staley) at his residence. The interview was conducted on Staley’s front porch area of his residence [REDACTED] Snyder identified himself and presented Staley with Snyder’s BCI credentials and business card. Snyder advised Staley of the purpose of this interview and Staley agreed to provide a voluntary statement. Staley provided the following information during this interview.

Staley advised having been at his residence since 1800 hours. Staley advised that he does not smoke inside his residence and gone outside on the front porch (south side of the residence – facing onto East High Street) to light a cigarette. Staley indicated hearing a loud crash that sounded like a car hitting something solid.

Staley indicated walking to the sidewalk in front of his residence and to the corner (located to the south and east of his residence), where he observed a figure running on the other side of

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the street (8<sup>th</sup> street, NE) wearing what he believed to be a gray-colored hooded sweatshirt and red pants. Staley indicated it was dark in that area, and he was unable to get a good look at the subject.

Staley indicated a few moments later, hearing sirens and then noticed "... a cop sitting in the middle of the road down here – yelling at some guy...". The yelling went on for approximately five minutes, as he continued to watch. Staley heard someone say, "I don't want to shoot you", then everything went quiet until he heard "...pop – pop – pop...", then a car came flying up the road (south bound on 8<sup>th</sup> Street), turning left and proceeded down East High Avenue (eastbound). Staley indicated that the gunshots occurred consecutively and very close together. Staley said that he was unable to see who fired the gunshots because the vehicle headlights were shining towards his position.

Staley indicated losing track of the subject with the gray-colored hooded sweatshirt in the area where the shooting happened and clarified that when he observed this subject, the subject was running away from where the crash sounded. Staley assumed this subject was fleeing from the scene. Staley indicated it was possibly ten minutes from the time the subject was observed running until he heard the gunshots.

Staley was asked to repeat the verbal commands he had heard. Staley replied that he heard, "...I don't want to shoot you – I don't want to shoot you...", then heard some words he described a mumbled and could not hear or understand. Staley advised everything, then went silent, and then he heard the gunshots.

Staley advised that after this occurred, he observed lots of flashing lights and vehicles stopped down there, pointing east from his residence towards East High Street and Pell Avenue. Staley indicated the vehicle he observed driving from 8<sup>th</sup> Street and turning left onto East High Street was believed to be an SUV. Staley was unable to tell if it was a law enforcement vehicle.

Staley indicated having a cellular telephone but did not secure any photos or videos from this incident.

Snyder then asked Staley if there was anyone else at his residence when this occurred. Staley advised his girlfriend, who he identified as Colleen Claire Fitzgerald (Fitzgerald).

Snyder then met and interviewed Fitzgerald.

Fitzgerald said that she had also heard the initial crash that sounded to her as if it was a car accident. She indicated then she went outside and observed that several neighbors were also outside. Fitzgerald reported that someone said the vehicle went into a residence's living room.

Fitzgerald also indicated that as she went outside, she heard "pap – pap", very quickly and approximately five minutes after hearing the earlier crash. Fitzgerald said she did not see anything else and was just coming outside when this occurred.

With no additional information provided, the interview of John Robert Staley and Colleen Claire

Fitzgerald concluded at approximately 2257 hours.

Note: This report summarizes information deemed by the author of the most relevance to the investigation and does not contain all questions and answers from the interview. This report was placed in a chronology to aid the reader's overall understanding of information elicited during the interview and may not be reflective of the actual sequencing of questions. It is suggested the full audio recording be reviewed to clarify any content or contextual questions regarding the information from the interview.

**Attachments:**

Attachment # 01: 2024-03-31 John Robert Staley – Interview 240331\_0316