



**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:** Prosecutor Ruling and Case Closing  
**Involves:** Portage County Prosecutor's Office (O)  
**Activity Date:** 04/23/2025  
**Activity Location:** BCI - Richfield  
**Authoring Agent:** SA Allison Fletcher

**Narrative:**

On Tuesday, April 15, 2025, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Allison Fletcher (Fletcher) received a letter relevant to the investigation regarding the officer-involved critical incident that occurred in Ravenna, Ohio, on October 22, 2024. The letter contained the prosecutorial decision made by Portage County Prosecutor Connie Lewandowski (Lewandowski) who declined to present the case to a Grand Jury. Prosecutor Lewandowski also declined to file criminal charges against Ravenna Police Department (RPD) [REDACTED]. Prosecutor Lewandowski ruled the use of force as justified.

SA Fletcher reviewed the document and noted the following:

Dear Special Agent Fletcher:

I have had the opportunity to carefully review your investigative reports and supporting evidence regarding the October 22, 2024, shooting death of Matthew Fries. The shooting occurred in the City of Ravenna and involved two officers from the Ravenna Police Department. It is my conclusion upon such review that this was a thorough and comprehensive investigation by your agency upon which I can base an informed decision. For the reasons set forth herein, we have determined not to present this matter to the grand jury nor to pursue any criminal charges against the officers involved and we will hereby close our file.

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In conclusion, it is clear based upon your investigation, the physical evidence, in conjunction with the audio and video recordings, the forensic findings, witness statements, as well as the law enforcements statements that [REDACTED] [REDACTED] responded appropriately to this incident. There is no reasonable interpretation of the evidence other than each of the officers in question, who were objectively faced with an imminent threat to the lives, before the reasonable determination was made to utilize deadly force.

Wherefore, their actions were justified to confront the deadly threat against them.

For these reasons, it is the finding of this office that the use of deadly force by [REDACTED] was reasonable and justified in each instance. Accordingly, there is no basis for the pursuit of any criminal prosecution against either officer in connection with this incident, and we are closing our file.

Thank you for your extremely detailed investigation and substantial efforts in this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have.

Best regards,

Connie J. Lewandowski  
Prosecuting Attorney

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All evidence in this case has been returned to the requesting agency. Special Agent Fletcher and Special Agent Supervisor Charles Moran reviewed this investigation and

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discussed the documentation. During this discussion, it was determined that the investigation was sufficiently pursued, and all investigative efforts and aspects of this case have been completed. Special agent assistance is no longer required by the requesting agency.

The documents received from the Portage County Prosecutor's Office are attached to this report. Please refer to those documents for further information.

This case is closed.

**References:**

None

**Attachments:**

1. 2025-04-15 Letter from Portage County Prosecutor
2. 2025-04-24 Evidence to Ravenna Police Department - Kevin Nicolino
3. 2025-04-24 Case File Receipt

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CONNIE J. LEWANDOWSKI  
PORTAGE COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

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RAVENNA, OHIO 44266

(330) 297-3850  
CRIMINAL DIVISION FAX (330) 297-3856  
CIVIL DIVISION FAX (330) 297-4594

[www.portageprosecutor.com](http://www.portageprosecutor.com)

April 15, 2025

Special Agent Allison Fletcher  
Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigations  
4055 Highlander Parkway  
Richfield, OH 44286

**Re: BCI Investigation of Officer Involved Critical Incident  
Involving RPD [REDACTED]  
Case Number 2024-3294**

Dear Special Agent Fletcher:

I have had the opportunity to carefully review your investigative reports and supporting evidence regarding the October 22, 2024, shooting death of Matthew Fries. The shooting occurred in the City of Ravenna and involved two officers from the Ravenna Police Department. It is my conclusion upon such review that this was a thorough and comprehensive investigation by your agency upon which I can base an informed decision. For the reasons set forth herein, we have determined not to present this matter to the grand jury nor to pursue any criminal charges against the officers involved and we will hereby close our file.

A police officer acts reasonably in using deadly force when the officer has a reasonable belief that the suspect poses an imminent threat of serious physical harm or death to the officer or to others. *Tennessee v. Garner* (1985), 471 U.S. 1, 105 S.Ct. 1694; *Graham v. Connor* (1989), 490 U.S. 386. The Fourth Amendment inquiry is whether the officers' actions are "objectively reasonable" considering the facts and circumstances confronting them, without regard to the underlying intent or motivation. The "reasonableness" of a particular use of force must be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on scene, and its calculus must embody an allowance for the fact that the police officers are often forced to make split-second decisions about the amount of force necessary in a particular situation.

[REDACTED] Officer Joshua Twigg, and Officer Matthew Meyers were dispatched to the Portage Hike and Bike near North Freedom Street in Ravenna Ohio. The call involved a victim Larry Burghy who had been stabbed multiple times by the decedent Matthew Fries. Police responded and observed the victim lying on the Hike and Bike trail with multiple stab wounds to his arm and buttock. The victim provided a description of Fries indicating he was bald and was not wearing a shirt.

Shortly thereafter police observed Fries approaching aggressively with a double-sided axe and a knife in his hands. Fries held the weapons over his head and periodically took a fighting stance. Moreover, Fries continually yelled expletives as officers gave commands repeatedly to stop and drop the weapons. Nevertheless, Fries continued to approach intensely.

As Fries became closer to officers, an innocent passerby on a bicycle was observed within arm's reach, police continued commands, yet Fries refused to drop his weapons. Fries continued to boldly approach officers wielding the ax and the knife, and when he was within approximately fifteen feet of the officer's location, an officer indicated, "we are going to have to do this" and [REDACTED] then stated, "shots fired," immediately thereafter [REDACTED] fired their guns striking Fries in multiple locations rendering him incapacitated.

Officers then safely approached Fries to render aid to him, officers then located the double-bladed axe lying beneath Fries' head. They further observed a curved knife lying on the ground next to him. Evidence was established that from the moment Officer Twigg first observed Fries and announced the same, until the time the first gunshot was fired was less than two minutes. Fries was given over thirty commands to stop and drop the weapons before [REDACTED] fired their service weapon.

In their interviews, [REDACTED] Officer Meyers and Officer Twigg each reported seeing Fries brandishing the ax and knife, while failing to heed commands to drop the weapons, this is consistent with their utterances and the depictions on their body-worn cameras, as well as civilian witness Jack Chandler.

The autopsy revealed Fries was shot multiple times. The gunfire lasted approximately two seconds. In addition, Fries toxicology established he was positive for Methamphetamine and Amphetamines.



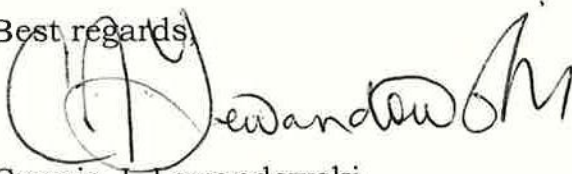
In conclusion, it is clear based upon your investigation, the physical evidence, in conjunction with the audio and video recordings, the forensic findings, witness statements, as well as the law enforcements statements that [REDACTED] [REDACTED] responded appropriately to this incident. There is no reasonable interpretation of the evidence other than each of the officers in question, who were objectively faced with an imminent threat to the lives, before the reasonable determination was made to utilize deadly force.

Wherefore, their actions were justified to confront the deadly threat against them.

For these reasons, it is the finding of this office that the use of deadly force by [REDACTED] was reasonable and justified in each instance. Accordingly, there is no basis for the pursuit of any criminal prosecution against either officer in connection with this incident, and we are closing our file.

Thank you for your extremely detailed investigation and substantial efforts in this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Connie J. Lewandowski". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C" and "L".

Connie J. Lewandowski  
Prosecuting Attorney

Cc: Chief Jake Smallfield



# EVIDENCE RECEIPT



## Ohio Attorney General's Office Bureau of Criminal Investigation

Case Number  
2024-3294

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

Transfer Date  
4/24/2025 10:50 AM

### RELEASED FROM

Releasing Agency  
Ohio Attorney General's Office Bureau of Criminal  
Investigation

Case Number  
2024-3294

Released By  
Betsy Turney

### RECEIVED BY

Receiving Agency  
Ravenna Police Department

Case Number  
Not Entered

Received By  
Kevin Nicolino

### RELEASE REASON

Returned to Agency

### EVIDENCE

- 001 - Hoodie (Crime Scene Item 001) Browns logo with suspected blood recovered from trail - P00020-1040860, 001 (*Personal Property*) in *Brown Paper Bag C00020-1023446*
- 002 - Knife (Crime Scene Item 002) curved blade with suspected blood - P00020-1040861, 002 (*Weapon*) in *Cardboard Box C00020-1023445*
- 003 - Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 003) .45 recovered from trail (gravel) - P00020-1040862, 003 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023444*
- 004 - Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 004) .45 recovered from trail (gravel) - P00020-1040863, 004 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023443*
- 005 - Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 005) .45 recovered from trail (gravel) - P00020-1040864, 005 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023442*
- 006 - Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 006) .45 recovered from trail (gravel) - P00020-1040865, 006 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023441*
- 007 - Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 007) .45 recovered from trail (gravel) - P00020-1040866, 007 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023440*
- 008 - Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 083) .45 recovered from trail (gravel) - P00020-1040867, 008 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023439*
- 009 - Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 009) .45 recovered from trail (gravel) - P00020-1040868, 009 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023438*
- 010 - Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 010) .45 recovered from trail (gravel) - P00020-1040869, 010 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023437*
- 011 - Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 011) .45 recovered from trail (gravel) - P00020-1040870, 011 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023436*
- 012 - Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 012) .45 recovered from trail (gravel) - P00020-1040871, 012 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023435*
- 013 - Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 013) .45 recovered from trail (gravel) - P00020-1040872, 013 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023434*
- 014 - Cell phone (Crime Scene 014) - P00020-1040873, 014 (*Device*) in *Envelope C00020-1023433*
- 015 - Axe (Crime Scene 015) with suspected blood - P00020-1040874, 015 (*Weapon*) in *Cardboard Box C00020-1023432*
- 016 - Eyeglasses (Crime Scene Item 016) - P00020-1040875, 016 (*Personal Property*) in *Envelope C00020-1023431*

- 017 - Bedding (Crime Scene Item 017) - P00020-1040876, 017 (*Personal Property*) in *Brown Paper Bag C00020-1023430*
- 018 - Misc clothing (Crime Scene Item 018) - P00020-1040877, 018 (*Personal Property*) in *Brown Paper Bag C00020-1023429*
- 019 - Swab of suspected blood (Crime Scene Item 019) - P00020-1040878, 019 (*Biological Evidence*) in *Envelope C00020-1023428*
- 020 - Buccal swab from Larry Burghy (Crime Scene Item 020) - P00020-1040879, 020 (*Biological Evidence*) in *Envelope C00020-1023427*
- 021 - [REDACTED] Firearm (Crime Scene 021) Semi Auto Pistol - Heckler & Koch HK45 - P00020-1040880, 021 (*Weapon*) in *Cardboard Box C00020-1023426*
- 022 - [REDACTED] Firearm (Crime Scene 022) Semi Auto Pistol - Heckler & Koch HK45 - P00020-1040881, 022 (*Weapon*) in *Cardboard Box C00020-1023425*
- 023 - [REDACTED] 2 Magazines (Crime Scene 023) - P00020-1040882, 023 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023424*
- 024 - [REDACTED] 2 Magazines (Crime Scene 024) - P00020-1040883, 024 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023423*
- 025 - Various swabs and samples from autopsy of Matthew Fries - P00020-1041035, 025 (*Biological Evidence*) in *Envelope C00020-1023597*
- 026 - pants and belt from Matthew Fries - P00020-1041036, 026 (*Personal Property*) in *Brown Paper Bag C00020-1023596*
- 027 - underwear - P00020-1041037, 027 (*Personal Property*) in *Brown Paper Bag C00020-1023595*
- 028 - sock - P00020-1041038, 028 (*Personal Property*) in *Brown Paper Bag C00020-1023594*
- 029 - sock - P00020-1041039, 029 (*Personal Property*) in *Brown Paper Bag C00020-1023593*
- 030 - right boot - P00020-1041040, 030 (*Personal Property*) in *Brown Paper Bag C00020-1023592*
- 031 - left boot - P00020-1041041, 031 (*Personal Property*) in *Brown Paper Bag C00020-1023591*
- 032 - projectile from posterolateral right thigh - P00020-1041042, 032 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023590*
- 033 - projectile from left 9th ICS - P00020-1041043, 033 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023589*
- 034 - projectile from small bowel - P00020-1041044, 034 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023588*
- 035 - projectile from left hip - P00020-1041045, 035 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023587*
- 036 - projectile from left inferior buttock - P00020-1041046, 036 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023586*
- 037 - projectile from R posterior shoulder - P00020-1041047, 037 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023585*
- 038 - projectile from left mid back - P00020-1041048, 038 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023584*
- 039 - projectile from paramedian right low back - P00020-1041049, 039 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023583*
- 040 - projectile from left posterior thigh - P00020-1041050, 040 (*Weapon*) in *Envelope C00020-1023582*
- 041 - Blood standard card of Matthew Fries - P00020-1041051, 041 (*Biological Evidence*) in *Envelope C00020-1023581*

## PACKAGING



*Brown Paper Bag C00020-1023446 - Sealed*

- 001 Hoodie (Crime Scene Item 001) Browns logo with suspected blood recovered from trail

*Cardboard Box C00020-1023432 - Sealed*

- 015 Axe (Crime Scene 015) with suspected blood

*Cardboard Box C00020-1023445 - Sealed*

- 002 Knife (Crime Scene Item 002) curved blade with suspected blood

*Cardboard Box C00020-1023426 - Sealed*

- 021 [REDACTED] Firearm (Crime Scene 021) Semi Auto Pistol - Heckler & Koch HK45

*Cardboard Box C00020-1023425 - Sealed*

- 022 [REDACTED] Firearm (Crime Scene 022) Semi Auto Pistol - Heckler & Koch HK45

*Envelope C00020-1023423 - Sealed*

- 024 [REDACTED] 2 Magazines (Crime Scene 024)

*Envelope C00020-1023433 - Sealed*

- 014 Cell phone (Crime Scene 014)

*Envelope C00020-1023431 - Sealed*

- 016 Eyeglasses (Crime Scene Item 016)

*Envelope C00020-1023424 - Sealed*

- 023 [REDACTED] 2 Magazines (Crime Scene 023)

*Envelope C00020-1023427 - Sealed*

- 020 Buccal swab from Larry Burghy (Crime Scene Item 020)

*Envelope C00020-1023428 - Sealed*

- 019 Swab of suspected blood (Crime Scene Item 019)

*Brown Paper Bag C00020-1023429 - Not Sealed*

- 018 Misc clothing (Crime Scene Item 018)

*Envelope C00020-1023434 - Sealed*

- 013 Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 013) .45 recovered from trail (gravel)

*Envelope C00020-1023435 - Sealed*

- 012 Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 012) .45 recovered from trail (gravel)

*Envelope C00020-1023436 - Sealed*

- 011 Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 011) .45 recovered from trail (gravel)

*Envelope C00020-1023437 - Sealed*

- 010 Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 010) .45 recovered from trail (gravel)

*Envelope C00020-1023438 - Sealed*

- 009 Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 009) .45 recovered from trail (gravel)

*Envelope C00020-1023439 - Sealed*

- 008 Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 083) .45 recovered from trail (gravel)

*Envelope C00020-1023440 - Sealed*

- 007 Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 007) .45 recovered from trail (gravel)

*Envelope C00020-1023441 - Sealed*

- 006 Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 006) .45 recovered from trail (gravel)

*Envelope C00020-1023442 - Sealed*

- 005 Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 005) .45 recovered from trail (gravel)

*Envelope C00020-1023443 - Sealed*

- 004 Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 004) .45 recovered from trail (gravel)

*Brown Paper Bag C00020-1023430 - Sealed*

- 017 Bedding (Crime Scene Item 017)

*Envelope C00020-1023444 - Sealed*

- 003 Fired cartridge casing (Crime Scene Item 003) .45 recovered from trail (gravel)

*Envelope C00020-1023581 - Sealed*

- 041 Blood standard card of Matthew Fries

*Envelope C00020-1023582 - Sealed*

- 040 projectile from left posterior thigh

*Envelope C00020-1023583 - Sealed*

- 039 projectile from paramedian right low back

*Envelope C00020-1023584 - Sealed*

- 038 projectile from left mid back

*Envelope C00020-1023585 - Sealed*

- 037 projectile from R posterior shoulder

*Envelope C00020-1023586 - Sealed*

- 036 projectile from left inferior buttock

*Envelope C00020-1023587 - Sealed*

- 035 projectile from left hip

*Envelope C00020-1023588 - Sealed*

- 034 projectile from small bowel

*Envelope C00020-1023589 - Sealed*

- 033 projectile from left 9th ICS

*Brown Paper Bag C00020-1023594 - Sealed*

- 028 sock

*Envelope C00020-1023590 - Sealed*

- 032 projectile from posterolateral right thigh

*Envelope C00020-1023597 - Sealed*

- 025 Various swabs and samples from autopsy of Matthew Fries

*Brown Paper Bag C00020-1023593 - Sealed*

- 029 sock

*Brown Paper Bag C00020-1023595 - Sealed*

- 027 underwear

*Brown Paper Bag C00020-1023596 - Sealed*

- 026 pants and belt from Matthew Fries

*Brown Paper Bag C00020-1023591 - Sealed*

- 031 left boot

*Brown Paper Bag C00020-1023592 - Sealed*

- 030 right boot


## SIGNATURES

X 

4/24/2025

Released From Betsy Turney

Date

X 

4/24/2025

Received By Kevin Nicolino

Date

# RECEIPT

BCI CASE 2024-3294  
CASE FILE  
AND  
REFERENCES

Det. *K. [Signature]* #434

Signature

Det. Kevin Nicolino #434

Print

4-24-2025

Date & Time