



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



2023-1835
Officer Involved Critical Incident – 114 North Ninth St, Byesville,
OH (L)

Investigative Activity: Interview with Witness
Date of Activity: 07/11/2023
Author: SA Craig Call

Narrative:

On July 11, 2023, the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Investigations and Crime Scene Units were requested by the Guernsey County Sheriff's Office (GCSO) to investigate an Officer Involved Critical Incident (shooting) involving members of the Byesville Police Department (BPD), GCSO, and Jeremiah Wise (Wise). It was reported to BCI the incident occurred at Wise's residence, 114 North 9th Street, Byesville, Ohio and resulted in Wise being shot and transported to a nearby hospital where he ultimately succumbed to his injuries.

SA Call was informed by the GCSO Sgt. Bill Patterson (Sgt. Patterson) the original call for service leading to the contact with Wise was a welfare check called in by Wise's employer. On July 13, 2023, Sgt. Patterson forwarded SA Call a voicemail left by an individual identifying himself as Phil Sothen (Sothen) and informing he was the Love's truck stop general manager who called in the welfare check for Wise. Sothen requested additional information about the above incident and left a callback number he identified as his personal cell phone number of [REDACTED]. The described voicemail has been added to the case file.

On July 13, 2023, SA Call spoke with Sothen on the above listed number and obtained a recorded statement about his involvement in the incident. The following is a summation of the contact SA Call had with Sothen. An audio recording of the conversation was obtained and added to the case file.

Sothen indicated he originally requested a welfare check on Wise due to him not showing up for work and blocking all work related phone calls throughout the day. Sothen said Wise was scheduled to be at work at 6:30am the morning of the incident. Sothen said one of the employees he identified as Angie Robinson (Robinson), was able to get in contact with Wise via text messages and Sothen observed the text messages to be suicidal in nature. Sothen described some of the messages as containing statements indicating Wise did not intend to live through the night. Sothen also described the text messages as Wise indicating his children would be better off without him. Sothen indicated Robinson has taken the news of the incident very hard and has taken off for a few days. Sothen provided a phone number for Robinson of [REDACTED].

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Sothen described Wise as a very good employee that he had no issues with during the time he worked there. Sothen said Wise was the operations manager at the truck stop and ran the majority of the shifts when Sothen was not there.

SA Call has also obtained the original recording of the welfare check request called in by Sothen to the GCSO and BPD and found it to be consistent with the above statement. The audio recording has also been added to the case file.

Attachments:

Attachment # 01: Phil Sothen Vmail to GCSO

Attachment # 02: Phil Sothen Phone Interview

Attachment # 03: Welfare Check request from Phil Sothen