



**Ohio Attorney General's Office
Bureau of Criminal Investigation
Prosecutor Summary**



2024-3649

Officer Involved Critical Incident – 6880 Sunset Strip
Avenue NW, Room #220, North Canton, Ohio 44720

Prosecutor Summary

INVESTIGATION REGARDING:

Officer-Involved Critical Incident (Shooting)

Involved Subject – James Vanest

Involved Officers – Canton Regional SWAT Team members – [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

INVESTIGATING AGENCY:

Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation

CASE NUMBERS:

2024-3649 BCI Special Investigation Unit
BCI Crime Scene Unit
BCI Criminal Intelligence Unit
24-38325 BCI Laboratory

DATE OF INCIDENT:

November 18, 2024

DATE OF REPORT:

June 16, 2024

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Officer-Involved Critical Incident - Officer Involved Critical
Incident - 6880 Sunset Strip Ave NW, Room #220, North
Canton, Ohio, 44720

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Investigative Request

On Monday, November 18, 2024, at approximately 1413 hours, the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) was requested by the Jackson Township Police Department (JTPD) to conduct an independent investigation of the facts and circumstances surrounding an officer-involved critical incident which occurred in the area of 6880 Sunset Strip Ave NW, Room #220, North Canton, Ohio, 44720.

The shooting incident involved a subject, James Vanest, and members of the Canton Regional SWAT Team. Also present during the incident were troopers from the Ohio State Highway Patrol, and Deputy Marshals from the United States Marshals Service.

The incident resulted in the death of James Vanest and the injury of a North Canton Police Officer. The incident occurred in Jackson Township and involved nine officers from the Canton Regional SWAT Team – five Canton Police Officers, one Massillon Police Officer, one Perry Township Police Officer, one Carroll County Sheriff's Office Deputy, and one Stark County Sheriff's Office Deputy.

Names of involved officers:

- Canton Police Department:
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
- Massillon Police Department
 - [REDACTED]
- Perry Township Police Department
 - [REDACTED]
- Carroll County Sheriff's Office
 - [REDACTED]
- Stark County Sheriff's Office
 - [REDACTED]

The BCI Crime Scene Unit (CSU) and the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) were requested to investigate the incident.

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Preface:

This report serves as a synopsis of the investigation into the November 18, 2024, officer-involved shooting in Stark County, Ohio. This report only summarizes the information that the investigative team determined to be the most useful in achieving an overall understanding of what occurred in this incident. Every fact and every detail have not been presented in this summary report. Therefore, it is recommended that each individual report from which this document is derived be read in order to obtain a complete understanding of this investigation. Further, audio and/or video recordings exist for the majority of the interviews conducted, revealing further details of statements given regarding the incident.

This investigation was conducted with the purpose of determining, to the extent possible, the facts and circumstances surrounding this incident. As unbiased collectors of fact, the investigative team has not and will not render any opinion of the legality of officers' actions. Instead, it is anticipated that this investigation will provide the basis of information for decisions to be rendered by the appropriate authorities.

Investigative Team

BCI Special Agent (SA) Matthew Armstrong (now SAS Armstrong) was assigned as the original lead investigator. SA Allison Fletcher, SA Jesse Bynum, SA Nick Valente, SA Bill Conn, and SA Joseph Goudy also responded to the scene and provided investigative assistance.

SA Allison Fletcher was later assigned as the lead investigator.

BCI Special Agent Lurna McClintock, SA Chad Doran, SA Larry Hootman, SA Daniel Boerner, and SAS Edward Lulla of the Crime Scene Unit (CSU) processed the scene.

Additionally, various personnel from the BCI crime laboratory performed scientific analyses on submitted items of potential physical evidence.

The investigation was supervised by Special Agent Supervisor (SAS) Charles Moran.

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Summary of Process

The following is a partial list of investigative activities or methods which were employed during this investigation to thoroughly and accurately locate and document all pertinent facts and circumstances regarding this incident:

- Video-recorded interviews of the nine officers who discharged their weapons
- Video-recorded interviews of eight witness officers who were present during the incident
- Canvassed for surveillance video cameras in the area surrounding the scene
- Canvassed for and interviewed fifteen witnesses to the incident
- Obtained and reviewed body-worn camera recordings of officers involved in the incident
- Obtained and reviewed drone footage captured during the incident
- Obtained and reviewed records of prior law enforcement contacts with the subject
- Obtained and reviewed open and closed-source biographical information on the involved subject, including criminal history reports, OHLEG, driving records, etc.
- Processed the crime scene for potential evidence (photographing, searching, measuring, documenting and collecting)
- Reviewed audio communications on the radio frequencies utilized during the incident
- Reviewed the dispatch/CAD records pertaining to the incident
- Conducted forensic laboratory examinations to include:
 1. Firearm identification testing of involved firearms and cartridge casings
 2. Firearm operability testing
 3. DNA collection and preservation
- Collected and reviewed the departmental personnel files of the officers involved in the shooting, to include training and disciplinary records
- Reviewed firearm qualification and training records for the involved officers
- Verified the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission (OPOTC) certification status of the officers who discharged their weapons
- Obtained the department's policies and procedures regarding the use of force for prosecutorial review
- Reviewed social media posts and pertinent statements made in the media regarding the incident
- Reviewed autopsy records of the subject

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Incident Summary/Overview

In the days prior to the officer involved shooting, United States Marshal Service (USMS) Deputy Marshal Christopher Alstrom (Alstrom) became involved in an investigation regarding the apprehension of James Vanest (Vanest). His investigation began on the Thursday or Friday prior to the shooting incident (11/14/24 or 11/15/24). During the initial days of his investigation, Deputy Marshal Alstrom received a "collateral lead" from the USMS Southern District indicating that Vanest had an active federal arrest warrant for felony possession of firearms. The arrest warrant was a result of an ATF investigation which was later turned over to the USMS for apprehension. It was learned that Vanest had ties to the Stark County and Canton, Ohio areas, and Vanest was believed to be present in the area.

During Deputy Marshal Alstrom's investigation, he determined Vanest was staying at 6880 Sunset Strip Avenue NW, Room #220 in North Canton, Ohio (Rodeway Inn). A plan was formulated for apprehension and assistance was requested to include the two TFO (Task Force Officers) officers and a uniformed patrol officer from JTPD.

Additional information about Vanest was gathered, and it was learned that Vanest had a history of firearms and multiple encounters with law enforcement that involved firearms. It was also believed that Vanest was the suspect in a cold-case homicide, but no additional information was provided.

On the morning of November 18, 2024, Deputy Marshal Alstrom, two USMS TFO officers, and a JTPD officer responded to 6880 Sunset Strip Avenue NW, Room #220, to apprehend Vanest. Motel management provided a key for officers to enter the room. The four officers then stacked up on the right side of the building near Room #220. After numerous attempts of knocking and announcing their presence and purpose, a key was used to gain access to Room #220.

The door to Room #220 opened approximately 3 inches. Deputy Marshal Alstrom peeked through the small gap in the door and observed Vanest pointing a gun directly at him. Officers quickly retreated and made attempts to negotiate with Vanest to no avail. The Canton Regional SWAT Team was requested a short time later.

SWAT officers arrived on scene and took multiple positions within the parking lot outside of Room #220. Officers took cover behind the armored SWAT vehicle and various other vehicles parked nearby. Multiple rounds of chemical munitions were utilized in an effort to gain compliance from Vanest. Eventually, a drone was deployed that entered into Room #220 through the doorway. Once the drone entered Room #220, Vanest shot at the drone, causing it to crash and remain on the floor of the room during the remainder of the incident. Eventually, Vanest began shooting towards officers, striking North Canton Police [REDACTED] in the arm. Officers

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returned fire. Multiple volleys of gunfire continued throughout the duration of the incident with nine officers from the Canton Regional SWAT Team firing.

A robot was eventually deployed into Room #220 to check on the status of Vanest. Video captured on the camera of the robot appeared to show Vanest lying on the ground behind the bed.

Officers made entry into Room #220 and located Vanest, unresponsive, lying behind the bed holding a firearm in his hand. Vanest was located with his finger still on the trigger of the gun which had to be carefully removed by officers. Officers rendered aid to Vanest, and he was pronounced dead a short time later.

For additional information, refer to the Investigative Report titled *2024-11-18: Case Opening*.

Crime Scene Processing

The BCI Crime Scene Unit (CSU) responded to the scene to document, process and preserve items of potential evidence. The process included the search for, documentation and collection of potential evidence. Detailed photographs and crime scene reports were completed with the information below only summarizing some of the more significant findings.

BCI CSU Special Agents Dan Boerner, Lurna McClintock, Larry Hootman, Chad Doran and CSU SAS Ed Lulla processed the scene of the shooting. This included mapping the scene with a Leica RTC360 scanner.

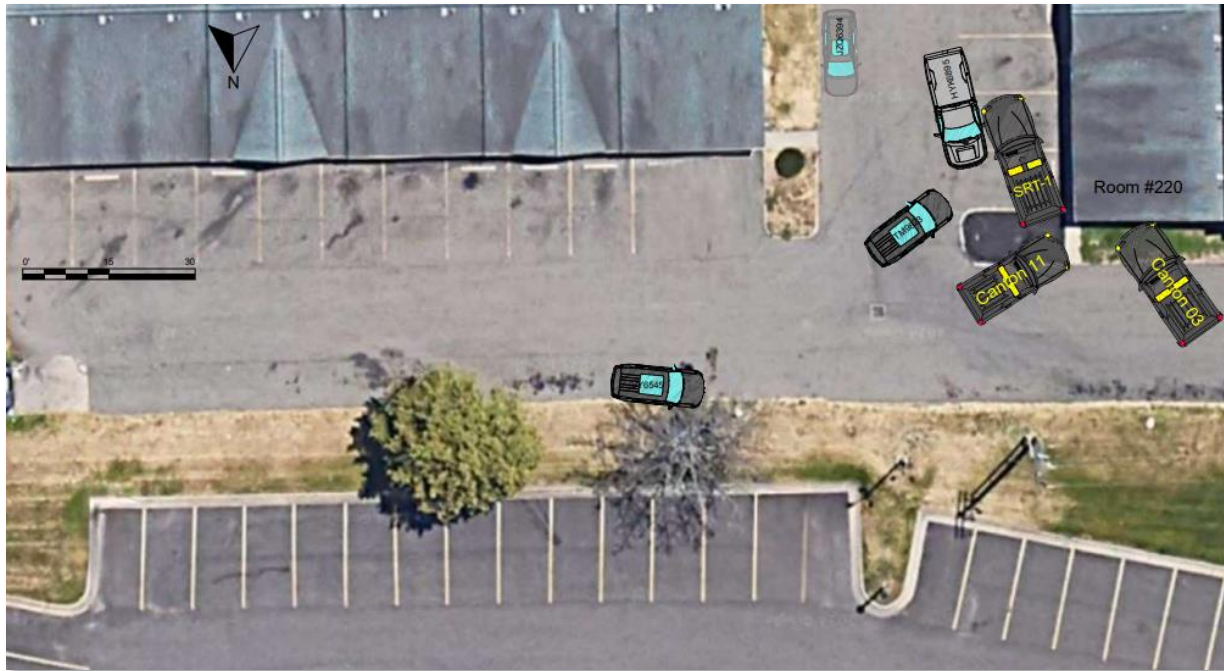
The scene was photographed as found and examined for items of suspected evidence. Areas within the scene included the parking lot of 6880 Sunset Strip Avenue (Rodeway Inn), the interior of Room #220, and a gray 2015 Ram 3500 truck bearing Ohio registration HYK6895 (reportedly used by Vanest; see figure - *Overhead Scene Diagram - Clean*).



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Overhead Scene Diagram - Clean

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Scene Examination – Parking Lot

Location: parking lot of 6880 Sunset Strip NW (Rodeway Inn)

The parking lot was photographed as it was found. The parking lot scene consisted of three SWAT vehicles, three task force vehicles and the subject vehicle (*Figures 1-6, Overall photographs*). The parking lot scene also consisted of a portion of the adjacent parking lot of the Cracker Barrel.



Figure 1, Overall photograph

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Figure 2, Overall photograph



Figure 3, Overall photograph

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Figure 4, Overall photograph



Figure 5, Overall photograph

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Figure 6, Overall photograph

The parking lot was documented using a Leica RTC360 laser scanner. Using the scan data, an overhead diagram and panoramas were created and provided to the investigators (*Figure 7, Overhead Diagram*).

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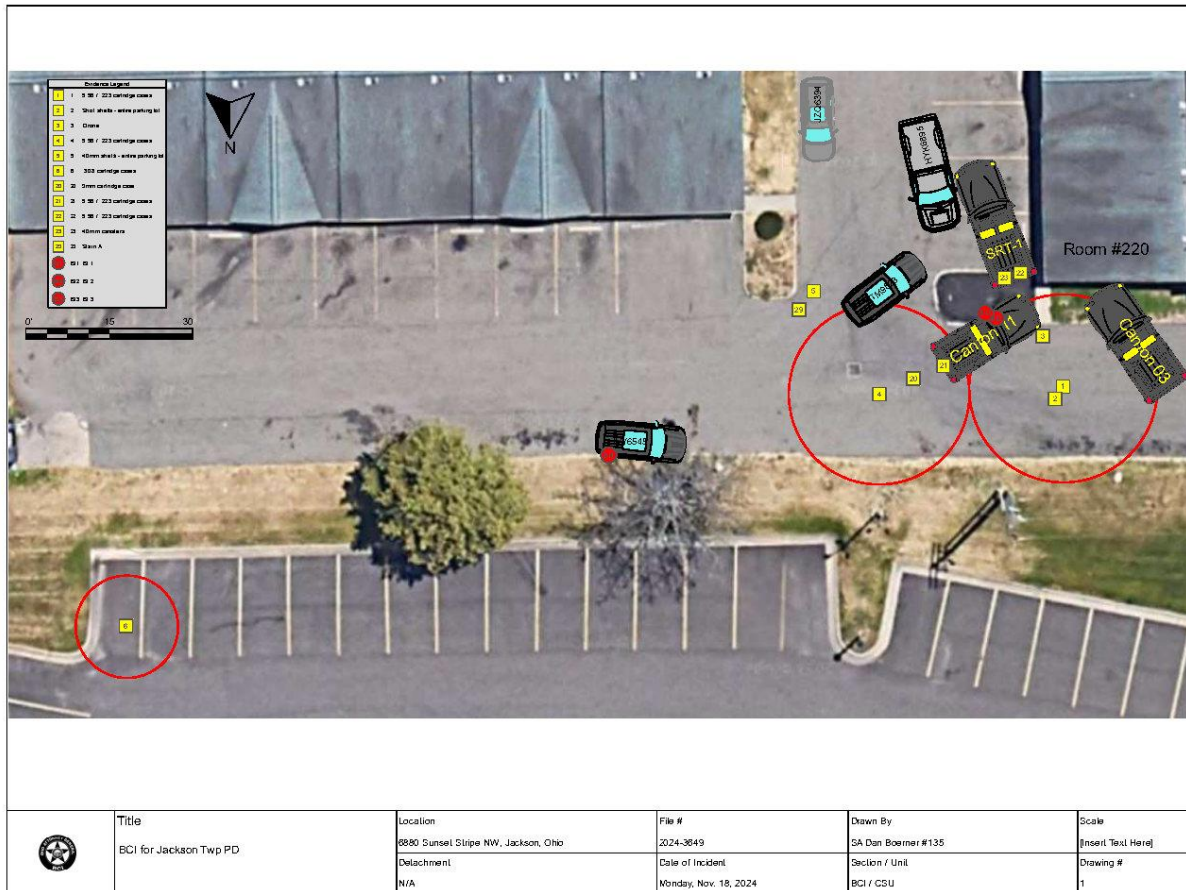


Figure 7, Overhead Diagram

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The parking lot was examined for items of suspected evidence and several items of suspected evidence were located, photographed and collected (*Table 1, Items of Suspected Evidence - Parking Lot*).

Item #	Description	Location
1	Qty 67, 5.56 / .223 cartridge cases ¹	Near Canton Armor 03
2	Qty 10, less lethal shot shells	Parking lot
3	Blk damaged drone **released on scene** ²	Room #220
4	Qty 34, 5.56 / .223 cartridge cases	Near Canton Armor 11
5	Qty 12, 40mm canisters	Parking lot
6	Qty 4, .308 cartridge cases	Cracker Barrel parking lot
20	9mm cartridge case	Near Canton Armor 11
21	Qty 36, 5.56 / .223 cartridge cases	Inside Canton Armor 11
22	Qty 10, 5.56 / .223 cartridge cases	Inside OSP SRT-1
23	Qty 15, 40mm canisters	Inside OSP SRT-1

Table 1, Items of Suspected Evidence - Parking Lot

The parking lot was examined for suspected bloodstains, and one suspected bloodstain was observed in the area behind Canton Armor 11. The suspected bloodstain was tested with the presumptive test Tetramethylbenzidine (TMB), which produced a positive result for blood. A representative swab was collected from suspected bloodstains, preserved and secured as evidence (Item 29, Stain A).

The parking lot and vehicles inside the parking lot were examined for suspected ballistic impacts and ballistic impacts were observed on two vehicles. A task force vehicle (a black Ford Explorer, bearing Ohio registration JY6545) exhibited one suspected ballistic impact on the passenger side trunk window (BI 1). At the time of the reported shooting, the driver's side front window was reportedly down. Canton Armor 11 exhibited two suspected ballistic impacts (BI 2 and BI 3). BI 2 was located on the driver's side of the hood and BI 3 was located on the driver's side front fender. No items of ballistic evidence were recovered from any of the suspected ballistic impacts.

[Scene Examination - Room #220 Interior](#)

Location: Room #220 (Rodeway Inn)

The interior of room #220 was photographed as it was found (*Figures 8-16, Overall photographs*). The exterior / interior of room #220 exhibited multiple suspected ballistic impacts and multiple deployments of less lethal devices.

¹ At total of 147 5.56 / .223 cartridge cases were recovered at in the parking lot scene.

² Item 3 was released to task force / SWAT team members at the scene.

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Figure 8, Overall photograph

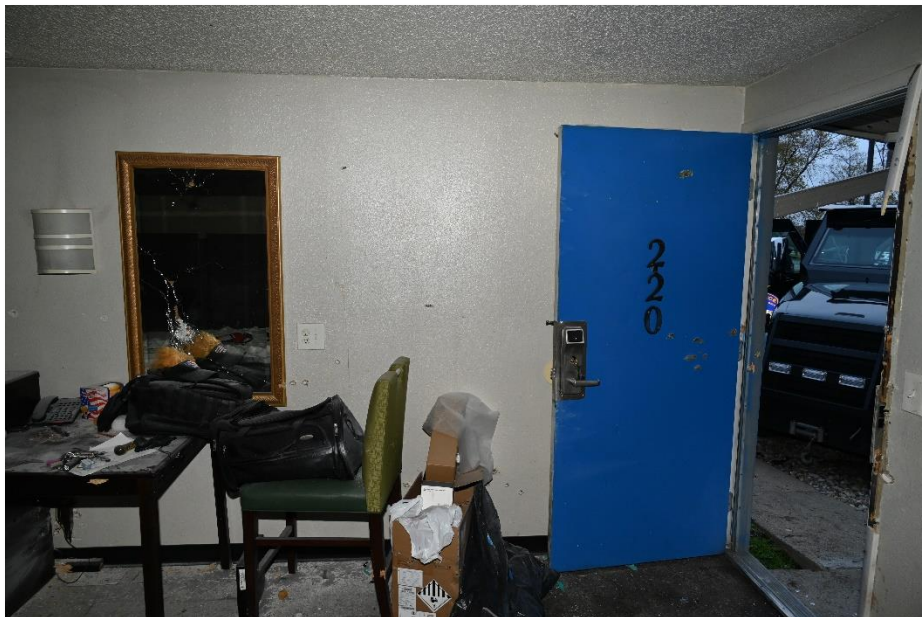


Figure 9, Overall photograph

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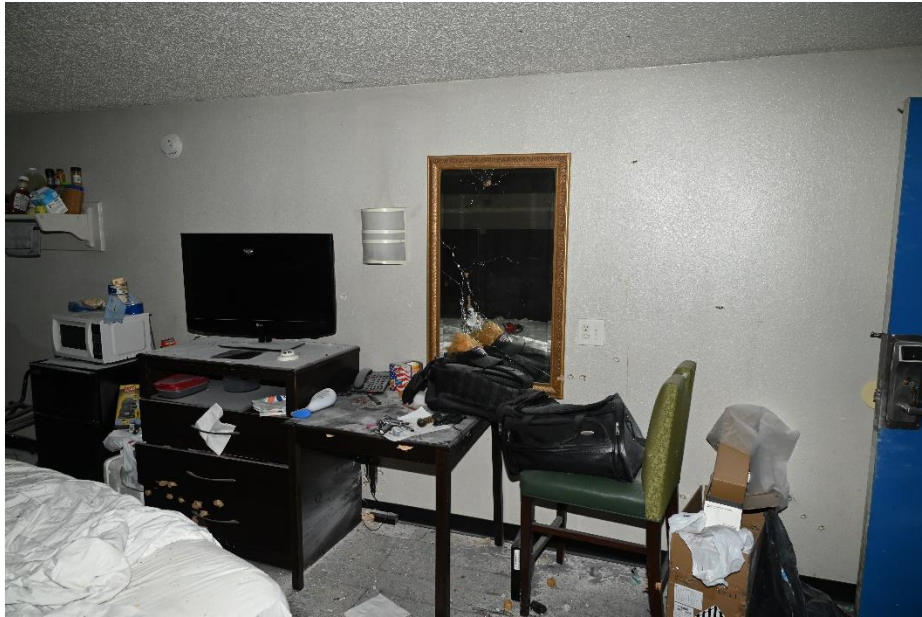


Figure 10, Overall photograph

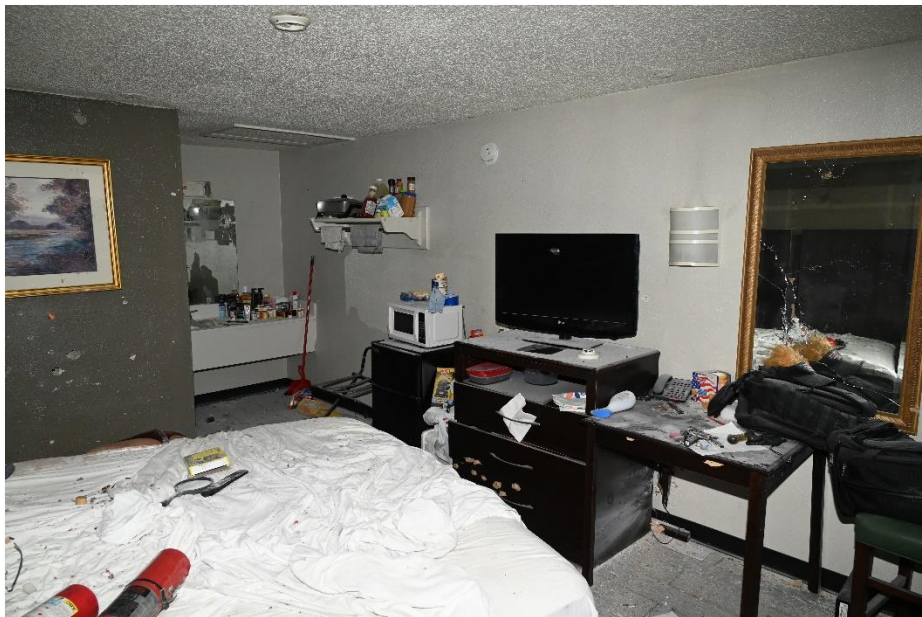


Figure 10, Overall photograph

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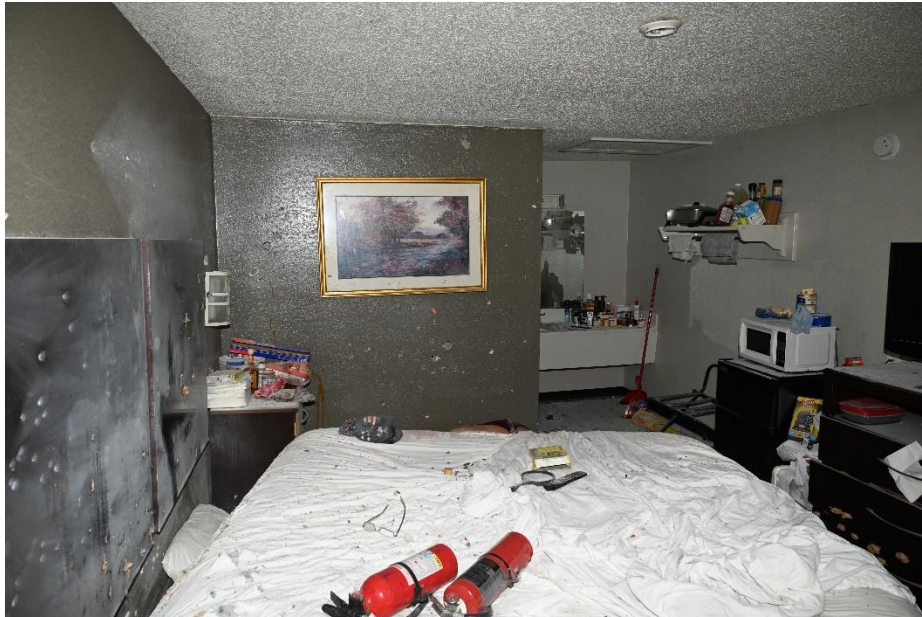


Figure 11, Overall photograph

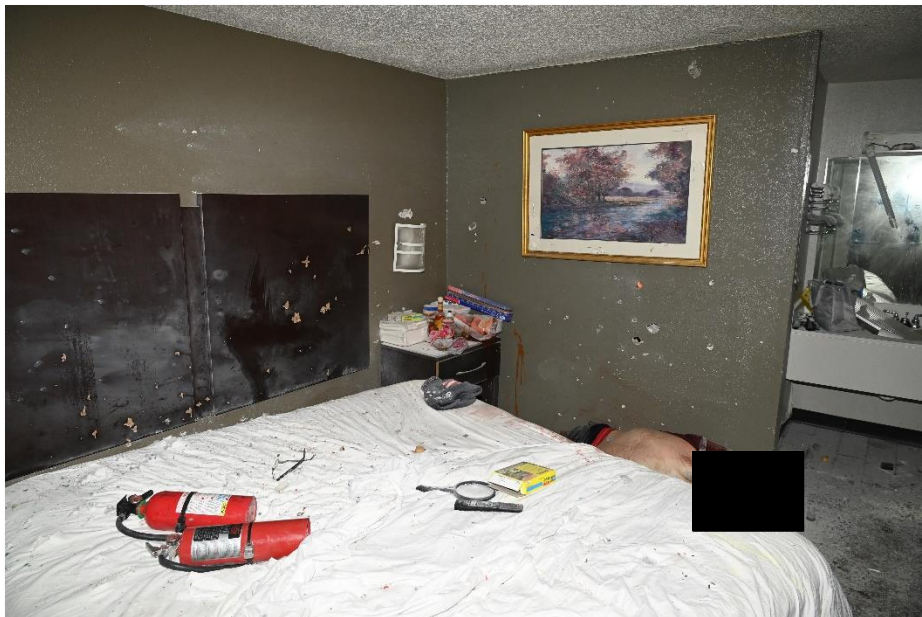


Figure 12, Overall photograph

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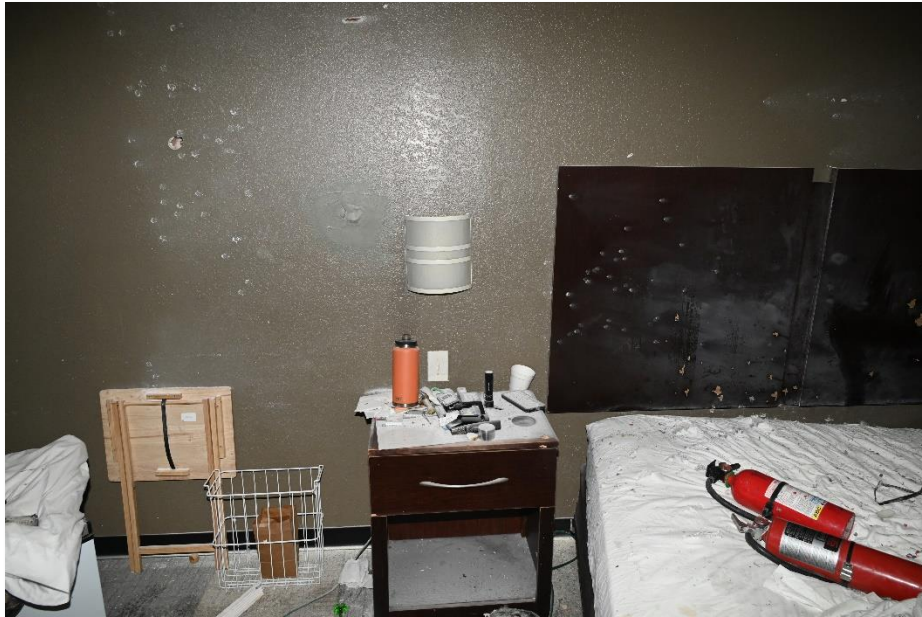


Figure 13, Overall photograph



Figure 14, Overall photograph

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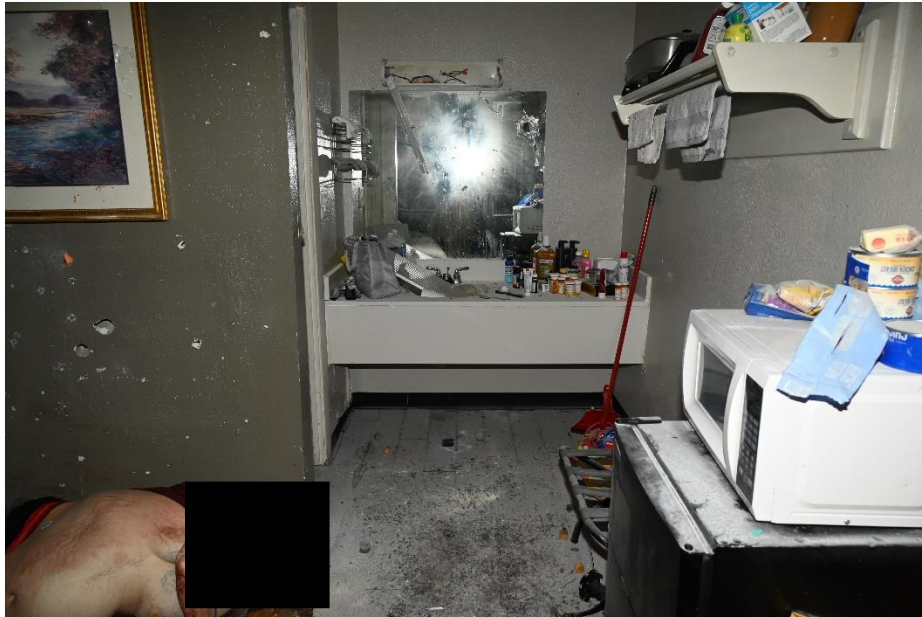


Figure 15, Overall photograph



Figure 16, Overall photograph (includes 2 - 10mm magazines)

The interior of room #220 was examined for items of suspected evidence and several

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items of suspected evidence were located, photographed and collected (*Table 2, Items of Suspected Evidence - Interior #220*).

Item #	Description	Location
7	Qty 2, Flash bang device	Room #220
8	Qty 1, Paper bag containing several less lethal devices	Room #220
9	Revolver – a black Ruger LCR .38 special, SN: 540-45090, w/5 cartridges and suspected bloodstains	Near window, Room #220
10	Handgun – a tan Springfield Armory, 10mm, SN: BE277600, w/1 cartridge in chamber and magazine ³	Near window, Room #220
11	Qty 2, set of vehicle keys **released on scene** ⁴	Room #220
12	Wood firearm stock	Black bookbag, Room #220
13	Black firearm stock	Black bookbag, Room #220
14	Qty 2, 10mm cartridge cases	Foot of bed, Room #220
15	Qty 2, 10mm magazines	Near body of Vanest, Room #220
16	10mm cartridge cases	Nightstand near body of Vanest, Room #220
17	Qty 5, .38 special cartridges	On bed, Room #220
18	Black Motorola cell phone	Nightstand, Room #220
19	SWAT recon robot **released on scene** ⁵	Under luggage rack, Room #220
24	Qty 1, 10mm cartridge case	Nightstand near body of Vanest, Room #220
25	Qty 5, 10mm cartridge cases	Near body of Vanest, Room #220
26	10mm cartridge	Near body of Vanest, Room #220
27	Black wallet with ID of Vanest, misc. cards and \$19.00	Jeans near the door of Room #220
28	Qty 2, 10mm magazines	Jeans near the door of Room #220

Table 2, Items of Suspected Evidence - Interior #220

³ Firearm is damaged and magazine could not be removed. Firearm was dismantled for packaging purposes.

⁴ The keys were released to the tow truck driver, via Jackson Twp PD.

⁵ Item 19 was released to task force / SWAT team members at the scene.

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The interior of room #220 was further documented using a Leica RTC360 laser scanner. Using the scan data, an overhead diagram and panoramas were created (*Figure 19, Overhead Diagram – Interior*).

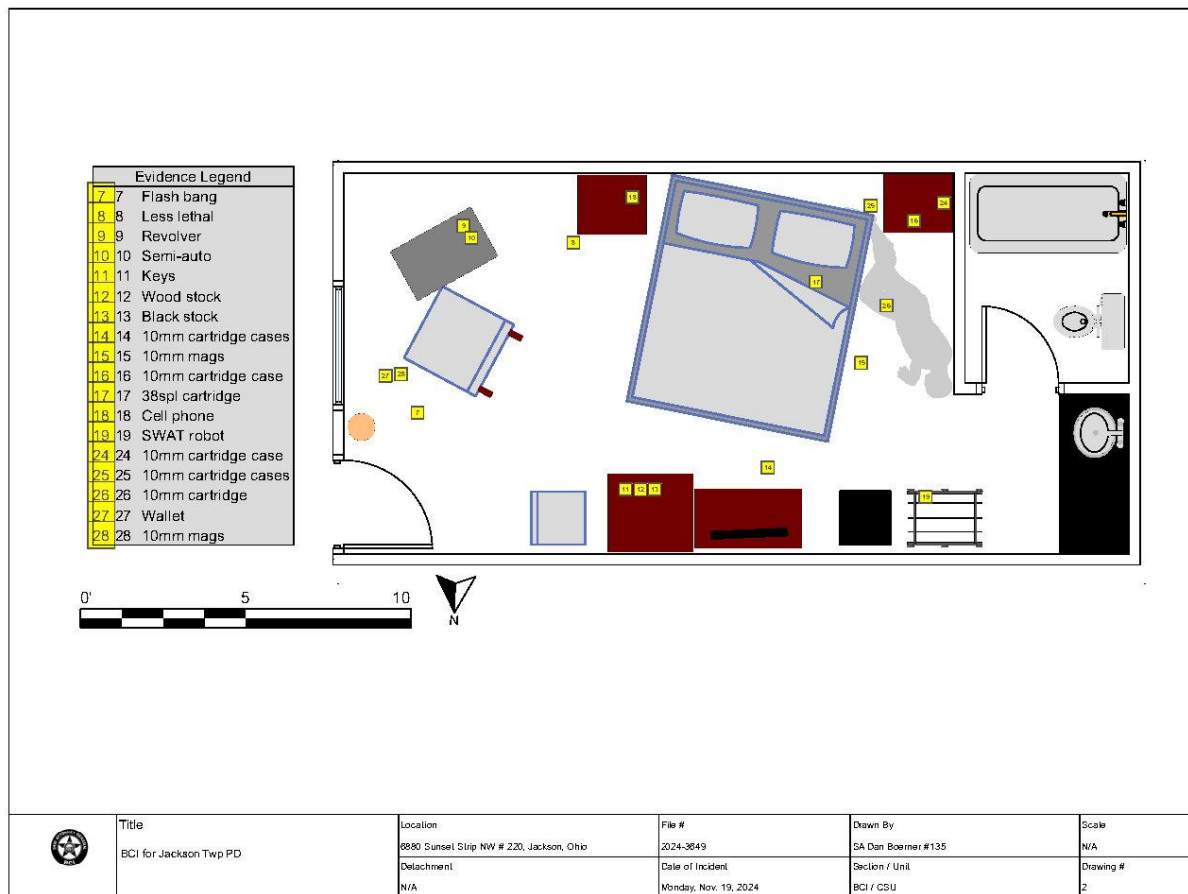


Figure 19, Overhead Diagram – Interior

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The body of Vanest was photographed as it was found and examined by an investigator from the Stark County Coroner's Office (*Figures 20-22, Overall photographs*). The body of Vanest was subsequently transported from the scene by the Stark County Coroner's Office transport service.



Figure 20, Overall photograph

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Figure 22, Overall photograph

Scene Examination – Subject's Vehicle

Vehicle: Gray 2015 Ram 3500 truck bearing Ohio registration HYK6895 (reportedly used by Vanest)

The subject vehicle was photographed as it was found. The vehicle was forcibly moved during the standoff and exhibited damage suffered during the same.

Subject Vehicle

Make	Ram – 3500
Model	TK
Year	2015
Color	Gray
VIN	3C63R3GJ4FG590637
License State/Number	OH/HYK6895
Owner	[REDACTED] ⁶

⁶ [REDACTED] is the listed in OHLEG as the owner of the vehicle.

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The interior of the vehicle was examined for items of suspected evidence and several items of suspected evidence were located, photographed and collected (*Table 3, Items of Suspected Evidence – Subject Vehicle*).

Item #	Description	Location
48	Rifle – WASR-10, 7.62x39, SN: A1-33596-15 RO, 1 cartridge in chamber, 1 magazine	Gray 2015 Ram 3500
49	Rifle – CVA Scout, SN: 61-06-133257-23, 1 cartridge in chamber	Gray 2015 Ram 3500
50	Shotgun – Dickinson semi-auto XXPA, SN: 204216591, 1 shot shell, 3 magazines	Gray 2015 Ram 3500
51	Cardboard box containing Qty 4, 7.62 magazines	Gray 2015 Ram 3500
52	Qty 3, 10mm magazines	Gray 2015 Ram 3500
53	Green ammo box with misc. ammo / magazines	Gray 2015 Ram 3500

Table 3, Items of Suspected Evidence – Subject Vehicle

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Officers' Firearm Examination

The firearms of the officers who reportedly fired their firearms during the incident were collected by members of the Canton Regional SWAT team and provided to SA Hootman and SAS Ed Lulla. The firearms and magazines were photographed as they were found and collected as evidence (*Table 4, Officers' Firearms*).

Item #	Description	Officer
30	Gun/Firearm Cardboard Box containing Rifle Quantity: 1; Serial Number: [REDACTED] Aero Precision - Freedom; .223; [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
31	Paper Bag containing Magazine — Quantity: 4; [REDACTED] 1 cartridge	
32	Paper Bag containing Rifle — Quantity: 1; Serial Number: [REDACTED] Stolle Atlas - Kelby's Inc. - Envy Pro; .308; [REDACTED]	
33	Paper Bag containing Magazine — Quantity: 2; [REDACTED]	
34	Gun/Firearm Cardboard Box containing Rifle Quantity: 1; Serial Number: [REDACTED] Rock River Arms - LAR-15; 5.56; [REDACTED]	
35	Paper Bag containing Magazine — Quantity: 5; [REDACTED]	
36	Gun/Firearm Cardboard Box containing Rifle Quantity: 1; Serial Number: [REDACTED] Daniel Defense - DDM4; 5.56; [REDACTED]	
37	Paper Bag containing Magazine — Quantity: 4; [REDACTED] one cartridge	
38	Gun/Firearm Cardboard Box containing Rifle -- Quantity: 1; Serial Number [REDACTED] Daniel Defense - DDM4; 5.56; [REDACTED]	
39	Cardboard Box containing Magazine -- Quantity: 3; [REDACTED] 1 cartridge	
40	Cardboard Box containing Rifle -- Quantity: 1; Serial Number: [REDACTED] Bravo Company MFG - BCM4; 5.56; [REDACTED]	
41	Paper Bag containing Magazine -- Quantity: 4; [REDACTED] 1 cartridge	

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42	Gun/Firearm Cardboard Box containing Rifle -- Quantity: 1; Serial Number: [REDACTED] Daniel Defense - DDM4; 5.56; [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	
43	Paper Bag containing Magazine -- Quantity: 3; [REDACTED] 1 cartridge		
44	Gun/Firearm Cardboard Box containing Rifle -- Quantity: 1; Serial Number: [REDACTED] Twisted River Rifle; 5.56; [REDACTED]		
45	Paper Bag containing Magazine -- Quantity: 3; [REDACTED]		
46	Gun/Firearm Cardboard Box containing Rifle -- Quantity: 1; Serial Number: [REDACTED] Daniel Defense - DDM4; 5.56; [REDACTED]		
47	Paper Bag containing Magazine -- Quantity: 3; [REDACTED] 1 cartridge		

Table 4, Officers' Firearms

For additional information refer to the Leica scan, crime scene photographs, and Investigative Reports titled *2024-11-18: Initial Crime Scene Processing*

Hospital Response

On November 18, 2024, agents responded to Mercy Hospital and Aultman Hospital which were both located in Canton, Ohio, to meet with officers who were involved in the shooting incident.

Mercy Hospital

[REDACTED] was transported to Mercy Hospital after being shot in the arm by Vanest during the shooting incident. At the time of the agents' arrival, [REDACTED] was being prepped for surgery. Information was provided to the North Canton Chief of Police, Chief Kemp, to have [REDACTED] contact agents after the conclusion of his medical treatment.

Aultman Hospital

Eight of the involved officers from the shooting incident were located at Aultman Hospital where they received an agency required evaluation.

The officers included:

- [REDACTED] - Canton Police Department

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- [REDACTED] Canton Police Department
- [REDACTED] Canton Police Department
- [REDACTED] Canton Police Department
- [REDACTED] Canton Police Department
- [REDACTED] Massillon Police Department
- [REDACTED] Township Police Department
- [REDACTED] Carroll County Sheriff's Office

Photographs were taken of each officer in the uniform they were wearing during the incident.

One officer, [REDACTED] with the Stark County Sheriff's Office, was photographed at the scene by SA Bynum.

For additional information refer to the Investigative Reports titled *2024-11-18: Response to Mercy Hospital* and *2024-11-18: Response to Aultman Hospital*.

Neighborhood and Video Surveillance Canvass

While the crime scene was being processed, agents conducted a neighborhood canvass of the area surrounding the shooting incident. The purpose of the canvass was to identify and interview potential witnesses to the officer-involved shooting. It was also conducted to identify any potential sources of video surveillance. Nine of the fifteen Rodeway Inn residents interviewed observed some portion of the shooting incident and/or provided video footage captured on their personal cellphones. Agents also located, obtained, and reviewed surveillance videos from the Rodeway Inn and Cracker Barrel.

Neighborhood Canvass

Fifteen residents at the Rodeway Inn were interviewed during the neighborhood canvass. Nine of the residents observed or heard portions of the shooting incident. Only interviews with the residents who had observed or heard something relevant to the incident have been included below. For additional information, please refer to the Investigative Report titled *2024-11-21: Neighborhood Canvass*.

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[Nicholas Ratzel – Room #222](#)

SA Goudy spoke with Nicholas Ratzel (Ratzel). At the time of the incident, Ratzel was staying at the Rodeway Inn Motel inside room #222. Ratzel stated that at approximately 1030 hours, he stepped outside his room to smoke his vape. During that time, he noticed three US Marshalls knocking on the door of #220 stating that they had a warrant. Shortly thereafter, Ratzel stepped back into his room to put shoes on and went back outside. Ratzel stated that while he was outside, he heard shots being fired from inside room #220. It was at that moment that Ratzel and the other bystanders were told to move further back.

Ratzel stated that law enforcement made multiple announcements for the occupant of #220 to exit and surrender. Ratzel stated that he heard the occupant yell something from inside but was not able to understand what he said. Ratzel stated that the occupant of #220 fired his weapon from inside the room before law enforcement fired. When Ratzel was asked why he felt the first shots were fired from inside room #220, he stated that the gunshots sounded muffled. Furthermore, Ratzel stated that gunfire was more distinct coming from the outside. Ratzel stated that when the shots were fired from inside, law enforcement officers moved back to take cover. Ratzel stated after the officers moved back towards cover, they fired their weapons in a manner he believed was to "deter" the occupant and not harm him.

Ratzel believed that these rounds were meant to be more "suppressive" in nature to avoid harming the occupant. Shortly after, an additional round was fired from inside towards officers. Ratzel described it as one round that sounded like a handgun which was muffled. Ratzel stated that the officers did not return fire after that. When Ratzel was asked if he had any interactions with the occupant of #220, he stated that he did not. Ratzel was asked if he had ever seen the truck possessed by the occupant of #220, he stated that prior to him leaving for work at 1530 hours on 11-17-2024, he had never seen the truck. Ratzel added that during the incident, "the officers did a fantastic job."

[Joseph King – Room #225](#)

SA Goudy and SA Conn spoke with Joseph King (King). He resided in room #225 at the time of the incident. King stated that at approximately 1030 hours, he woke up to what sounded like law enforcement banging on the doors. King stated that officers were evacuating the residents near room #220 and placing them at the far end of the building, out of harm's way. King stated they were still able to observe everything that was going on from where they were standing.

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King heard multiple gunshots being fired from inside the room towards officers. King further stated that he observed one of the officers get hit by the same gunfire. He also observed officers returning gunfire into the room along with other forms of less lethal munitions. King stated, "a lot of gunfire exchanged...back and forth gunfire, for every bit of two hours." King stated that he was not able to see much of the incident, due to where he was standing. When King was asked if he was aware of when the less lethal munitions were deployed, King stated it was approximately 10 or 15 minutes before the occupant of room 220 fired at officers. He further stated that the occupant of room 220 fired at officers sometime around 1115 or 1130 hours. King stated that, due to his previous experience in the United States Army, he was able to distinctly recognize that the occupant of room 220 fired at officers from within his room. King stated that he saw one of the rounds hit a SWAT vehicle that was parked in front of the room. At that point, King stated that the officers returned gunfire.

King stated that as the incident was occurring, officers maintained their positions on the outside of room 220. At that point, King stated that a drone was sent into the room to which he heard approximately two more gunshots being fired from inside. King assumed that the drone was hit because he did not see it exit. It was at that time that King stated that officers fired another volley of gunfire into the room. King estimated that he heard 20 or 30 heavy rounds and 20 or 30 light rounds fired by the officers during the exchanges. When King was asked if he had any interactions with the occupant of room 220, he stated that the male, "seemed like a regular person that stays around here." King further stated that the male did not appear to be a threat and was respectful to everyone. King stated that motel management told him that the male had been staying in the room for 42 days.

[John Stone – Room #226](#)

Mr. Stone stated that he and his girlfriend were evacuated from their room, 226, at approximately 1030 hours by local police and directed to the south end of the building to stand by. Mr. Stone stated that he observed the officers attempting to gain entry to the room at the north end of the building, when he heard gunshots and saw an officer get shot. Mr. Stone further stated that, at that time, he, along with several other people, were moved further back out of sight of the incident by the police. Mr. Stone did not see or hear anything further of relevance.

Mr. Stone stated he did not know the subject, nor did he ever have any contact with him. Mr. Stone's girlfriend, Samantha Harsh (DOB: 12/9/1974), who also resides with him, could add nothing further.

[Jason Evans – Room #400](#)

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SA Valente and SA Fletcher spoke with occupant Jason Evans (Jason E.) at 1735 hours on November 18, 2024. Jason E. stated that he was home at the time of the incident. Jason E. reported that he heard law enforcement officers identify themselves as being U.S. Marshals. Jason E. further reported that he later heard law enforcement shooting what he believed to be tear gas canisters into or at the subject's room. Jason E. stated he did occasionally look out his windows as the events outside unfolded. Jason E. did not hear or see the subject at any point during the event and was unsure if he was even in his room. Further, Jason E. did not see any specific officers fire their weapons. Jason E. stated that he would not be able to identify any of the involved officers and was told by law enforcement to stay inside his room and away from the window. Jason E. stated that he generally followed this advice and stayed inside and away from his window. Jason E. did not take any pictures or videos of the incident. Jason E. did not know the subject.

[Alan Koontz and Christopher Koontz – Room #405](#)

SA Valente and SA Fletcher spoke with occupants Alan Koontz (Alan) and Christopher Koontz (Christopher) at 1740 hours on November 18, 2024. Alan and his son Christopher reported that they recognized the subject's truck but did not know the subject. Alan reported that the subject would often have his truck backed up to the door of his room with the door to the room left open, including early in the morning. Alan felt that behavior was weird, and it had caught his attention in the past. Alan stated that when he attempted to leave his room earlier that day, he realized something unusual was happening because he saw multiple law enforcement officers positioned throughout the parking lot. Alan and Christopher both heard undistinguished yelling and law enforcement using a P.A. system to give orders to the subject. Alan and Christopher reported that they could not make out the orders law enforcement were giving the subject from their position at the front door of their room. Alan and Christopher recalled hearing the subject yell loudly at the officers when they believed police had breached the door of the subject's room.

Alan and Christopher reported hearing the sound of what they believed to be multiple pepper balls being fired at the subject or into his room during the incident. The two men also reported they could smell and taste the effects of the pepper balls at the entrance to their room.

Both Alan and Christopher reported hearing multiple five to ten second firefights throughout the incident. Both men believed they heard between 20 and 30 actual gunshots fired collectively throughout the entire event. Both men observed a SWAT vehicle push the subject's truck away from the door of the subject's room.

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Both men further reported that at one point they observed smoke clouds forming as pepper balls hit the front window of the subject's room. Both men believed at least 200 pepper balls were fired at the subject or his room.

[James Belcher – Room #305](#)

On November 18, 2024, SA Tingley and SA Bynum attempted to speak with residents of room 305. James Belcher (Belcher) stated that he was in the room at the time of the incident. Belcher said that he witnessed a sniper being shot and that the person in the room (200) was shooting at the SWAT team. Belcher also stated that SWAT was using pepper balls and returning fire. Belcher stated that he had video taken with his cellular phone and agreed to send it through evidence.com. Later that same day, five videos were submitted by Belcher. (Refer to the section titled *Cellphone Video Recordings* for a review on the videos submitted by Belcher).

[Clifton Jones and Tashae Jones – Room #323](#)

On November 18, 2024, SA Tingley and SA Bynum spoke with the residents of room 323. Clifton Jones (DOB 10-11-1971) and Tashae Jones (DOB 5-8-1995). Clifton Jones stated that he heard three shots when SWAT sent in the drone. He also stated that SWAT was using pepper spray and the person in the room was shooting at the police, and he saw one police officer fall to the ground after being shot. Clifton stated he did not have any video of the event.

[Jonelle Young – Room 327](#)

SA Tingley and SA Bynum spoke with residents of room 327. Jonelle Young (Young) stated that she was home at the time of the incident and saw a drone go in and then after an officer was shot. Young stated that the guy in the room kept shooting and that she had video. Young stated that she had taken the video with her cellular phone and agreed to send it through evidence.com. Later that same day, one video was submitted by Young. (Refer to the section titled *Cellphone Video Recordings* for a review on the video submitted by Young).

For additional information, refer to the audio recordings and the Investigative Report titled *2024-11-21: Neighborhood Canvass*.

[Law Enforcement Witnesses](#)

BCI agents conducted audio and video recorded interviews of eight law enforcement officers who were present at the time of the shooting incident. Below is a summary of each interview conducted.

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[United States Marshal Service Deputy Marshal Christopher Alstrom](#)

Deputy Marshal Alstrom did not discharge his firearm during the course of the incident.

In the days prior to the shooting incident, U.S. Marshal Alstrom became involved in an investigation regarding the apprehension of the involved subject, James Vanest (Vanest). His investigation began on the Thursday or Friday prior to the incident (11/14/24 or 11/15/24). During those initial days, he received a "collateral lead" from the USMS southern district indicating that Vanest had an active federal arrest warrant for felony possession of firearms. Vanest had ties to the Stark County and Canton, Ohio areas, and he was believed to have fled to this location. The arrest warrant for Vanest was the result of an ATF investigation; ATF then turned the warrant over to USMS for apprehension.

U.S. Marshal Alstrom conducted his investigation and determined Vanest was located at 6880 Sunset Strip Avenue NW, Room #220 in North Canton, Ohio. He formulated a plan for apprehension and requested assistance from two USMS Task Force Officers (TFO) and a uniformed patrol officer from the Jackson Township Police Department (JTPD).

Additional information about Vanest was gathered, and it was learned that Vanest had a history of firearms and multiple encounters with law enforcement that involved firearms. It was also believed that Vanest was the suspect in a cold case homicide, but no additional information was provided.

On the morning of November 18, 2024, U.S. Marshall Alstrom, the two USMS TFO officers and the JTPD officer arrived at the Rodeway Inn Motel located at 6880 Sunset Strip Avenue NW. U.S. Marshal Alstrom maintained surveillance on Room #220 while the JTPD officer spoke with the motel management to obtain a key for the room.

A short time later, the JTPD officer returned with a digital key card. The four officers then stacked up on the right side of the building next to Room #220. U.S. Marshal Alstrom knocked on the door softly to see if he could ascertain if anyone was inside the hotel room. He noted, based upon his investigation, that there was only one way in and one way out of the hotel room, which was through the front entry door where they were attempting to make contact. U.S. Marshal Alstrom then began knocking louder and giving announcements that he was a police officer, and he had a warrant for Vanest's arrest.

After multiple attempts of knocking on the door and giving loud verbal announcements, U.S. Marshal Alstrom used the digital key card to open the door,

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however, the key did not function properly, and the door would not open. The JTPD officer returned to the motel manager and requested a second digital key and the master "skeleton key."

The second attempt to unlock the door was a success. However, the door only opened approximately three inches, due to the security bar preventing the door from fully opening. U.S. Marshal Alstrom noted that since there was only one way in and out of the room, the security bar on the door indicated to him that someone was inside the room.

U.S. Marshal Alstrom then peeked through the small gap in the open door and observed "a big bald head and a pistol pointing right at my face with both hands on it (the gun), like sighting through the sights ready to go" [27:15].

U.S. Marshal Alstrom quickly moved away from the door opening and pushed the other officers standing behind him further back. He then began attempting to negotiate with Vanest through the small opening in the door. Vanest never responded to any of his commands or requests. U.S. Marshal Alstrom then requested one of the TFO officers to deploy multiple rounds of pepper balls into the room through the small opening in the door. U.S. Marshal Alstrom explained that the pepper ball gun was clearly different from that of a traditional firearm. He further explained that the pepper ball gun was yellow and did not make percussive sounds like a firearm.

During the initial negotiating period with Vanest, U.S. Marshal Alstrom requested the Canton Regional SWAT (Canton SWAT) team and the JTPD to respond to the scene for assistance.

Canton SWAT arrived on scene a short time later and U.S. Marshal Alstrom briefed them on the incident, then handed the scene over to them.

A significant amount of time after U.S. Marshal Alstrom initially arrived, he heard gunfire that sounded like "pop, pop, pop." He then observed holes in the side of the building where Room #220 was located. U.S. Marshal Alstrom believed Vanest was firing from his room towards the officers on scene. The initial gunfire took everyone by surprise and officers immediately began taking cover. U.S. Marshal Alstrom was unsure if any officers returned gunfire at that time, he just heard "a lot of gunshots" in a short amount of time.

U.S. Marshal Alstrom eventually took a position behind the Canton SWAT armored vehicle which was parked in front of the entrance to room #220. To his left, approximately 8-10 feet away, he observed a Canton SWAT sniper who had his long

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rifle positioned on a tripod. U.S. Marshal Alstrom heard gunfire and then heard the sniper officer yell in pain. U.S. Marshal Alstrom knew that the officer had been struck by gunfire. The sniper officer was assisted by other officers on scene and was successfully taken to the ambulance that was staged in a safe location.

From the same position behind the armored vehicle, U.S. Marshal Alstrom observed a Canton SWAT officer fire his rifle multiple times in rapid succession towards Room #220. The SWAT officer was positioned at the rear of the Canton SWAT armored vehicle on the driver's side. U.S. Marshal Alstrom could not recall how many rounds were fired in total by that officer.

The Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) Special Response Team (SRT) armored vehicle arrived on scene. U.S. Marshal Alstrom got into the OSHP armored vehicle with multiple other officers that he believed at the time to be with the OSHP SRT. He later learned some of the officers in the OSHP armored vehicle were from the Canton Police Department (CPD).

After entering the armored vehicle, U.S. Marshal Alstrom stated they immediately used the vehicle to push Vanest's vehicle out of the way. Vanest's vehicle was parked in front of Room #220. The OSHP armored vehicle then took a position in front of the room.

U.S. Marshal Alstrom had difficulty seeing into Room #220. He recalled one of the OSHP SRT officers using a less lethal firearm to "shoot out" the window of Room #220 in an attempt to make it easier to see inside. At no point was he able to observe Vanest inside the room aside from his initial approach.

At some point during the incident, one of the officers inside the OSHP armored vehicle announced that they saw movement inside Room #220. The officer then announced they saw a pistol and the officer fired approximately seven rounds through the open port on the side of the armored vehicle.

U.S. Marshal Alstrom described a multitude of tactics that were used throughout the duration of the incident. He had difficulty recalling specific times that the tactics were used. He mentioned Canton SWAT deploying a drone into the room and Vanest shooting at the drone. Flash bangs were also utilized at some point during the incident. He also recalled officers giving numerous commands throughout the incident.

After officers discovered there was no longer any movement from Room #220, officers from the Canton SWAT team entered the room.

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U.S. Marshal Alstrom feared for his safety when he initially peered into the small opening of the doorway. He believed Vanest was going to shoot him. He did not fire his weapon because, based upon his training, he was not in a good position to shoot. He believed the best course of action was to request SWAT and the police department of jurisdiction for assistance.

U.S. Marshal Alstrom also feared for the safety of the other officers on scene and anyone else in the area. U.S. Marshal Alstrom added that the area was evacuated to the best of their ability prior to the shooting incident occurring.

For additional details refer to the video recorded interview, and the investigative report titled *2024-12-03: Witness Officer Interview - Christopher Alstrom*.

[Canton Police Department Captain Lester Marino](#)

Captain Marino did not discharge a firearm during the course of the incident. During his interview, Captain Marino provided background information on the Canton Regional SWAT team in addition to his recollection of what occurred during the incident.

Captain Marino was the uniform division commander at the CPD and had been the commander of the CPD Regional SWAT team since 2018. The team was part-time and consisted of approximately 30 officers. He was responsible for SWAT operations, training, and activation of the team. As the commander, he could perform the role of a SWAT Operator, but typically he was responsible for overseeing the operation.

SWAT Operators assigned to the team must initially complete a 40-hour basic SWAT school. The SWAT team also trained 16 hours per month in addition to a 40-hour training conducted annually. Precision marksmen assigned to the team train an additional 8 hours each month.

When he initially became involved with the SWAT team, the primary operation involved the execution of high-risk drug-related search warrants. Over the years, those types of operations have declined, and the resolution of barricaded subjects has become more predominant. Captain Marino estimated that the team annually responded to 14 - 15 barricaded subject calls and executed approximately 5 - 6 search warrants.

When responding to barricaded subject situations, they try to resolve them without using any force or the least amount of force possible. First, they establish containment to prevent the subject from exiting the area by foot or by vehicle. He explained containment is important, especially with armed subjects, to prevent them from fleeing and having contact with the public whom they could potentially harm. Then communication is set up with the incident commander from the agency with original

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jurisdiction. An immediate action plan can then be established, and officers are issued assignments or roles.

On November 18, 2024, CPD Officer Billy Lott, who was assigned to the U.S. Marshall's Task Force, called Captain Marino. Officer Lott informed him they were trying to serve an arrest warrant at the Roadway Inn and the subject pointed a weapon at one of the Marshals.

When they arrived, the Marshals on scene had contained the premises. The SWAT vehicle was positioned in front of the motel room, so announcements could be given over the public address system while an officer covered the room from the hatch on the SWAT vehicle. While getting set up, an officer told him he thought he heard a muffled gunshot from inside the room. At that moment, Captain Marino thought the subject may have taken his own life. He explained:

"So, we wanted to confirm that, um, rather than send guys actually in there, the, um, the door was ajar. Uh, there was a small gap in the door, and it was being held by a hasp on the door. Uh, we also inserted chemical munitions. We launched, uh, 40-millimeter chemical munitions into the, uh, through the window to see if we get a reaction or some type of response from the subject inside. And, uh, when we did that, we did not get any reaction. Also, there was no, um, acknowledgement of the verbal commands to exit the apartment to come outside. Um, you know, we have placed 'It's the police department come outside.' Um, there was no reaction to those verbal commands at all (15:32)."

They then decided to breach the door with bean bag rounds to release the hasp, which was holding the door closed. As a result, the door was successfully opened. Captain Marino said he wanted to get a drone into the room to determine if the subject had shot himself. The drone was then deployed. When the drone pushed the door open and entered the room, shots were fired. He could see the debris from the building material coming out of the north wall of the building, which he believed was the subject firing. He saw two shots come through the wall but could hear more than that being fired. Officer Volpe then radioed that the drone was down. At that moment, he believed the subject had shot the drone down.

He then directed the team to deploy more chemical munitions into the room, and he used the public address system to tell the subject that no one was hurt, and they wanted him to exit the room. He continued giving verbal commands over the public address system, and then a shot or shots were fired, and [REDACTED] was struck.

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Captain Marino was in the front passenger seat of Canton 11 at that moment. He did not see it happen but overheard it.

At that point Captain Marino said,

"Now, I, I had one of my officers, I, I, one of my officers was hit. Um, it was apparent to me that, uh, Mr. Vanest was intent on shooting police officers at that point and, um, using deadly force on us. So, we have to do what we have to do to stop his deadly force against us or anyone else (21:16)."

Officers then requested to utilize suppressive gun fire to keep the subject from shooting at them while they extracted [REDACTED]. Captain Marino explained:

"I gave the go ahead to, um, engage with lethal force and, uh, several of our officers began engaging, uh, shooting in, into the, uh, motel room. And it was effective, uh, to my knowledge, Mr. Vanest did not shoot out of the room, um, when our officers were engaging. So [REDACTED] was extracted when he was treated, extracted. They got tourniquets on him and, uh, got him out of there. Um, shortly after, I know there were other shots fired by Mr. Vanest after, uh, [REDACTED] was extracted. Um, so then once [REDACTED] was out, I gave the, I, I don't think it needed to be said, but I was telling officers to make sure that they maintained cover (22:02)."

After that, Captain Marino began devising a plan to keep the subject from shooting out into the parking lot. The Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSP) offered their assistance, and he confirmed the need for their response. He also activated the entire SWAT team.

[REDACTED] had taken over [REDACTED] sniper rifle after [REDACTED] was shot. At one point, [REDACTED] radioed that he was being shot at. Captain Marino indicated that he gave [REDACTED] and the other SWAT officers the "green light" to engage the subject. He explained that officers did not need his permission to fire, but it also did not require them to fire. Despite giving a "green light" to engage, officers know they are still required to use their judgement and operate within policy. He added an example of a subject who was obviously surrendering and said officers would know they would not be authorized to engage just because the Captain had given them a "green light."

Once OSP arrived, he and OSP Sergeant Castellanos decided to use OSP's armored vehicle to push the subject vehicle away from the front of the room so they could attempt to see inside the room. He also wanted an armored vehicle on the east side of the room to help block the subject's rounds from traveling across the parking lot and

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Interstate 77. They also decided Canton officers would operate from inside OSP's armored vehicle and could utilize the gun ports.

Once OSP's armored vehicle pushed the subject's vehicle out of the way and was positioned in front of the room, a trooper deployed 40 mm rounds of wood batons into the glass bay window to clear it out and create better visibility into the room. Captain Marino then heard gunfire followed by a Canton officer on the radio. The officer, who was in OSP's vehicle, radioed that the subject had presented himself, and pointed a gun at him and he had engaged the subject.

After that, there was no activity. Sergeant Castellanos then deployed flash bangs into the room to help assess if there was any response from the subject. After receiving no response, they deployed a robot to gain a visual assessment of the subject. Upon doing so, it appeared that the subject was incapacitated, but they could not determine whether he was conscious and just waiting for them. They then deployed an entry team to enter the room.

As the team entered, they deployed a flash bang as a diversion. They also immediately engaged the subject with a 40 mm less lethal impact round and received no response. They approached the subject and disarmed him. Medics were then brought in to evaluate the subject.

Captain Marino was asked if he authorized "directed fire" at other times during the incident and if that was a tactic the team was trained on. He said he knew he authorized directed fire while [REDACTED] was being extracted, and he may have authorized it at another point when the subject was actively shooting at them. He said the team had trained and participated in live fire drills where directed fire was used to extract an injured officer, hostage, or an innocent bystander. He added that the use of that tactic during the incident was consistent with their training and that he had confirmed that the motel had been evacuated before authorizing directed fire.

When asked how he felt throughout the incident he replied saying:

"Initially I was fairly confident that the, uh, the situation was gonna be resolved with, uh, chemical munitions, uh, being, it was a confined, uh, room. Um, then once he actively started shooting and once [REDACTED] was hit, that is when I was, uh, I was scared for my guys, uh, 'cause he had shot my sniper. I assumed at that point that he had a rifle inside the room. Um, and I, like I said, I, I had thought that [REDACTED] was further away than I thought he had targeted him. And he was further away. 'cause I could not see him. I didn't, uh, have a visual on him. Um, so yeah, I was, uh, I was really nervous for my guys at that point.

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And when, uh, you know, to put the directed fire down, these are the, the things I was considering that the subject has a rifle at this point and he can engage, engage my guys at will with pretty accurate fire if he can hit my sniper (38:37)."

For additional details, refer to the video recorded interview and the investigative report titled *2024-12-16: Witness Officer Interview - Captain Lester Marino*.

[North Canton Police Department](#) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] was shot by Vanest during the shooting Incident. He did not discharge his firearm during the course of the incident.

On November 18, 2024, [REDACTED] was at the Canton Regional SWAT headquarters with multiple other officers and supervisors for training. During training, the SWAT team was requested to respond to 6880 Sunset Strip Avenue NW in North Canton, Ohio. The request was made via a telephone call to [REDACTED] who was also present at SWAT headquarters.

Prior to arriving, he learned that the subject had warrants through ATF. The subject was also wanted for an investigation of a murder. Reportedly, the subject was barricaded and had presented a firearm to the US Marshals.

When SWAT first arrived, he was assigned as a shield operator. He utilized a shield at the rear driver's side portion of Canton 11. The door to the motel room was closed, and they could not see through the window of the room. He believed commands were given for the subject to come out of the room. A breaching shotgun was used from a distance to open the door and then a drone was deployed. When the drone pushed the door open and entered the room, he heard gunfire and saw muzzle blasts inside the room. Although he could see into the room through the open door, he could not see the subject.

After the gunshots, he moved to the back of Canton 11 and obtained an AR-15 rifle. He moved from the back of Canton 11 to the rear passenger side portion of a black SUV positioned approximately 15 yards from the door of the motel room. He was trying to see into the room but was unable to see clearly. [REDACTED] was the team leader and asked him to utilize a sniper rifle to help responding officers see inside the room and locate the subject. Other team members then retrieved [REDACTED] .308 rifle, tripod and other equipment he had stored in a gray Yeti backpack.

Initially, [REDACTED] set up his rifle along a row of rooms east of the building the subject was in. He estimated he was approximately 25 yards away. He was unable to see from his position and decided to move back to his previous position behind the

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black SUV. He had a conversation with [REDACTED] and they decided that [REDACTED] would have a better view from the passenger side, rear quarter panel. [REDACTED] then set up there and used the magnification on his optic to see into the room. After setting up, he began scanning the room. He estimated he was scanning for approximately a minute before he heard a gunshot and realized he was shot. He described that moment saying,

"And I heard a, a gunshot, simultaneous pain, a lot of pain. So, and that's when I realized that I was shot. Um, I screamed for a couple seconds, uh, kind of was processing everything, realized I need to get on the ground to put a tourniquet on. Um, as soon as I got on the ground, um, [REDACTED] Sergeant Lee were right there. Uh, [REDACTED] was already getting, getting ready to put a tourniquet on me. I told them, I started rolling up my sleeve here. Um, and, uh, noticed that the gunshot wound was here (pointed to right forearm). I didn't know if there was an exit wound. I didn't really think about it at the time. I was just worried about the blood. They put a tourniquet on me. Um, Officers from Canton. Uh, he then put the second tourniquet on me. Um, I did not know that until, until I saw the video. I saw, uh, that was Sens, um, he put the second, the second tourniquet on me. Then they, uh, they lifted me up. Um, ran, uh, we ended up running, uh, I was able to run on my own, but I did have two guys kind of holding me. They passed me off to a couple, to a couple officers. Uh, I want to say Volpe. I don't know if he's a sergeant or not from Canton. And I don't know how to pronounce the other guy's name. R Rorschach or, uh, forget. He was, I think he's another Canton officer. Okay. They helped me, uh, run over to, uh, the Jackson medic (28:31)."

At the moment he was shot, he did not remember if he was looking through the optic or if he was giving his eye a rest. When he watched the video, it appeared he was looking through the optic, but he said he did not remember seeing a muzzle blast which made him question if he was giving his eye a rest.

He remembered being afraid he was going to bleed out. After the tourniquets were placed on him, he remembered feeling like he was close to passing out, but he didn't.

He explained why he didn't fire during the incident, saying,

"Uh, I, I didn't have to. Um, he had fired a few rounds. Uh, they appeared to be at the drone. Um, so I, um, I didn't feel like I, I didn't, uh, well, he didn't, he was firing at the drone at first. Um, I was trying to figure out kind of what was going on, then realized that he was shooting, but he was shooting, but I could only



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see the muzzle blast. I didn't wanna fire at something that I couldn't see properly see. Um, and for that whole time, I just couldn't properly see him and that that was the issue. And, um, I'm pretty positive that the next shot after the drones were fired was on me. So, um, you know, like I said, I couldn't, I couldn't see him, so I'm not gonna shoot at something I can't see (26:35)."

For additional details, refer to the video recorded interview and the investigative report titled *2025-01-30: Witness Officer Interview - [REDACTED]*

[Canton Police Department Officer Matthew Machamer](#)

Officer Machamer did not discharge his firearm during the course of the incident.

On the day of the incident, Officer Machamer was working his normal shift as a uniform patrol officer for CPD. He first became aware of the incident at Sunset Strip Avenue NW, when he observed information logged by dispatch on his mobile data terminal (MDT). Information provided stated that the U.S. Marshals requested the assistance of Canton SWAT members at 6880 Sunset Strip Avenue NW, Room #220 in North Canton, Ohio. The U.S. Marshals also requested an additional CPD officer (also a member of Canton SWAT), who was working uniform patrol, to respond to the scene. The additional officer requested was [REDACTED] who was a [REDACTED]

Officer Machamer began scanning the Canton SWAT radio channel, SPEC OPS, and was learning information as the incident evolved. Dispatch was also updating information within the call for service screen on Officer Machamer's MDT. The information he learned included: the subject's name was James Vanest (Vanest), there was a federal warrant for a weapons charge for Vanest, and Vanest pointed a firearm at federal agents. Officer Machamer also took it upon himself to look up Vanest through a law enforcement database to gain background information and criminal history.

From monitoring the Canton SWAT radio traffic, Officer Machamer learned Vanest had fired a gun at officers on scene, and he also shot an officer. Officer Machamer later learned the officer who was shot was [REDACTED]

Officer Machamer became involved in the incident after a "full team activation" was sent via text/alert to his personal cellphone. Officer Machamer responded to the location of the incident in his marked police vehicle. Based on the information he had gathered from monitoring the SPEC OPS radio traffic, Officer Machamer believed his response to the situation was elevated and the level of threat was much higher. He went on to state, "you're going into a position where you know this individual (Vanest) in my head is trying to murder us" [11:05].

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When Officer Machamer arrived on scene, he maintained his normal patrol uniform and exchanged his external patrol uniform vest for his SWAT uniform external vest. There was no active gunfire at the time of his arrival.

After approaching the armored vehicle, Officer Machamer was assigned a task that involved delivering a pepper ball gun to another officer on scene. In order for Officer Machamer to deliver the gun to the other officer, he had to cross the area where Vanest had been shooting. Officer Machamer believed there was no safe way to deliver the less-lethal firearm to the other officer "based on his (Vanest) actions of trying to kill us" and did not complete the initial task [12:25].

After putting the pepper ball gun back, Officer Machamer heard gunfire. He believed the gunfire was from a rifle, but he was initially unsure who was firing. Officer Machamer then heard CPD [REDACTED] state over the radio that the subject was pointing a firearm at him. This led Officer Machamer to believe it was [REDACTED] who was firing his gun.

Not long after [REDACTED] fired his gun, Officer Machamer was requested by Sergeant Lee to assist with entry into Room #220 by using a 40mm launcher (less-lethal firearm). Officer Machamer explained that the 40mm launcher was loaded with foam OC, which upon impact on a target, would become an irritant. Officer Machamer was specifically assigned to "launch"/fire the less-lethal round at Vanest upon entry for purposes of verification that Vanest was not responding to their commands due to incapacitation. Officer Machamer believed there was a strong likelihood that Vanest was feigning incapacitation and could ambush officers.

Vanest's last known location was between the bed and the wall of the room. That specific location was a small space, and it would be difficult for officers to go "hands on" with Vanest should he decide to engage with officers. Based on those circumstances, Officer Machamer fired one less-lethal round at the subject's thigh area.

Officer Machamer was uncertain if commands were given upon entry into Room #220. He indicated officers making entry had gas masks on which often made it difficult for commands to be given or even be clearly heard. He did mention that commands were previously given, and it was clear the subject was not "surrendering."

Officer Machamer feared for the safety of himself and other officers on scene. He stated that Vanest was "a lethal threat, he posed a massive risk of serious physical harm towards us" [15:50].

The last thing Officer Machamer was thinking about prior to making entry into the

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room was that Vanest had just pointed a firearm at an officer and previously shot another officer. Officer Machamer described making entry into the room as "scary" because Vanest had attempted to "murder" many of the officers out there [19:35].

Officer Machamer also explained Vanest was a threat to the surrounding area. Based on the location of Room #220, there was a highway not far from the shooting area and a large business district just beyond the highway. Officer Machamer explained Vanest was firing his gun in the direction of innocent drivers on the highway and could have struck someone.

For additional details refer to the video recorded interview, and the investigative report titled *2024-12-19: Witness Officer Interview - Matthew Machamer*.

[Canton Police Department Sergeant Eric Lee](#)

Sergeant Lee did not discharge his firearm during the course of the incident.

Sergeant Eric Lee previously stated during his interview that he only deployed less lethal devices and ammunition during the incident. It appeared Sergeant Lee utilized four different devices throughout the incident and fired approximately 83 rounds of less-lethal ammunition. His BWC did not visually capture the actions of Vanest leading up to or during the time Sergeant Lee deployed the less-lethal devices, however, based on statements and the general context at the times he fired, it appeared he was not directly engaging with Vanest.

On November 18, 2024, Sergeant Lee was at the Canton Regional SWAT headquarters with multiple other officers and supervisors for training. During training, the SWAT team was requested by SWAT Commander Captain Marino to respond to 6880 Sunset Strip Avenue NW in North Canton, Ohio. The request was made via a telephone call to [REDACTED] who was also present at SWAT headquarters.

A summary of the initial incident was provided for the SWAT officers who were present at the training. They were told that the U.S. Marshals attempted to serve a search warrant on a James Vanest (Vanest) at the Rodeway Inn located in Jackson Township, Ohio. When the U.S. Marshal used a key card to open the door to make contact, he observed Vanest pointing a firearm at him.

Sergeant Lee responded to the location at approximately 1200 hours in the Canton SWAT armored vehicle with seven other officers. When he arrived on scene, he received instructions to park the armored vehicle at the corner of the room where Vanest was barricaded.

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Sergeant Lee explained that during an "armed barricaded situation" the typical protocol was to begin using the PA system to have the subject (Vanest) surrender peacefully. They also began preparing chemical munitions that would be inserted into the room. Sergeant Lee was an instructor for chemical munitions operations and took on the role of planning and operating that portion of the scene response.

After parking the vehicle, he began preparing the chemical munitions and locating a position where he could fire them from. The rounds he had available to him were 40mm OC and CS barricade rounds. Another officer was also issued a less-lethal shotgun with shotgun barricade rounds.

Chemical munitions were not deployed immediately. Multiple commands were given over the PA by Captain Marino without a response from Vanest. Captain Marino then provided the command to deploy the chemical munitions. This was consistent with a typical protocol for an armed barricaded subject who was unresponsive in a small room.

The initial three chemical rounds fired by Sergeant Lee were CS barricade rounds. Sergeant Lee fired from the outside of the room to the left of the large bay window. He explained the round was capable of penetrating a wall, causing the chemicals inside the round to mix, and the second barrier striking the round would cause the round to deploy the chemical. Once released, the chemical causes irritation to skin and breathing to gain compliance from Vanest.

After Sergeant Lee deployed his chemical rounds through the bay window, a second officer deployed multiple rounds from the less-lethal shotgun into the room through the window. He explained the rounds fired by the second officer contained OC gas and the gas would deploy once it struck any barrier.

Once the initial rounds of chemical munitions were deployed, Sergeant Lee observed FBI agents on scene attempting to deploy a drone. He also began deploying glass breaking rounds using a pepper ball gun. He attempted to further break out the large bay window but was unsuccessful. He estimated he fired approximately ten rounds.

He then observed another officer on scene using a less-lethal firearm to shoot the lock on the door. The officer was able to shoot the lock off the door, allowing the door to swing open and the drone to enter the room. Once the drone entered the room, Vanest began shooting at the drone. Based on this, Sergeant Lee reloaded his chemical munitions and used OC foam rounds and barricade rounds to attempt to "overwhelm" the room and gain compliance from Vanest.

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When Sergeant Lee fired the second round of chemical munitions, he could observe inside the room and noticed a bathroom and large bathroom mirror. He used the less-lethal rounds to break the mirror and also struck the wall near the bed multiple times.

Sergeant Lee moved to various positions outside the room while deploying his chemical munitions. He would then take a position near a black SUV next to [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was a [REDACTED] and began setting up his firearm to the right of the black SUV. A short time later, Sergeant Lee heard gunfire and heard [REDACTED] yelling in pain. Sergeant Lee also saw [REDACTED] bleeding from his arm.

Sergeant Lee used a shield to provide cover to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], while aid was provided to [REDACTED]. He also drew his pistol to provide "lethal cover." [REDACTED] was then removed from the scene. During that period, other officers were firing their guns as "suppressive fire" in order to provide cover for [REDACTED] and the other officers aiding him.

Sergeant Lee could see the front door of the room. However, he could not see Vanest or anything else inside the room.

Sergeant Lee feared for his safety and the safety of the other officers on scene. First and foremost, they had an officer already shot by the subject, not to mention it was clear the subject did not care. Sergeant Lee then discussed how the subject shot down the drone and stated, "just that right there, you can tell this guy was ready to fight back and do it with, uh, lethal force" [22:15].

The subject was also firing in the direction of the Cracker Barrel restaurant, so he feared for the safety of any bystanders or patrons at the restaurant. Lastly, he mentioned the highway being a short distance away from their location, and he feared for the safety of any drivers on the roadway because the rounds being fired by Vanest were going in multiple directions.

Sergeant Lee fired his chemical munitions based on standard protocol for SWAT operations and his actions were consistent with his training.

Sergeant Lee was part of the team who entered the room after the gunfire had ceased. Prior to officers entering, a ground drone was deployed. The drone stopped near Vanest's head and was unable to determine if he was responsive or not. Sergeant Lee then deployed a flashbang prior to entry. He threw the flashbang into the area behind the bed where Vanest was believed to be. Sergeant Lee explained this was a technique used to gain compliance and elicit a response from a subject.

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Once officers entered, Sergeant Lee stated it was very clear Vanest was deceased. He immediately observed a revolver on the bed along with random cases and ammo. He also observed a pistol in one of Vanest's hands. [REDACTED] removed the firearm from Vanest's hand and secured it.

For additional details, refer to the video recorded interview, and the Investigative Report titled *2024-12-06: Witness Officer Interview - Eric Lee*.

[Canton Police Department Officer Michael Volpe](#)

Officer Volpe did not discharge his firearm during the course of the incident.

Officer Volpe received a call from Captain Marino requesting him to respond to 6880 Sunset Strip Ave NW, North Canton, Ohio and deploy a drone. When he arrived, he deployed a drone into the suspect room, once the front door was opened. While using the drone camera, Officer Volpe observed a white male appear from behind the bed and then start shooting at the drone until it went down. Every time Officer Volpe attempted to fly again, the subject would shoot at it, inside or outside the room. The drone recorded video that will be reviewed in a separate report.

A robot was also sent in to get visuals from inside the room. When inside the room, the robot was used to confirm that the subject was shot and no longer a threat, and then SWAT members advanced inside the room. The robot recorded video that will be reviewed in a separate report.

For additional details refer to the audio recorded interview and the investigative report titled *2024-11-18: Witness Officer Interview - Mike Volpe*.

[Ohio State Highway Patrol Trooper Mike Vitullo](#)

Trooper Vitullo did not discharge his firearm during the course of the incident.

Trooper Mike Vitullo appeared to fire two different less-lethal devices at three separate times throughout the incident. The first time was at 13:14:41 and he appeared to fire 5 times. The second time was at 13:16:01 and he appeared to fire approximately 3 times. The third time was at 13:20:03 and he appeared to fire 8 times. His BWC did not visually capture the actions of Vanest leading up to or during the time Trooper Vitullo fired.

Prior to the shooting incident, Trooper Vitullo was at the Canton OSHP post located at 4711 Shuffel Street NW, North Canton, Ohio 44720. He overheard radio traffic on the PA system dispatching road patrol units to assist Jackson Township Police Department (JTPD) with closing down the interstate due to an ongoing incident. Trooper Vitullo felt

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this was an odd request and went to the dispatch center located on post to gather more information.

The dispatchers contacted JTPD for additional information. It was learned that shots had been fired and there was a barricaded subject at the Rodeway Inn located at 6880 Sunset Strip Avenue NW in North Canton, Ohio.

JTPD eventually requested the assistance of OSHP SRT. Trooper Vitullo mentioned that their armored vehicle had recently left the Canton Post to head towards Cleveland. Arrangements were made to have the vehicle turn around and respond to the Rodeway Inn.

Trooper Vitullo responded to the scene location in his personal vehicle. He was initially unfamiliar with the area until he arrived and recognized the Cracker Barrel restaurant located adjacent to the motel. Trooper Vitullo recalled arriving on scene sometime during the late morning or early afternoon, possibly between 1000 and 1200 hours.

Once on scene, Trooper Vitullo observed Canton Regional SWAT team members (Canton SWAT), and their armored vehicle parked close to the entry door of Room #220 of the Rodeway Inn. Trooper Vitullo gathered his equipment from his personal vehicle which included his shield, drone, helmet, and additional "entry gear" and approached the Canton SWAT team.

A short time later, the OSHP armored vehicle, "Bear", arrived on scene. Trooper Vitullo and additional OSHP SRT members began loading the armored vehicle with the required equipment. During that time, Trooper Vitullo recalled hearing a volley of gunfire and hearing multiple bullets pass over his head. He described the bullets as making a "whistling" noise. During the volley of gunfire, Trooper Vitullo believed there were multiple different guns being fired that were coming from the area of the motel. He was unable to observe who was shooting except for a Canton SWAT sniper positioned at the rear of the Rodeway Inn parking lot who appeared to be firing his gun.

Trooper Vitullo went on to describe the gunfire, stating, "so it was like we were kinda in the middle of a gunfight, is essentially what it felt like" [14:25]. Trooper Vitullo estimated a ten-minute time lapse from the time he arrived until the volley of gunfire began. He described the scene as chaotic.

Once the "Bear" was loaded, Canton SWAT requested OSHP SRT to use the armored vehicle to move the involved subject's vehicle that was parked in front of room #220. Trooper Vitullo recalled that the vehicle was some kind of large Dodge pickup truck.

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Trooper Vitullo was a passenger in the Bear, while OSHP Trooper Skipper drove the vehicle. Trooper Skipper was able to push the Dodge pick-up out of the way. During that maneuver, Trooper Vitullo explained that this put him and the other officers inside the Bear in a vulnerable position to possibly be struck by gunfire from the subject. Because of this, they kept all "ports" (i.e. small doors on the side of the armored truck used by operators to fire weapons through) closed. The Bear then remained in position in front of Room #220.

Trooper Vitullo also mentioned the additional officers who were inside the Bear with him. They included OSHP Sergeant Castellanos, OSHP Trooper Burgos, U.S. Marshall Chris Alstrom (Alstrom), and 3-4 Canton SWAT officers but he could not recall their names. All the officers remained inside the vehicle even while engaging in the subject.

Trooper Vitullo recalled the officers inside the vehicle having a group discussion on how to manage the situation. The OSHP units did not have access to the radio channel being used by Canton SWAT, so all information was being funneled through the Canton SWAT officers. It was learned that the officers who were operating from the Canton SWAT armored vehicle were requesting the windows to Room #220 be removed due to officer safety issues of not being able to see inside the room or see the subject.

Trooper Vitullo volunteered to use a less lethal 40mm launcher that utilized wooden projectiles. He took a position in the turret of the Bear and fired approximately fifteen less-lethal rounds to shoot out the window of Room #220. Trooper Vitullo stated the decision to fire was a group decision based upon what was needed at the time by all officers on scene. His purpose in firing the less lethal firearm was to break the glass of the window and all rounds were aimed at the window. While in the turret, Trooper Vitullo did not observe the subject or believe any gunfire was directed at him. He did, however, hear gunfire in the background but he did not know who was firing. He believed it was likely law enforcement based upon the radio traffic he overheard inside the Bear.

While inside the Bear, Trooper Vitullo said it was difficult to hear additional gunfire due to most sounds being muffled. He did recall seeing one of the Canton SWAT officers firing his weapon but was unsure who the officer was or how many rounds he fired. He later observed a BWC video that showed the Canton SWAT officer firing approximately ten rounds from the port of the Bear.

Although Trooper Vitullo never saw or heard the involved subject, he feared for his safety and the safety of other officers on scene. He was especially concerned about his

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safety when he was firing the less lethal rounds from the turret because he was partially exposed.

Trooper Vitullo estimated that dozens of rounds were fired during the entirety of the incident. While he was on scene he heard three separate volleys of gunfire.

Trooper Vitullo was unsure of any other officers who fired their weapons. He recalled Sergeant Castellanos utilizing approximately three flashbangs prior to officers making an entry. Trooper Vitullo provided one of the flashbangs to Sergeant Castellanos.

For additional details refer to the video recorded interview and the investigative report titled *2024-11-26: Witness Officer Interview - Trooper Mike Vitullo*.

[Jackson Township Police Department Detective Jeff Aynes](#)

Detective Aynes did not discharge his firearm during the course of the incident.

Detective Aynes stated that he was requested to assist the US Marshal Service with a warrant at the Rodeway Inn Room 220, as he was a negotiator with JTPD. Detective Aynes attempted to make contact with the occupant of room 220 by yelling and also having the hotel manager connect him via the room phone. No contact was made, so Detective Aynes had dispatch attempt to call a cell phone again with no answer.

Detective Aynes observed that pepper balls were being used in the room and no acknowledgment was made from inside. Then the SWAT team was activated, and they brought a drone. Once the drone was able to enter the room, there were shots from within the room and the drone was shot. Those shots were observed exiting the side wall of the room / building. Additional pepper balls were fired into the room, and then Detective Aynes said a sniper was shot in the arm and transported via ambulance to the hospital.

Two additional armored vehicles arrived and a throw bot was used in order to make contact with the subject. During this time, there were shots coming out from inside the room and officers shooting into the room. Once officers were able to determine that the subject had been shot, they entered the room and found that the subject was deceased.

For additional details, refer to the audio recorded interview and the investigative report titled *2024-11-18: Witness Officer Interview - Jeff Aynes*.

[Involved Law Enforcement Officers](#)

BCI agents conducted video recorded interviews with the nine Canton Regional

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SWAT Team members who were involved in the shooting incident. Five of the officers were employed with the Canton Police Department, and one officer with each of the following additional agencies: Perry Township Police Department, Massillon Police Department, Stark County Sheriff's Office, and Carroll County Sheriff's Office. BCI agents also reviewed all nine officers' personnel files and training records. Included within this section are abbreviated versions of the officers' account of his actions pertaining to this incident and/or discharging his weapon. A more detailed account can be found by reviewing the video recorded interview.

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Canton Police Department

██████████ had been a commission law enforcement officer for approximately ██████████ and he had been employed with the Canton Police Department for the entirety of his career. ██████████ was also assigned to the Canton Regional SWAT Team as their ██████████

██████████ appeared to fire his rifle one time during the incident. At 16:52 ██████████ appeared to fire his rifle seven times. His BWC did not visually capture the actions of Vanest leading up to or during the time ██████████ fired.

Interview

On the morning of November 18, 2024 ██████████ was at the Canton Regional SWAT (Canton SWAT) training facility with six other officers. His assigned position at that time was ██████████ of the Canton SWAT team.

During SWAT training, ██████████ received a phone call from Captain Marino instructing ██████████ and the six other officers to respond to 6880 Sunset Strip Avenue NW in North Canton, Ohio (Rodeway Inn Motel). Captain Marino explained that the U.S. Marshals attempted to serve an arrest warrant at the Rodeway Inn motel for James Vanest (Vanest) and Vanest pointed a firearm at the officers. Vanest was now barricaded in his room and a perimeter was created surrounding the Rodeway Inn motel Room #220.

██████████ was familiar with the area and stated that he had responded to that location before. He was not familiar with Vanest.

██████████ instructed the Canton SWAT officers to respond to the incident location in the Canton SWAT armored vehicle. One of the SWAT officers was a Stark County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) deputy. ██████████ requested that the SCSO deputy to respond in his marked SCSO police cruiser and "get a lay of the land" prior to the arrival of additional personnel.

██████████ responded to the motel in an unmarked black CPD SUV. While he was driving, he received a text message from a U.S. Marshal at the incident location who sent a photograph and demographic information for Vanest. Information about the arrest warrant and Vanest's possible connection to a homicide investigation were also provided.

When ██████████ arrived at the Rodeway Inn, he parked his vehicle in the Cracker Barrel restaurant parking lot that sat adjacent to the motel. He then approached and briefly spoke with Captain Marino at the Canton SWAT armored vehicle that was parked

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in front of Room #220. [REDACTED] was notified that the motel rooms in the immediate surrounding area had been evacuated.

While standing near the armored vehicle and Room #220, [REDACTED] observed that the door to Room #220 was still ajar but not fully open. He could see the security bar still affixed to the door which prevented the door from opening all the way.

Captain Marino began giving verbal commands to Vanest over the PA system of the armored vehicle. After the first round of gunfire that was fired from inside Room #220, by Vanest, multiple rounds of chemical munitions were deployed into the room by multiple Canton SWAT officers.

Attempts were also made to break out the large bay window at the front of the room using less lethal rounds. The purpose of breaking the window was to allow a drone to enter the room and observe the location of the subject. Unfortunately, the initial attempts to break the window failed. That prompted [REDACTED] to use a less-lethal shotgun to shoot beanbag rounds at the lock on the door. [REDACTED] was positioned at the passenger door of the armored vehicle near the "A pillar" at the time of shooting the less-lethal shot gun. After firing approximately five rounds, he was able to successfully shoot the lock off the door, which would allow the door to freely swing open.

The drone was then deployed and pushed the door to Room #220 open and entered the room. The drone was able to observe the subject between the bed and wall in the room. Vanest then began shooting at the drone. [REDACTED] observed gunfire exiting Room #220. He explained that the reason he knew it was gunfire exiting the room was because the rounds were striking areas behind him.

After Vanest shot at the drone, it fell to the ground and was no longer operable. However, the live video feed on the drone continued to play.

After this first shooting incident, where only Vanest fired, [REDACTED] recalled hearing Captain Marino state over the PA system to Vanest, "nobody got hit, it's not that big of a deal" [30:26]. [REDACTED] vividly remembered this statement and believed it was an effort on Captain Marino's part to prompt Vanest to surrender.

Vanest's firing also prompted [REDACTED] to request a "full team activation" where additional Canton SWAT officers and an armored vehicle were requested. Officers on scene then held their positions until additional personnel and equipment arrived.

Once additional officers and equipment arrived [REDACTED] remained in his position at the passenger side door of the armored vehicle. He then heard the next

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round of gunfire coming from inside of Room #220. [REDACTED] explained, "and then the next big thing I hear, I hear a round, and I just remember, the rounds were really loud, cause I initially thought, oh he's got, like a short barrel rifle or like an AR pistol... because they were loud" [32:05].

[REDACTED] then heard an officer behind him yell and state he was struck by gunfire. [REDACTED] did not turn around to see who the officer was, but he later learned it was [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] then announced on the radio to other officers on scene that he was going to provide lethal cover by shooting his rifle into Room #220 in the area where he believed the subject was. He stated this decision was made because Vanest was shooting a gun at officers, and he also needed to allow officers to aid the injured officer and transport him to the ambulance, staged away from the incident scene.

[REDACTED] recalled firing approximately 7-8 times into Room #220. He then conducted a tactical reload, replacing the magazine just used with a new magazine.

[REDACTED] believed he was successful at preventing Vanest from shooting at an officer while [REDACTED] was receiving aid.

[REDACTED] explained that he had difficulty seeing into the room from where he was positioned. Not only was the room becoming cloudy because of the chemical munitions previously deployed, but he also was at an angle that did not allow him to see much of the interior of the room, which appeared dark to him.

[REDACTED] believed that after [REDACTED] was shot, it escalated the situation. He also realized that they were down a sniper [REDACTED] was a [REDACTED]

Special Response Team members from the Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) arrived on scene with their armored vehicle. [REDACTED] recalled some of the Canton SWAT officers getting into the OSHP armored vehicle.

[REDACTED] formulated a plan to maneuver the three armored vehicles that were on scene to "basically make an armored wall" [37:58]. This was also in an effort to better protect officers on scene and any possible bystanders in the surrounding area.

There were sporadic exchanges of gunfire between Vanest and other officers on scene.

[REDACTED] became aware of [REDACTED] who had arrived and took the position of sniper somewhere in the rear of the parking lot near a dumpster. [REDACTED] heard [REDACTED] announce over the radio "shots fired." Moments later, [REDACTED] heard [REDACTED] state over the radio that he was being shot at by Vanest. [REDACTED] made the determination to use lethal

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cover/suppressive fire to allow [REDACTED] to safely exit the area. [REDACTED] fired his rifle into Room #220 in the area where he believed the subject to be located. He stopped firing once he believed [REDACTED] had reached a safe location.

[REDACTED] described in detail how he felt during the incident. He stated,

"It's fear, it's scary as shit, it's confusing, it's scary, um, guys are getting shot and there is also a fear like professionally in that position of holy shit this guy, I don't know if I am ready for this, and I don't know what price we're gonna have to pay to end this. It's scary, like we don't often run into somebody that's gonna, they have no intention of walking out... they're going to hurt as many people as possible... his (Vanest) actions were clearly evident that this was, we're not talking our way out of this, there's no reasoning out of this. It's a totally unreasonable situation" [51:37].

He later mentioned, "I've been on some stuff, I was pretty shocked by that. It was definitely a, uh, a pretty shocking police call" [59:44].

[REDACTED] feared not only for his safety, but also for the safety of his team members, additional responding officers, and any bystanders in the area.

[REDACTED] expounded on some of his training in relation to incidents such as this. Specifically, he discussed the concept of "exfil." [REDACTED] explained that when there is an active threat, such as an armed barricaded subject like Vanest, it is common practice for SWAT officers to be trained in suppressing the threat by firing in the last known location of the subject. This is done even when the subject cannot be visually observed by the officer. It allows for officers to move safely to cover when a threat was previously shooting at them. [REDACTED] further explained that he had knowledge of the area being evacuated, which provided additional confidence in the use of tactics such as this. The term "accurate directive fire" was provided as a term used for a technique such as this.

Employment and Training Records

Records regarding [REDACTED] employment as a police officer were received from the Canton Police Department. The records included commendations, training records, employments records, and miscellaneous documents. No discipline related to use of force was located within the personnel file.

[REDACTED] attended and successfully completed the Ohio Police Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) Basic Training Class [REDACTED] at the University of Akron Police

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Academy. [REDACTED] also took and passed the OPOTA certification examination on [REDACTED] and was issued Peace Officer Certificate [REDACTED] by the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission.

[REDACTED] has completed a number of advanced training classes from a variety of sources.

On May 15, 2024, [REDACTED] qualified with the SWAT Team on the following weapons:

- Glock 17 - 9mm - Serial # [REDACTED]
- Geissele Super Duty - 5.56 - Serial # [REDACTED]
- RRA (SMG) LAR 15 - 5.56 - Serial # [REDACTED]
- Remington 870 - 12 gauge - Serial # [REDACTED]

Based on the records received and reviewed from OPOTA, it is noted that [REDACTED] was a duly certified and sworn Ohio Peace Officer at the time of the officer involved critical incident.

For additional information, refer to the video and audio recordings, [REDACTED] personnel file, and the Investigative Reports titled *2024-12-06: Involved Officer Interview* - [REDACTED] and *2024-12-19: Review of Involved [REDACTED] Personnel File*.

Canton Police Department [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] has been a commissioned law enforcement officer for approximately [REDACTED] years, and he has been employed with the Canton Police Department for the entirety of his career. [REDACTED] has also been a member of the Canton Regional SWAT Team for approximately two years.

[REDACTED] appeared to fire his rifle one time during the incident. At 17:22 [REDACTED] appeared to fire nine times. Cartridge casings that were likely being ejected from [REDACTED] firearm were captured in the video in addition to the recoil from his firearm. His BWC did not visually capture the actions of Vanest leading up to or during the time [REDACTED] fired.

Interview [REDACTED]

On November 18, 2024, [REDACTED] received a "full team activation" page on his phone requesting that he respond to 6880 Sunset Strip Avenue in North Canton, Ohio. Additional information stated there was a barricaded subject who had engaged in gunfire with other officers already on scene.

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When [REDACTED] arrived on scene, he gathered his equipment and was instructed to get inside the Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) armored vehicle parked at the rear of the Rodeway Inn.

Inside the OSHP armored vehicle was [REDACTED] CPD [REDACTED] Jackson Township Police Department (JTPD) Officer Weber (also a Canton SWAT team member), two OSHP SRT troopers, and a U.S. Marshal.

Once [REDACTED] entered the armored vehicle, they were immediately given orders to move the subject's vehicle away from the front of the motel Room #220. [REDACTED] said the driver of the armored vehicle maneuvered the vehicle through the parking lot of the Rodeway Inn and eventually pushed the subject's vehicle out of the way. During that time, [REDACTED] said none of the officers inside the vehicle opened the small ports on the side of the vehicle. These small ports were described 5-6" holes that SWAT officers could use to aim their firearms through. These ports provided a means to operate, but also a point of vulnerability should the subject have fired at the vehicle.

Once the armored vehicle repositioned itself in front of Room #220, [REDACTED] said it was difficult to see inside due to the window glare on the large window of Room #220. To solve this issue, one of the OSHP SRT team members inside the armored vehicle began firing less lethal rounds to knock out the window.

The window took some time to break. During that time, [REDACTED] was aiming his rifle through the center port of the armored vehicle. As the window slowly broke apart, he was able to see more and more of the interior of Room #220. First, he was able to see a bed with a large mound of blankets and pillows lying on top of it. He then began seeing small amounts of movement that appeared to be a person moving behind the bed.

The OSHP trooper continued to shoot out the window with the less-lethal rounds. Eventually, the entire window was shattered, and [REDACTED] could clearly see inside. He noticed the bathroom light on, but did not recall any other lighting inside.

Officers on scene were given the command by Canton Regional SWAT Commander Captain Marino to shoot whenever they had a line of sight.

[REDACTED] continued to aim his rifle through the center port of the armored vehicle. He was aiming in the general direction of Room #220. He then saw the left hand of the subject come over the mound of blankets and pillows on the bed pointing a gun in the direction of [REDACTED] began firing his rifle in the

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general area of the bed/mound of blankets and pillows. This was the area where he believed the subject to be based upon the location of the subject's arm and a small portion of his head. After [REDACTED] fired his weapon, he recalled announcing it to the other officers inside the armored vehicle. [REDACTED] believed he fired his rifle approximately 7-9 times.

Other officers on scene stated that they believed they saw a portion of the subject's body on the ground near the foot of the bed. The SWAT team then began formulating a plan to launch their ground drone to enter the room first. [REDACTED] said the ground drone became stuck, so a few flash bangs were utilized in an effort to gain a response from the subject. Eventually, the ground drone was able to navigate into the room and confirmed the subject was down on the ground and no longer a threat.

A few members of the Canton SWAT team entered the room to detain the subject and render first aid. [REDACTED] remained in the armored vehicle during the entirety of the incident.

[REDACTED] feared for his safety and the safety of other officers on scene. Although [REDACTED] was behind cover in the armored vehicle, he was still exposed in the area of the open port. He stated, "I was concerned, I was definitely worried... I don't know how good of a shot this guy is... you can hit a five-inch hole pretty far out" [29:00]. He did not learn that another officer had been shot until after the shooting incident occurred.

[REDACTED] was unsure how many rounds in total were fired during the incident. He explained that it was difficult to hear from inside the armored vehicle. [REDACTED] also did not provide any commands to the subject prior to firing his weapon. He again explained that any command he could have given would have been muffled by the armored vehicle and would not have been heard by the subject or anyone else on the outside of the vehicle.

[REDACTED] had no previous encounters with the subject, nor had he ever responded to the location before. He indicated the Rodeway Inn was not in his normal area of jurisdiction.

Employment and Training Records

Records regarding [REDACTED] employment as a police officer were received from the Canton Police Department. The records included commendations, training records, employments records, and miscellaneous documents. No discipline related to use of force was located within the personnel file.

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██████████ was hired by the CPD as a full-time Police Officer on ██████████
██████████ CPD is the only law enforcement agency that ██████████ has worked for.

██████████ attended and successfully completed the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) Basic Training class ██████████ at the Ohio State Highway Patrol Academy. ██████████ also took and passed the OPOTA certification examination on ██████████, and was issued Peace Officer Certificate ██████████ by the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission.

██████████ has completed a number of advanced training classes from various sources.

On May 15, 2024, ██████████ qualified with the SWAT Team on the following weapons:

- Glock 17 - 9mm - Serial # ██████████
- Daniel Defense DDM4 - 5.56 - Serial ██████████
- Remington 870 - 12 gauge - no serial listed
- HK MP 5 - 9mm - no serial number listed

On October 31, 2024, ██████████ qualified with the CPD on the following weapons:

- Glock 17 - 9mm - Serial # ██████████
- Daniel Defense DDM4 - 5.56 - Serial # ██████████
- Remington 870 - 12 gauge - no serial listed
- HK MP 5 - 9mm - no serial number listed

Based on the records received and reviewed from OPOTA, it is noted that ██████████
██████████ was a duly certified and sworn Ohio Peace Officer at the time of the officer involved critical incident.

For additional information, refer to the audio and video recorded interview, ██████████
██████████ personnel file, and the Investigative Reports titled *2024-11-27: Involved Officer Interview* - ██████████ and *2024-12-19: Review of Involved ██████████ Personnel File*.

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Canton Police Department

██████████ has been a sworn law enforcement officer for approximately ██████████. He has been employed with the Canton Police Department for the last ██████████. He is also a member of the Canton Regional SWAT Team and is assigned as a ██████████ for the unit.

██████████ appeared to fire a rifle at two separate times throughout the incident. The first time was at 49:17, and he appeared to fire five times. The second time was at 51:48, and he appeared to fire approximately one time. His BWC did not visually capture the actions of Vanest leading up to or during the time ██████████ fired.

Interview

On November 18, 2024, ██████████ was driving to police headquarters to handle an unrelated call for service when he was called off from that assignment and dispatched to respond to the motel complex where the officer-involved shooting would occur. ██████████ received a brief summary of what had transpired from his dispatcher. That included being told that U.S. Marshals were requesting assistance from SWAT for an armed barricaded male subject.

██████████ responded to the scene, utilizing his emergency lights and siren based on the above-noted information he received from dispatchers. Once on scene, ██████████ met with the Marshal's task force officers. ██████████ received a description of the subject (a white male in his 60s) and his location (room 220). ██████████ was one of the first SWAT operators to arrive on scene, and he arrived prior to any armored SWAT vehicles. ██████████ had his sniper equipment with him and chose to set up as a sniper to observe any potential activity of the subject based on the above-noted factors and nature of the complaint. ██████████ then observed the subject's room without noting any movement or activity from the subject or from his room for an undetermined period of time until additional SWAT operators arrived. Once additional SWAT personnel arrived on scene, ██████████ changed into his SWAT vest and transitioned into the role of a SWAT ██████████. ██████████ took an assignment of interior perimeter control. Once assigned his new role, ██████████ secured his sniper rifle and equipped himself with an M4 patrol rifle.

██████████ spoke with other SWAT operators and learned that they were preparing to deploy chemical munitions into the subject's motel room. ██████████ put on his gas mask and took a position behind what he believed was a U.S. Marshal's Ford Explorer near the front door of the subject's room and what he later

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learned was the subject's Dodge Ram truck that was parked in front of the subject's motel room. [REDACTED] remained in this position for what he believed was approximately 15 to 20 minutes.

While in position behind the Ford Explorer, [REDACTED] heard other law enforcement giving the subject loud verbal commands to surrender over a loudspeaker. [REDACTED] did not hear the subject respond to those commands. [REDACTED] noted that during that time other law enforcement/SWAT operators deployed chemical munitions into the subject's room.

After the subject failed to comply with verbal commands to surrender and chemical munitions failed to garner any noticeable response from the subject, SWAT team members deployed a drone into the subject's room. [REDACTED] observed the drone push open the front door of the subject's motel room and enter the room. [REDACTED] described his view into the subject's room at that time as (27:03 mark) "pretty poor." Once the drone entered the subject's room, he observed muzzle flashes coming from the subject's room and heard the sound of gunshots coming from the subject's room. Another officer reported over the police radio that the subject shot the drone down.

After the subject shot the drone down, SWAT [REDACTED] transitioned into a sniper role. [REDACTED] took over the position [REDACTED] was in behind the Ford Explorer. [REDACTED] had his rifle on a tripod and was set up partially behind the Ford Explorer and was looking into the subject's room for approximately 30 seconds when [REDACTED] heard a gunshot. Immediately after hearing the gunshot, [REDACTED] observed [REDACTED] react in pain and take cover behind the Ford Explorer. [REDACTED] then heard [REDACTED] say he was shot and observed an injury to [REDACTED] right arm. [REDACTED] then placed a tourniquet on the right arm of [REDACTED] above the gunshot wound. Another officer then placed a second tourniquet on [REDACTED] helped [REDACTED] leave the scene of the shooting, walking southbound away from the subject's room.

After successfully having helped [REDACTED] out of the scene and to an ambulance, [REDACTED] returned to the group of SWAT operators. [REDACTED] then took control of [REDACTED] rifle because (30:54 mark) "this guy's demonstrated, you know, he's willing to use extreme amounts of violence to prevent arrest." [REDACTED] removed the sniper rifle from the affixed tripod. [REDACTED] notified his supervisor, Sergeant Lee, of what he was doing, and looked for a better position to set up as a sniper further back from the subject's motel room. Eventually, [REDACTED] set up approximately 200 feet from the subject's room on a hill or embankment

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between the motel parking lot and the parking lot of a neighboring Cracker Barrel restaurant southwest of the subject's motel room.

From his position on the hill/embankment, [REDACTED] attached his own tripod to the rifle. [REDACTED] also took off his vest and helmet so that he could comfortably operate the rifle from the position he was now in. [REDACTED] remained in this position for an unknown amount of time. He believed it may have been approximately 15 to 20 minutes. While in this position and looking into the subject's room through the scope on the rifle, [REDACTED] saw a muzzle flash and heard a gunshot. [REDACTED] stated,

"So, at this point I know that the suspect has already pointed a firearm at deputy marshals, which was the reason for the original, uh activation for the team Um, I knew he used a firearm to shoot down a drone, uh, and I, uh knew he'd shot [REDACTED] at this point, uh, so I was extremely confident that this suspect uh, was continuing to discharge a firearm for the purpose of not just preventing apprehension but to hurt and or kill other officers. To that end, uh, so with that knowledge, uh and with the belief it was necessary and justified to use lethal force to stop that suspect from continuing to hurt people, um, I made the decision to shoot the sniper rifle, uh, where I believed the suspect was at. Now, to again, to clarify, visibility into the room was pretty poor, even on a magnified optic at 200 feet. Um, I could see basically inside the room and then I think as a mixture of how dark it was in addition to the chemical munitions and everything that had been deployed visibility in the back of the room was pretty poor but I could, again I could hear the gunshot and I could see the muzzle flash. Um, based on my training, you know, if you can identify the source of the muzzle flash, uh, uh, you're, you can essentially, um extrapolate that that's where the suspect is at or at least in the area. So, I send uh, the first round into that specific area where I see the muzzle flash and believe that the suspect is probably at or at least holding the firearm. Um so, he fires once. I fire one. Um, so this happens twice more, uh within a short period of time he fires again. I respond, send uh, another round from the sniper rifle to that same area, um so, one, two, and three, in that, in that timeframe. After that initial engagement I get on the air, on the radio, and uh, say something to the effect of, you know [REDACTED] shots fired at the suspect.' It's not clear if he's hit at this point or, um, you know what effect those rounds that I fired had. However, he did stop shooting for a period of time. While I'm on the radio he shoots again. Um, so, uh, it's very obvious he's still able to do harm. Um, at some point I, I, don't recall exactly how long this, uh, this time frame was, within a few minutes. Uh,

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after the first round, uh, that I heard him fire, uh, I very well though that he was shooting at me or at least at other officers. Um, he shoots a fourth time and even after I lost, uh a significant, significant portion of my ability to hear after the first round I fired, um this, I believe it was the fourth round he fired at me or fired, I could hear came past me and I could hear the definitive like whiz sound basically of a round passing by my position. I again, out of fear for my own life and the life of the other officers on scene, um I believed it was necessary and justified to return fire or apply lethal force to that suspect. Did so again with the fourth round from the sniper rifle. Um, and uh, kind of retreated back into cover a little bit. It didn't take a lot for me to do that because I was able to lean back and out of the way and that was it. Took me out of the line of sight of that suspect. I'm there for a minute. He sends another round. Uh, the suspect fires another round that goes close by my position again. Again, I can hear that whiz. Uh, things are muffled but I can distinctly hear the gunshot and whiz of that bullet flying by. So, um, I made the decision to abandon that position that I had set up at and seek out a different one. Um, because it was clear to me the suspect knew where I was at and was shooting at me" [34:29].

██████████ then briefly took up a position further back but quickly moved again. ██████████ then moved up to the armored vehicle to attempt to see into the room better from this closer vantage point. ██████████ learned from another SWAT operator that he believed the subject was in the right corner of the room behind a pile of bedding.

██████████ then returned to his previous position where he exchanged gunfire with the subject. ██████████ requested closer SWAT operators direct a green laser into the subject's room at the back wall to help ██████████ orient himself to the subject's presumed location should he need to fire again. At that time, ██████████ learned that other SWAT operators were able to utilize a drone to see into the subject's room, and it appeared the subject was unresponsive and lying face down in a pool of blood. Ultimately, the closer SWAT operators deployed flash bang grenades into the room and then sent SWAT operators into the room who stated the subject was deceased.

When asked, ██████████ stated that he believed the first three shots he and the subject exchanged occurred within approximately 30 seconds. The fourth and final shots he and the subject exchanged occurred very shortly thereafter, while ██████████ was speaking on the radio.

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██████████ described the incident as one of the scariest events he had ever experienced.

When asked if he felt he perceived any other options available to him at the moment he fired, ██████████ stated absolutely not.

██████████ Employment and Training Records

██████████ was hired by the CPD as a full-time police officer on ██████████. ██████████ also had previous law enforcement experience with both the Boston Heights Police Department (Auxiliary Officer from ██████████) and the Uniontown Police Department (Reserve Officer ██████████).

██████████ attended and successfully completed the Ohio Police Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) Basic Training Class ██████████ at the Monroe Falls Police Academy. ██████████ also took and passed the OPOTA certification examination on ██████████, and was issued Peace Officer Certificate ██████████ by the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission.

██████████ has completed a number of advanced training classes from a variety of sources.

On May 15, 2024, ██████████ qualified with the SWAT Team on the following weapons:

- Glock 17 - 9mm - Serial # ██████████
- Daniel Defense DDM4 - 5.56 - Serial # ██████████
- HK MP 5 - 9mm - Serial # ██████████
- Remington 870 - 12 gauge - Serial # ██████████

██████████ received discipline, including a suspension, related to a ██████████ use of force incident. Based on the records received, this was the only discipline ██████████ has received for a use of force issue.

Based on the records received and reviewed from OPOTA, it is noted that ██████████ was a duly certified and sworn Ohio Peace Officer at the time of the officer involved critical incident.

For additional information, refer to the audio and video recorded interview, ██████████ personnel file, and the Investigative Reports titled *2024-11-27: Involved Officer Interview - ██████████* and *2024-12-19: Review of Involved ██████████ Personnel File*.

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Canton Police Department

██████████ has been a commissioned law enforcement officer for approximately ██████████ years and has been employed with the Canton Police Department for the entirety of his career. ██████████ was also assigned to the Canton Regional SWAT Team and has been a member for approximately two years.

██████████ did not have his BWC activated at the time he fired during the incident. The videos from ██████████ BWC captured various points throughout the incident but did not capture any of Vanest's actions.

Interview

On November 18, 2024, ██████████ was working at SWAT Headquarters assisting with SWAT School for officers newly assigned to the SWAT Team. Sometime before noon, ██████████ relayed that the U.S. Marshalls had tried to arrest a subject with ATF warrants and the subject had brandished a firearm. The Marshalls pulled back and were calling for SWAT to come handle the situation.

They loaded their gear into the armored vehicle, "Wyatt" and he rode to the scene in it. While responding to the scene, he learned the subject was a white male, possibly older, with warrants related to firearms violations.

When they arrived, the Wyatt was parked. He followed the shield officer out the back of the Wyatt. The shield officer took up a position at the rear driver side portion of the vehicle which was also the "threat side". He provided shield cover and presented his rifle toward the main door and window of the room. The door was closed so he could not see inside. A plan to deploy less lethal munitions was formed and announcements were made on the Wyatt's public address system. Other officers held the perimeter while the gas team moved up and began deploying gas through the window. He believed a less lethal shotgun was also utilized to break open the door which was latched closed.

After the door was opened, they flew a drone which was equipped with cameras into the room. He explained:

"Once the drone went in, the, the suspect fired shots at the drone. Um, however, I believe some of them missed the drone because I saw, uh, bullet holes in the window consistent with being shot from the inside out. Um, the drone went down after being shot. So, we, you know, we called out with shots fired. Um, we, I believe they, the team inserted more gas and uh, that was kind of it from there. So, in between all this, I was bumping out or switching positions with other team members to kind of, you know, get relief there. At one point, um, a

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team member suggested that we're gonna send a shield team up there to have another officer insert a throwable, uh, robot camera in there that could ride on the floor since we didn't have the drone anymore. So, I left my position on the corner of the Wyatt, grabbed a shield, I walked around the Wyatt.

So, I walked around this side of the Wyatt (pointed to passenger side) where the team was being orchestrated. The plan was to go up through here (pointed to the area between the front bumper of the Wyatt and the northeast corner of the motel building) and then throw the, throw a robot in the door.

Um, so around that time I downed the shield 'cause I had a bunch of gear on me. So, I wanted to down my rifle. I handed my rifle to someone who was inside the Wyatt. Um, and around that time I heard a gunshot and then I heard screaming. Um, I looked up and [REDACTED] was shot. I wasn't sure where I saw him on the ground. He was yelling. Uh, other officer's kind of pulled him behind the vehicle" (19:22).

At that time, he had returned to his original position at the rear driver side portion of the Wyatt. He then rotated on and off with another officer providing cover with his rifle on the front door area of the room. Additional gas and pepper balls were deployed and then more gunfire was exchanged.

After [REDACTED] was shot, [REDACTED] took [REDACTED] sniper rifle and positioned himself further away from the room. [REDACTED] then called out that he was being shot at. [REDACTED] said:

"So, around that time, officers, uh, shot into the room towards where the suspect was or Intel said that he was hiding behind the bed that would've been on this wall (pointed to area of west wall in the room). And he said he was hiding behind the bed in the wall here. So, officers conducted their, or, uh, targeted their fire to the bed area to try and suppress his gunfire. Um, we got, you know, green lights to do so by the captain" (20:17).

During that portion of the incident [REDACTED] did not fire. He then described when he fired:

"There was a couple exchanges of gunfire where he was shooting out. Uh, we heard him reloading multiple times. We called out with that and went over the radio and officers were yelling that as well. Um, during one of the exchanges when he was shooting out, we got the green light. Um, there was an officer here (pointed to rear driver side of the Wyatt) that was shooting into here (pointed to



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front door area of the motel room) and I was standing right behind him. His magazine ran dry so I swapped him out. Uh, and the suspect was still shooting out of there. So, I fired into the bed area where Intel said that the suspect was hiding by" (23:34)

██████████ added, at the time he fired he was returning fire because the subject was shooting at them. When asked how he knew the subject was shooting at them, he said:

"So, the initial shots, so our team, like I said, deployed gas into the window. It didn't shatter the window completely. It left holes in the window consistent of, with our 40-millimeter gas canisters, which are large. So, when they sent the drone in, we all heard gunfire, none of us were shooting. Um, and then I saw bullet holes in the window consistent with gunshot or gunshot holes. Um, it appeared that he was shooting from inside at the drone and was missing and they were going through the window and then out towards these motels which were occupied. And then I believe the highway was over here" (26:26).

When asked how he felt throughout the incident he explained,

"Uh, to be honest, it was, it was terrifying. Um, you know, we all kind of think that we're prepared for that and when the moment comes, you know, we step up and deal with it. But we're all human. It's, it's scary, you know, when gun, gunshots are going past your head and stuff" (27:30).

Throughout the incident ██████████ did not see the subject. He received intel from other officers who relayed the subject's position and that they could see pillows moving. He never heard the subject say anything. He remembered hearing the subject reloading a firearm two different times. He could hear what he described as the magazine being inserted into a firearm and the slide being racked.

██████████ did not recall having any previous encounters with the involved subject or that incident location.

Employment and Training Records

██████████ was hired by the CPD as a full time Police Officer on ██████████. CPD is the only law enforcement agency that ██████████ has worked for.

██████████ attended and successfully completed the Ohio Police Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) Basic Training Class ██████████ at the Akron Police Academy. ██████████ also took and passed the OPOTA certification examination on ██████████ and was issued Peace Officer Certificate ██████████ by the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission.

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██████████ has completed a number of advanced training classes from a variety of sources.

On May 15, 2024, ██████████ qualified with SWAT on the following weapons:

- Glock 17 - 9mm - Serial # ██████████
- Daniel Defense DDM4 - 5.56 - Serial ██████████
- Remington 870 - 12 gauge - no serial number listed
- HK MP5 - 9mm - no serial number listed

On October 3, 2024, ██████████ qualified with the CPD on the following weapons:

- Glock 17 - 9mm - Serial # ██████████
- Daniel Defense DDM4 - 5.56 - ██████████
- Remington 870 - 12 gauge - Serial # ██████████

Based on the records received, ██████████ has no discipline related to the use of force.

Based on the records received and reviewed from OPOTA, it is noted that ██████████ was a duly certified and sworn Ohio Peace Officer at the time of the officer involved critical incident.

For additional information, refer to the audio and video recorded interview, ██████████ ██████████ personnel file, and the Investigative Reports titled *2024-11-27: Involved Officer Interview - ██████████* and *2024-12-19: Review of Involved ██████████ Personnel File*.

Canton Police Department ██████████

██████████ has been a commissioned law enforcement officer for approximately ██████████, and he has been employed with the Canton Police Department for the entirety of his career. ██████████ was also assigned to the Canton Regional SWAT Team as a team member and ██████████.

██████████ did not have his BWC activated at the time he fired during the incident. The videos from ██████████ BWC captured the period after the shooting incident and did not capture any of Vanest's actions.

Interview

On the day of the officer-involved shooting, ██████████ attended SWAT training as an instructor. During the training, ██████████ advised the SWAT team of a "Real World" call for service. ██████████ addressed the SWAT team and told the team the U.S. Marshals were attempting to arrest an individual who was

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wanted for federal firearm violation. The subject was a suspect in a homicide investigation. When the U.S. Marshals located and attempted to arrest the subject, he brandished a firearm.

██████████, other SWAT team members and five new SWAT team cadets were then transported to the scene in the back of the "WYATT" SWAT armored personnel carrier. While en route to the scene, ██████████ was assigned to act in the role of ██████████. The group of SWAT officers arrived in the WYATT, drove past the subject's motel room, turned around, and pulled up to the subject's motel room with the WYATT facing the front door and front window of the motel room at a slight angle. As the WYATT arrived on scene, ██████████ could hear other law enforcement calling out for the subject to surrender.

Once parked in front of the subject's motel room, ██████████ used the scope on his rifle to determine if the locking mechanism on the subject's motel room door was engaged. Other officers next utilized glass breaking balls to try and shoot the glass out of the subject's front motel room window so that officers could more clearly see into the room. The glass breaking balls were not effective at breaking the glass in a meaningful way. Members of the SWAT team then used a bean bag shotgun to fire bean bags at the front door to the motel room to open the door. This was successful in partially opening the door to the room.

A drone operator then sent a drone into the motel room. ██████████ then heard the sound of gunfire and believed the subject was shooting. ██████████ believed the subject was shooting at the drone and through the north wall of the motel room as he observed holes being formed, emanating from the north wall of the motel room wall. ██████████ noted the bullet holes along the wall got closer to him, and he then heard the crack of a bullet as it traveled past him. ██████████ took cover behind the WYATT.

Throughout the next approximately ten minutes, other law enforcement deployed chemical munitions into the subject's motel room. ██████████ himself deployed an unknown amount of pepper balls into the subject's motel room from the WYATT.

The next event ██████████ recalled was ██████████ being shot. ██████████ recalled hearing a loud shot followed by a distinct scream. ██████████ observed blood coming from the arm of ██████████ and being relieved that ██████████ did not appear to have been shot in the face or head. ██████████ then advised other SWAT team members to fire more pepper balls into the subject's motel room.

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██████████ and the other SWAT team members realized they could not safely evacuate the injured officer away from the scene, without further putting the injured officer in the line of danger and potential gunfire from the subject. ██████████ advised the SWAT team that on his command some of the officers would attempt to escort the injured officer through the open danger zone and to an ambulance waiting nearby. ██████████ further advised the officers that upon his command they would use "suppressive fire" to fire into the subject's motel room at the moment the injured officer was being removed from the scene. Officers then fired into the motel room as the injured officer was removed from the scene.

██████████ stated,

"I oriented on the, excuse me, sorry, I'm getting kinda wrapped up in this. Um, I oriented on the front end of the WYATT. ██████████ was kinda high over the, the hood. I went a little low around him and as soon as he initiated the fire to, to get ██████████ (the shot and injured officer), ya know, moved I began discharging my rifle, um, into the north side wall there of the motel. Um, in the direction in which, I assumed um, Vanest (the subject) was positioned in to allow us to get ██████████ to safety into that ambulance" [28:18].

██████████ stated that he reviewed his BWC approximately five times to get an accurate count on the number of shots he fired. ██████████ could not conclusively determine the number of times he fired because his rifle was suppressed, and ██████████ was firing a rifle without a suppressor next to him at the same time.

Officers were effectively able to extricate the injured officer during the time ██████████ fired into the motel room. ██████████ did not fire his rifle or any other weapons after that point.

After ██████████, the injured officer, was removed from the scene, there were (29:33 mark of recording) "sporadic incidents of exchanging gunfire." ██████████ himself was not involved in the following gunfire exchanges and described himself as taking on a role of support and coordination. ██████████ described supplying other officers with additional magazines from within the WYATT and calling for additional SWAT vehicles to respond. ██████████ provided tactical considerations for ██████████ and Captain Marino from that point until the conclusion of the event.

At some point in time, ██████████ took a group of SWAT team members to the neighboring Cracker Barrel parking lot to respond from this location in the event the north (exterior side) wall of the subject's motel room was to become compromised or open up.

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██████████ stated after the Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) SWAT vehicles arrived, they were able to push the subject's truck, which was parked in the parking space in front of his motel room, away from the motel room. The OSHP SWAT vehicle then maintained a position in front of the front door and window to the subject's motel room. ██████████ believed the subject and law enforcement in the OSHP SWAT vehicle also engaged in an exchange of gunfire and less lethal munitions, but did not have details of that exchange, due to his position.

When asked, ██████████ stated at the time he fired he had a relative idea of where the subject was but could not actually see him. ██████████ also stated he was aware the surrounding motel rooms were unoccupied prior to him firing his weapon.

When asked if he was in fear for his own safety during the incident, ██████████ stated (32:48 mark of recording) "Yes, absolutely."

When asked if he perceived any other options available to him other than the use of deadly force at the time he fired, ██████████ stated (37:30), "No, I believe all of our other options had been utilized."

██████████ was not aware of any previous interactions he may have had with the subject.

██████████ stated that he did see Stark County Sheriff's ██████████ fire through the top hatch of the WYATT at some point during the event. ██████████ recalled providing ██████████ with a fresh magazine after he fired and later asking him if he wished to be relieved from his position in the hatch, which ██████████ declined. ██████████ believed ██████████ was in close proximity to having been shot himself based on his ducking and the apparent defensive movements he made at times while in the hatch and exposed to possible gunfire while shots were being exchanged between the subject and law enforcement.

██████████ was not aware of the position of ██████████ at the time ██████████ was shot.

██████████ explained that at the time he fired the pepper ball launcher, he was positioned on the passenger side of the WYATT and was firing over the hood towards the front door of the motel room.

██████████ shared that there were many civilians throughout the extended area surrounding the officer-involved shooting scene and this also added to the complexity and potential danger of the suspect's actions throughout the incident.

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Employment and Training Records

██████████ was hired as a full time CPD Officer on ██████████. CPD is the only law enforcement agency that ██████████ has worked for.

██████████ attended and successfully completed the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) Basic Training Class ██████████ at the Stark State College. ██████████ also took and passed the OPOTA certification examination on ██████████ and was issued Peace Officer Certificate ██████████ by the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission.

██████████ has completed a large number of advanced training classes from various sources.

On May 15, 2024, ██████████ qualified with the SWAT Team on the following weapons:

- Daniel Defense Rifle - 5.56 - model DDM4 - serial # ██████████
- Glock - 9mm - model 17 - serial # ██████████
- Remington Shotgun - 12 gauge - serial # ██████████
- HK - 9mm - MP5 - serial # ██████████

On October 14, 2024, ██████████ qualified on the following weapons with the CPD:

- Daniel Defense Rifle - 5.56 - model DDM4 - serial # ██████████
- Glock - 9mm - model 17 - serial # ██████████
- Remington Shotgun - 12 gauge - serial # ██████████

██████████ received discipline, including a suspension, related to a November 29, 2021, use of force incident. Based on the records received, this was the only discipline ██████████ has received for a use of force issue.

Based on the records received and reviewed from OPOTA, it is noted that ██████████ was a duly certified and sworn Ohio Peace Officer at the time of the officer involved critical incident.

For additional information, refer to the audio and video recorded interview, ██████████ personnel file, and the Investigative Reports titled *2024-11-27: Involved Officer Interview - ██████████* and *2024-12-19: Review of Involved ██████████ Personnel File*.

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Officer-Involved Critical Incident - Officer Involved Critical Incident - 6880 Sunset Strip Ave NW, Room #220, North Canton, Ohio, 44720

Massillon Police Department

██████████ has been a commissioned law enforcement officer for ██████████ and he has been employed with the Massillon Police Department for the entirety of his career. ██████████ was also assigned to the Canton Regional SWAT Team as a ██████████.

██████████ appeared to fire his rifle at two separate times throughout the incident. The first time was at 06:13 and he appeared to fire 12 times. The second time was at 08:31 and he appeared to fire approximately 15 times. His BWC did not visually capture the actions of Vanest leading up to or during the time ██████████ fired.

Interview

On the morning of November 18, 2024, ██████████ was performing his normal duties as a ██████████ with the MPD. Sometime during the mid-morning, while at the police department, he received a phone call from his wife ██████████. ██████████ asked if he was in Jackson Township on the Canton Regional SWAT (Canton SWAT) call out. ██████████ was unaware of any Canton SWAT call out that was active.

██████████ hung up the phone with his wife and contacted Canton SWAT ██████████ informed ██████████ that there was an active "full team activation" in Jackson Township at 6880 Sunset Strip Avenue NW in North Canton, Ohio. ██████████ then said, "this guy is shooting at us, he shot a drone down, if you can get here, get here."

██████████ immediately went to his unmarked ██████████ vehicle parked at the MPD and began responding to the incident location. ██████████ also received a page on his phone for the "full team activation" for Canton SWAT. Minimal details about the incident were provided, and the page simply stated there was a barricaded subject with shots fired at the Rodeway Inn motel.

While ██████████ was driving, he turned his radio on and changed the channel from the MPD main channel to the Canton SWAT SPEC OPS channel. He listened to the officers who were already on scene in an effort to gain more information about how the incident was unfolding. ██████████ heard someone on the radio say there was an officer down (officer who was shot) and he also heard gunfire in the background over his radio.

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██████████ arrived at the Rodeway Inn motel approximately midday (unknown time). When he arrived, he parked on the northwest side of the Cracker Barrel restaurant. He observed a large crowd of people standing on the north side of the restaurant, and police units in the area beginning to shut down roadways.

██████████ gathered his equipment and approached the Canton SWAT armored vehicle. The vehicle was parked in front of the involved subject's motel room, Room #220. He approached multiple team members from the Canton SWAT team who were positioned at the rear of the armored vehicle. ██████████ asked where he was needed and eventually took a position at the rear of the vehicle on the driver's side next to another officer. To his left, he observed a black SUV that he believed was a U.S. Marshal vehicle and a small pool of blood where ██████████ had been shot.

██████████ also learned some additional information about the involved subject including the subject's identifying information, the motel room number, that the subject had a gun, and that the original call for service was the U.S. Marshals attempting to arrest the subject on a warrant.

██████████ recalled hearing commands coming through the PA system of the armored vehicle he was standing behind. He could not recall the actual commands given.

While still positioned at the rear of the armored vehicle, ██████████ heard gunfire coming from the motel room. He said he knew the gunfire was coming from Room #220 based upon the sound of the bullets impacting behind him and also statements made over the radio by the SWAT ██████████ ██████████ who stated he was being shot at by the subject.

██████████ was still standing next to another SWAT officer at the rear of the vehicle. The officer stated he was unable to see inside the room. ██████████ offered to switch positions with him because he had a magnifying scope on his gun, and it would likely allow him to see more clearly.

██████████ switched positions with the officer, and as he began to move from cover to look into Room #220, he heard additional gunfire coming from the motel room. He also heard ██████████ state that he was being shot at again. ██████████ then leaned around the side of the armored vehicle where he could observe muzzle flash(es), a bed, and a mound of pillows. Based on the knowledge given to him by other officers on scene, ██████████ knew the subject was behind the bed in

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between the bed and wall. He also could narrow down the location of the subject based on the muzzle flashes.

██████████ asked other officers around him if they wanted him to shoot since he had a clear shot on the subject. He was given permission.

At that moment, ██████████ fired multiple rounds from his firearm. He aimed at the area he believed the subject was based on all the factors previously mentioned.

██████████ returned to cover. He then went on to describe the scenario, stating, "so the first time I had fired, um I popped back behind cover, started listening for more (gunfire) and at that point I could actually hear him reloading his firearm" [25:49].

██████████ then fired his gun a second time at the same general area where the subject was believed to be hiding.

██████████ fired his gun because he feared for the safety of ██████████ who had clearly stated on the radio that he was being shot at. ██████████ believed he fired his gun approximately 28 times due to the fact that his magazine became empty, and he was required to reload his gun with an additional magazine.

██████████ feared for his safety and the safety of the other officers on scene. He also was concerned about the safety of the general public. He explained behind the area where ██████████ was positioned was a major highway and beyond that there were multiple businesses. He was concerned that the subject was firing in that direction.

As for less-lethal munitions used, ██████████ observed an OSHP "operator" fire multiple breaching rounds from a less-lethal firearm into the subject's room. He could not recall how many rounds the OSHP operator fired.

██████████ Employment and Training Records

██████████ was hired by the MPD as a full time Police Officer on ██████████. MPD is the only law enforcement agency that ██████████ has worked for.

██████████ attended and successfully completed the Ohio Police Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) Basic Training Class ██████████ at the Stark State College. ██████████ also took and passed the OPOTA certification examination on ██████████ and was issued Peace Officer Certificate ██████████ by the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission.

██████████ has completed a large number of advanced training classes from a variety of sources.

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On October 2, 2024, [REDACTED] qualified with the following weapons with the Massillon Police Department:

- S&W M&P 2.0 - 9mm - Serial # [REDACTED]
- Mossburg 590 - 12 gauge - no serial number listed
- BCM BCM4 - 5.56 - Serial # [REDACTED]
- S&W Shield - 9mm - Serial # [REDACTED]

On May 15, 2024, [REDACTED] qualified with the following weapons with the SWAT Team:

- S&W M&P 2.0 - 9mm - Serial # [REDACTED]
- BCM BCM4 - 5.56 - Serial # [REDACTED]
- HK MP5 - 9mm - Serial # [REDACTED]

Based on the records received, [REDACTED] has no discipline related to the use of force.

Based on the records received and reviewed from OPOTA, it is noted that [REDACTED] was a duly certified and sworn Ohio Peace Officer at the time of the officer involved critical incident.

For additional information, refer to the audio and video recorded interview, [REDACTED] personnel file, and the Investigative Reports titled *2024-12-06: Involved Officer Interview - [REDACTED]* and *2024-12-19: Review of Involved [REDACTED] Personnel File*.

[Perry Township Police Department](#) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] has been a commissioned law enforcement officer for [REDACTED] years and has been employed by the Perry Township Police Department for the entirety of his career. [REDACTED] was also assigned to the Canton Regional SWAT team.

[Interview](#)

[REDACTED] reported he was participating in a SWAT training with officers interested in joining the team on the day of the officer-involved shooting. While on a break during SWAT training, the SWAT team was advised that they were being activated for an actual call out. [REDACTED] told the SWAT team that the U.S. Marshalls were attempting to serve a warrant when a subject produced a gun, pointed the gun at a U.S. Marshals task force officer, and the subject was now armed and barricaded in a motel room. The SWAT team were also told that the subject's name was James Vanest, and he was a white male. The SWAT team was further informed that the subject was wanted for

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weapons violations and was to be extradited to West Virginia on these outstanding charges.

After receiving the above background information, the SWAT team members prepped the WYATT SWAT vehicle and responded to the scene. The trainee officers joined the SWAT team in responding to the scene.

While traveling to the scene, SWAT team members explained to the trainees they were to stay in the SWAT vehicle and observe rather than actively participate in the incident. While en route, one of the SWAT trainees provided further details of the motel layout as he was familiar with the motel complex and room layout.

██████████ had not personally responded to the motel complex where the incident occurred before. ██████████ had not previously interacted with the subject that he was aware of.

██████████ described the subject's room as being the final room in a large group of outwardly connected units. The subject's truck was backed in and parked in front of the subject's room.

Upon arrival, the WYATT was pulled in at a southwest angle with the front of the WYATT facing the subject's room. ██████████ escorted two of the trainees out of the SWAT vehicle and northwest of the subject's room to a Jackson Police vehicle. The trainees were left in a position of cover where they could potentially see and report if the subject was able to enter the attic or space above his room and exit into a neighboring room.

██████████ noted that there were civilians to the north of the subject's room in a neighboring Cracker Barrel restaurant. There were also nearby and neighboring motel rooms in the motel complex. Some of the neighboring motel rooms had been evacuated and some were not. ██████████ further noted civilians and additional law enforcement in the general area just outside the inner perimeter.

After escorting the two SWAT trainees to their new position of cover to observe the neighboring units, ██████████ returned to the WYATT. Once back at the WYATT, other SWAT team members were preparing to use chemical munitions. ██████████ recalled the subject was being given verbal commands that he believed were given through the PA system of the WYATT. The SWAT team members, including ██████████ donned gas masks in preparation of deploying the chemical munitions into the subject's room.

While preparing to utilize the chemical munitions, ██████████ reported he received additional intelligence that the subject was reported to be alone in his room, the room

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to the south of the subject was reported to have been unoccupied or cleared, and conflicting information was given whether the room to the west/behind the subject's room had been evacuated or cleared.

██████████ recalled that upon the SWAT team's arrival, the door to the subject's room was slightly ajar, but a hasp lock was still in place, preventing the door from fully opening. The subject's room had a large glass window in the front of the unit. The blinds behind the window were down, blocking any view into the unit from the front window.

Upon receiving the okay to deploy chemical munitions, ██████████ provided cover to two SWAT team members; Camden Sends (Officer Sends) and Sergeant Lee (Sergeant Lee). At that time, there was a black unmarked S.U.V. ██████████ believed it was a U.S. Marshall's vehicle, parked to the east of the subject's truck. Sergeant Lee deployed chemical munitions into the subject's motel room from near the front of this unmarked black S.U.V. and the subject's truck. This deployment of chemical munitions successfully knocked down the curtains behind the front window of the subject's room, allowing visibility into the room. Officer Sends also deployed chemical munitions into the room. ██████████ recalled that the SWAT team members did not get an audible response to the deployment of the chemical munitions. ██████████ stated once chemical munitions are deployed, there is generally an audible response from the subject, such as the sound of coughing. After deploying the chemical munitions, the three SWAT team members returned to cover.

Sergeant Lee then obtained a pepper ball gun loaded with glass breaking balls. Sergeant Lee, accompanied by ██████████ returned to their previous position near the subject's truck. Sergeant Lee then fired glass breaking balls from the pepper ball launcher in an attempt to break enough glass from the subject's front motel room window so that a drone could then enter through the opening. The glass balls further broke out pieces of the window but failed to create a large enough opening a drone could travel through. The two men returned to cover at the WYATT and brief period of quiet or lull in activity occurred. ██████████ reiterated it was unusual that there was no response from the subject during this period, due to the chemical munitions that were deployed into the room.

A drone was then flown by another law enforcement officer at/ into the subject's door. The drone was able to push the door partially open, allowing greater visibility into the room. ██████████ was surprised at the time because he believed the hasp lock on the door was still in place. ██████████ later became aware that another SWAT operator had defeated the hasp lock with a less than lethal munition prior to the drone hitting

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the door and pushing it open. [REDACTED] believed he was then at the rear driver's side of the Wyatt. [REDACTED] reported at this point that the subject had still not been seen or heard.

Once the drone hit the door and entered the room, [REDACTED] heard the sound of gunshots coming from inside the subject's room. [REDACTED] believed he heard more than four gunshots but did not feel comfortable guessing how many shots were fired at that time. [REDACTED] was able to see what looked like shots exiting the room through the roof at the time. [REDACTED] could not recall if he saw the drone go down or was just told it had gone down. In either event, [REDACTED] became aware the drone went down after entering the subject's room and gunshots were fired from within the subject's room.

When asked what he believed was happening at the moment he heard those gunshots, [REDACTED] stated that he believed the subject was firing but was not sure at the time if the subject was firing at the drone or at the officers outside the room.

Not long after, pepper ball rounds were fired by another unknown person into the subject's room.

At some point afterward, while [REDACTED] was stationed at the rear driver side of the WYATT, additional gunshots were heard. After this sound of gunfire, that [REDACTED] reported was being fired from within the subject's room, [REDACTED] heard a SWAT team member yell out in pain and stated he was shot. [REDACTED] heard other members of the SWAT team talking as they rendered aid and applied a tourniquet to the injured officer.

[REDACTED] explained that to reach medical assistance and exit the scene, the shot and injured officer would have to leave cover and cross in front of the potential line of fire of the subject, further exposing himself and assisting officers to possible gunfire from the subject. In preparation to extract the injured officer and move him through this danger zone, an unknown SWAT operator requested permission to utilize suppressive fire during the extraction so that the injured officer could be taken to safety. The request to utilize suppressive fire was granted and once a group of officers began to remove the injured officer, other SWAT operators fired into the subject's room. [REDACTED] himself did not fire at this time. [REDACTED] did not know who fired at the time and his personal concern in that moment was not knowing where the subject was within the room and not knowing whether the room directly behind the subject's was confirmed to be cleared.

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After the injured officer was safely removed from the room, another dead period or lull in activity occurred. Additional SWAT operators began to arrive. [REDACTED] himself then made his way towards the front passenger side of the WYATT. From this location, [REDACTED] was able to see damage to the exterior of the north side wall of the subject's room, indicative of the subject having fired out of the room through the wall towards the neighboring Cracker Barrel restaurant. [REDACTED] further recalled observing civilians exiting the motel rooms directly across from the front of the subject's motel room along with additional law enforcement now having arrived and staged near the edge of the Cracker Barrel lot along the outer perimeter of the scene.

The sound of gunfire coming from within the subject's room outward then started again. [REDACTED] recalled hearing the sound of the subject reloading inside the room as well during this time. At that time, there was another command given by Capt. Marino to engage with directed or suppressive fire. [REDACTED] reiterated at this point, in his recounting of events, that the subject had already shot out of his room on three separate occasions, including having shot and injured an officer. Further additional civilians were present in the surrounding area and the backdrop of where the subject had fired. [REDACTED] stated (43:39):

"So yes, I did have, um, I, I, I believed um, the suspect was uh, a threat, a deadly, deadly threat to the civilians, uh, other police and law enforcement, EMS, first responders, SWAT, and myself. Um, and it started, you know, I know there were other shooters, I, I wasn't, I didn't witness any other shooters other than during this time frame. Uh, we were utilizing cover. Uh, [REDACTED] first engaged from kind of this area from north to south into room 2, 220, and then once he came back to cover is when I came out and engaged. Um, just outside the, uh front passenger side of the WYATT, um from north to south, into room 220 kinda southwest type direction. Try to keep my shot group low. Um, where I thought the suspect would be and I don't recall if I was shooting left to right or right to left. General area where I thought my shot group could be most effective at stopping the deadly threat that was being presented to all of us. Again, estimation, maybe ten rounds. Um, I went back to cover. Cease fire command. I believe there was a cease fire command. Once I got back to cover, I did a reload with retention."

[REDACTED] did not fire his weapon after this point.

When asked how he felt throughout the incident, [REDACTED] stated he felt officers had a duty to resolve the situation professionally and responsibly. [REDACTED] was concerned about [REDACTED] who had been shot. [REDACTED] was also concerned

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about the many people who were outside in the potential line of the subject's fire. [REDACTED] expressed that all the bullets fired by the subject were going to strike somewhere and he was concerned about where all of those bullets would ultimately hit. [REDACTED] recalled his realization that the incident was deadly and anyone of the people there could have been struck by the gunfire.

After the final exchange of gunfire, a robot was sent into the room. The SWAT operator who had control of the robot reported locating the suspect with the robot. The robot operator reported that the subject appeared deceased. A group of officers, including [REDACTED] ultimately entered the room around this time after deploying flashbang grenades.

The SWAT operators located the subject on the ground behind the bed with no signs of life. [REDACTED] saw apparent gunshot wounds to the subject's person upon entering the room and seeing him for the first time. [REDACTED] recalled seeing a black revolver on top of the bed directly accessible to the subject. There was also a small fire in the room when officers entered. Another SWAT team member also called out that the subject still possessed another handgun in his hand. The handgun in the subject's hand was removed from his grasp and placed in a corner of the room away from the subject, along with the revolver. The fire was then put out and EMS entered and checked the subject for signs of life and found none.

Employment and Training Records

[REDACTED] was hired by the PTPD as a full time Police Officer on [REDACTED]. PTPD is the only law enforcement agency that [REDACTED] has worked for.

[REDACTED] attended and successfully completed the Ohio Police Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) Basic Training Class [REDACTED] at the University of Akron Police Academy. [REDACTED] also took and passed the OPOTA certification examination on [REDACTED], and was issued Peace Officer Certificate [REDACTED] by the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission.

[REDACTED] has completed a number of advanced training classes from a variety of sources.

On November 6, 2024, [REDACTED] qualified with the PTPD on the following weapon:

Daniel Defense DDM4 - 5.56 - Serial # [REDACTED]

On May 22, 2024, [REDACTED] Qualified with the PTPD on the following weapons:

Glock 34 - 9mm - Serial [REDACTED]

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Glock 27 - .40 caliber - Serial [REDACTED]

Based on the records received, [REDACTED] has no discipline related to the use of force.

Based on the records received and reviewed, it is noted that [REDACTED] was a duly certified and sworn Ohio Peace Officer at the time of the officer involved critical incident.

For additional information, refer to the audio and video recorded interview, [REDACTED] personnel file, and the Investigative Reports titled *2024-12-06: Involved Officer Interview* - [REDACTED] and *2024-12-19: Review of Involved [REDACTED] Personnel File*.

[Stark County Sheriff's Office](#) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] has been a commissioned law enforcement officer for approximately [REDACTED] years, and he has been employed with the Stark County Sheriff's Office since [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was also assigned to the Canton Regional SWAT Team and has been a member for approximately three years. [REDACTED] provided a written statement and responded to follow-up questions with agents after reading his statement so that it could be audio recorded.

[Stark County Sheriff's Office](#) [REDACTED] Interview

[REDACTED] had his BWC activated throughout the duration of the incident. However, the video did not visually capture any portion of the shooting incident. Additionally, the camera angle for [REDACTED] BWC became obstructed during the recording and nothing could be visually observed after 51:22. Due to this, his BWC did not visually capture the actions of Vanest leading up to or during the time [REDACTED] fired. Percussive sounds could be heard throughout the duration of the video and no determination based upon the BWC video could be made as to which percussive sounds were the result of [REDACTED] firing.

[\[REDACTED\] Interview](#)

The following excerpts were copied directly from [REDACTED] written statement:

"On the day of this incident, I had volunteered to help train new members of SWAT. I reported to the SWAT training center around 8:30 a.m. Around 11:00 a.m., [REDACTED] said he had gotten a call from the U.S. Marshals informing him of a barricaded suspect. The Marshals said the suspect had opened the door to his motel room and pointed a weapon at them. [REDACTED]"

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██████ told me and other members of SWAT to start getting our gear together since we might be responding to that incident.

The suspect was barricaded at the Roadway Inn motel located at 6880 Sunset Strip Ave NW in Canton. ██████ told me to head there before the rest of SWAT and liaison with the Marshals. I left SWAT and arrived at the motel around 11:30 a.m. The motel is made up of several buildings. All the rooms are accessible from the outside. The suspect was barricaded inside Room 220. That room was located in the northeastern most part of the middle building within the complex.

I parked and joined the Marshals. Their vehicle was parked parallel to and outside the suspect's room. They were covering the suspect's room from behind their vehicle. They were repeatedly ordering the suspect to come out of the room, unarmed, with his hands in the air. The Marshals told me the suspect was still barricaded in the room and had not come out since he pointed the weapon out of the door. They also told me he had multiple felony warrants for his arrest.

The door to the suspect's room appeared cracked open several inches; it seemed as if the latch was wedged between the door and the door jam, keeping it propped open. There was also a large window to the left of the door. At that time, the curtains were closed, and I could not see inside. The suspect's pickup truck was backed into a parking spot immediately in front of his room.

I let the rest of SWAT know where we were located. Not long later, several SWAT members, including Captain Marino and ██████, arrived in a large, armored vehicle similar to a Bearcat (referred to by SWAT as the WYATT). I had not seen or heard the suspect since I arrived on scene. The Marshals moved their vehicle, and the WYATT was parked at a southwesterly angle, right outside and facing the suspect's room. Once on scene, Captain Marino took operational control of the barricade. The remaining SWAT members arrived at the scene a short time later.

Captain Marino or ██████ announced that gas would be deployed into the room and for officers to put on gas masks. Initially, I put on my gas mask, but Captain Marino or ██████

██████ instructed me to cover the suspect's room from the hatch of the WYATT. To ensure I had a clear view of the suspect's room, I removed my mask.



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I took a position in the hatch of the WYATT. From there, I had an elevated and clear view of the exterior of the suspect's room. Other officers covered the suspect's room from behind the WYATT; one of those officers covered the room with a sniper. Some of the SWAT trainees were inside the WYATT. I believe Captain Marino and [REDACTED] remained in the front driver and passenger seats throughout most of the incident. By that time, officers had also evacuated the motel rooms immediately surrounding the suspect's room. The Marshals believed that the suspect was alone in the room.

I had not seen or heard the suspect since I got to the scene. Officers had tried calling the phone to the suspect's room as well as the suspect's cell phone, but he never picked up or otherwise communicated with officers. Once everyone was in position, and after the suspect had refused to come out of the room or otherwise communicate with officers, one or more officers deployed multiple glass breaking balls at the window to the suspect's room. After some of the window had been broken, suddenly the suspect fired one or more rounds from inside the room. I could not see the suspect at that time, and but it appeared he was shooting out of the front of the room. Officers yelled that the suspect was shooting, but I do not believe any officers fired back at that time.

Officers continued firing glass-breaking rounds at the window. In response, every few minutes the suspect would fire a round or two out the front of the room, but no officers had yet fired back. Once sections of the window were broken, multiple pepper balls and canisters of gas were deployed into the room. The suspect continued periodically firing out of the room.

One of the officers used a drone to nudge and prop open the suspect's door. Even once opened, though, I could not see the suspect. I could see some of the bed inside the room: The bed was positioned near the middle of the room such that the head of the bed was against the southern wall and the foot of the bed faced the northern wall. There appeared to be a large pile of clothes and other objects several feet inside the entrance to the room, on the eastern side of the bed. An officer flew the drone into the bedroom moments later, but the suspect immediately shot and disabled it.

About 30-40 minutes after glass-breaking balls were first shot at the window, the suspect again fired out the front of the room. The instant he did so, an officer loudly yelled out in pain, repeatedly yelling he was shot. (I later learned that officer was [REDACTED]) An order was given to deploy pepper balls into the room. I deployed multiple rounds of pepper balls while other officers



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provided aid to [REDACTED]. A brief time later, [REDACTED] gave one or more officers an order to lay down suppressive fire into the suspect's room so that [REDACTED] could safely be transported from behind cover to an ambulance. Officer(s) fired into the room and [REDACTED] was transported from the scene. After the suspect shot [REDACTED] either [REDACTED] or Captain Marino instructed me and the other officers to fire if we saw the suspect inside the room (unless, of course, the suspect was surrendering or otherwise showing signs of compliance).

Some additional time passed. More gas may have been deployed during that time, but at one point the suspect yet again fired out of the room. A moment later I heard what sounded like him reloading his weapon and an instant later I saw him pop up in the southwestern corner of the room, by the bathroom wall. I could only see the bottom half of the suspect's torso, but I could see he was moving (north) towards the foot of the bed. I believed the suspect intended to continue his deadly attack on me and the other officers and it was then that I fired.

I stopped firing when the suspect disappeared from my view. I quickly reloaded. (I believe I dropped my spent magazine inside the WYATT and was handed another magazine by a SWAT officer.) But within minutes the suspect fired out of the room again. This time, the round penetrated the top of the door, and I felt the round pass by my head, narrowly missing me. It seemed the suspect had shot directly at me; and I believe at that time Captain Marino or [REDACTED] ordered me and the other officers to put cover fire into the room, and I fired where I had seen the suspect moments earlier near the foot of the bed.

The other officers and I stopped firing moments later. I reloaded again. I could not see the suspect at that time, and he was not presently firing his weapon. Not long later, multiple members of SRT arrived at the scene in a Bearcat. The WYATT was briefly pulled backwards to make room for the Bearcat. The Bearcat pushed the suspect's pickup truck out of the way and parked parallel to the suspect's room. Captain Marino positioned the WYATT nearer to the northern side of the suspect's room.

Once the WYATT was pulled forward, I left the hatch and covered the room from inside the vehicle. From my location I still had a view of the front of the room as well as through the open door. SRT deployed some type of nonlethal munitions at the window to continue breaking glass. They planned to deploy another drone into the room. In response, the suspect continued firing rounds out of the room.



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Before SRT could deploy their drone, the suspect fired out of the room again. In response, one or more officers in the SRT Bearcat opened fire into the suspect's room. I could not see the suspect at that time, so I did not shoot. Once those officers stopped firing, I did not see or hear anything inside the room. Nor did the suspect shoot any more rounds.

Officers believed the suspect might be incapacitated. A robot was deployed into the room, but the clothes and objects inside the entrance blocked its path. SRT threw a series of flashbangs into the room which moved the clothes and freed up a path for the robot. The robot maneuvered into the room and officers could see the suspect: He did not appear to be moving and seemed unresponsive.

Captain Marino instructed me and other members of SWAT to clear the room. I put my gas mask back on since the room was filled with gas. I entered the room with the other officers. The suspect was on his side, facing the doorway in the western part of the room. He did not appear to be breathing and had multiple wounds on the lower half of his body as well as his hands. He was still holding a handgun in his (I believe) left hand. Officers also found another handgun inside his room.

One of the flashbangs had started a small fire near the head of the bed. I quickly grabbed a fire extinguisher and put out the fire. Medics (who had been staged nearby) arrived on scene a brief time later. I left the room once medics arrived. This ended my involvement with this incident.

I was transported from the scene to the SCSO. A captain with the SCSO took photographs of me for BCI's investigation. Sgt. Lee took additional photos and collected my weapon as evidence for BCI to process.

I believe I fired approximately 40 rounds during this incident. I fired those rounds over two volleys. I believe I fired approximately 8-10 rounds during the first volley and 29-30 rounds over the second volley. I fired those rounds in rapid succession: I would estimate that about 2-3 seconds passed between the first and last shot in the first volley and approximately 5-6 seconds passed between the shots in the second volley. I fired those rounds in a southwesterly direction. I would estimate that I was about 15-20 feet from the suspect at the times I fired. I fired those rounds from the top hatch of the WYATT, which is elevated about 12 feet off the ground.

My target for the first series of shots was the suspect's center mass, though I could only see the lower half of his torso. Though I did not have a clear view of



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the suspect during the second volley, I fired at his last known location in the room. I believe I used my red dot sites. My backdrop was the interior of the room. By the time I fired, officers had already twice swept and evacuated the surrounding rooms; officers also believed the suspect was alone in the room. At no time did I ever see or hear anyone else inside the room. There were no civilians or officers in my line of fire.

The incident occurred in the middle of the afternoon on an overcast day; while there was plentiful lighting outside, I believe most or all the lights were off inside the suspect's room. At times, it was also difficult to see inside due to the gas deployments. I recall my gun's flashlight being on during the incident. I fired using a two-handed grip.

I fired from a standing position. I was not moving. I fired from the left side of the WYATT hatch such that the right side of my body and lower torso had some cover and concealment; the upper left side of my body was entirely exposed. I am not certain where every officer was positioned during this incident; but I know several SWAT trainees were in the WYATT and several SWAT officers were covering the room from behind the WYATT. While the WYATT provided some cover and concealment to those officers, the suspect was still able to shoot and strike one of those officers.

At the times I fired my weapon, I believed the suspect posed a deadly threat to my life and to the lives of the other officers on scene. Before arriving on scene, U.S. Marshals reported that the suspect had presented a firearm at them. The Marshals also told me that the suspect had several felony warrants for his arrest. During the barricade, officers gave the suspect numerous loud commands to come out of the room with his hands in the air. Officers also tried calling the suspect. But he never came out of the room or, to my knowledge, communicated with officers.

In fact, as time went on the suspect only became more violent. He fired numerous rounds out the front of the room in response to the glass-breaking rounds and gas deployments. He also shot the drone deployed into the room. Even after firing multiple rounds, though, officers initially did not return fire, giving the suspect ample opportunities to surrender.

But one of the many times the suspect fired, he shot and struck one of the SWAT officers, seriously injuring him. I immediately heard that officer yell out in pain that he had been shot. I deployed numerous pepper balls into the room, and a



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brief time later one or more officers fired numerous rounds into the room so the officer could be transported away from cover to an ambulance. But even then the suspect did not surrender or give any signs of compliance.

Once the officer was shot, Captain Marino or [REDACTED] instructed me and the other members of SWAT that unless the suspect surrendered we were to fire if we saw him as it was clear he intended to continue shooting at officers and the risk of death and/or great bodily harm had become too high. Right before I fired the first series of shots, the suspect had fired a round out of the room. I then heard what sounded like him reloading his weapon before he popped up a moment later. I believed he intended to shoot at me and/or one of the other officers, and that I and possibly others would be seriously injured or killed, and it was then that I fired.

The suspect did not give up or otherwise give any signs of compliance after I fired. In fact, only a few minutes later the suspect fired again; and this time I saw the round penetrate the top of the door to the suspect's room and felt the round whiz by my head such that I believed the suspect had just shot at me. An order for cover fire was given, and I again fired to stop the suspect's deadly attack.

At the times I fired my weapon at the suspect, I did not believe I had any other reasonable alternative to protect my life and the lives of the officers from the deadly threat presented by the suspect's actions.

I might have heard the suspect's name during this incident, but I do not presently recall it. In any case, I do not believe I had ever met the suspect previously, nor do I believe I have ever encountered him before".

After [REDACTED] finished reading his statement, he was asked questions to clarify some of his observations. During that portion of the interview, he provided the following information:

When he made references to seeing or hearing the subject firing at them he differentiated that gunfire by the sound and seeing debris come from the subject's location. He explained:

"So, when the suspect fired, it was muffled because he was inside the room and when he would shoot outside of the room, you could see the glass coming out towards, towards the parking lot. Um, or not, not coming inside the room to where somebody would be shooting in. Um, also he, he shot multiple rounds

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through the, through the roof and the side of the building and you could see the pieces of wood, um, exploding off the building coming out in the opposite direction that the suspect was in." (23:04).

The commands that were initially when he first arrived were verbal from the officers present. Once the SWAT team arrived with the WYATT the commands were given over a public address system.

When [REDACTED] deployed pepper balls, he fired them in rapid succession from the hatch on the top of the WYATT. He explained the pepper ball gun was comparable to a paint ball gun and it was operated with compressed air.

Most of his observations throughout the incident were from his position in the turret at the top of the Wyatt. Since [REDACTED] was positioned behind him, [REDACTED] was unaware of [REDACTED] location when [REDACTED] was shot.

Employment and Training Records

[REDACTED] was hired by the SCSO as a full-time Deputy on [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] had previous law enforcement experience with the SCSO (Reserve Deputy from [REDACTED]) and with the Magnolia Police Department (Part-Time Officer from [REDACTED]).

[REDACTED] attended and successfully completed the Ohio Police Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) Basic Training Class [REDACTED] at Stark State College. [REDACTED] also took and passed the OPOTA certification examination on [REDACTED], and was issued Peace Officer Certificate [REDACTED] by the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission.

[REDACTED] has completed a number of advanced training classes from a variety of sources.

On September 25, 2024, [REDACTED] qualified on the following weapons:

- Glock 22C - .40 caliber - Serial # [REDACTED]
- Remington 870 - 12 gauge - Serial # [REDACTED]
- AR 15 (no manufacture listed) - 5.56 - Serial # [REDACTED]

Based on the records received, [REDACTED] has no discipline related to the use of force.

Based on the records received and reviewed, it is noted that [REDACTED] was a duly certified and sworn Ohio Peace Officer at the time of the officer involved critical incident.

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For additional information, refer to the audio recording, the written statement, [REDACTED] personnel file, and the Investigative Reports titled *2024-11-27: Involved Officer Interview* - [REDACTED] and *2024-12-19: Review of Involved [REDACTED] Personnel File*.

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Carroll County Sheriff's Office [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] has been a commissioned law enforcement officer for [REDACTED] years. He has been employed with the Carroll County Sheriff's Office for the last [REDACTED]. He was also assigned to the Canton Regional SWAT Team as a [REDACTED].

Interview

On November 18, 2024, [REDACTED] was assisting with SWAT school at SWAT Headquarters when [REDACTED] relayed that the U.S. Marshalls had an armed barricaded subject at a location, and they were requesting SWAT. [REDACTED] did not have a radio that day, so he did not receive information over the radio during the incident. He remembered hearing other officers talk about some of the details that led to the incident. He was aware the subject was a white male approximately 65 years of age who had flashed a gun at the Marshalls when they tried to serve an arrest warrant. He believed the SWAT team was requested shortly before 1130 hours.

After they arrived, he was initially at the back of their armored vehicle, Canton 11. They were doing some planning while additional officers were arriving and funneling into various positions. They began deploying gas into the room. [REDACTED] moved to the back of an SUV parked in front of the subject's room with [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] did not like his position and returned to the back of the armored vehicle.

At some point, he heard gunshots and believed they were coming out of the room, past them, and toward the Cracker Barrel restaurant. At that time, he was at the back of Canton 11 while [REDACTED] was positioned at the back of the black SUV. He yelled at [REDACTED] and asked if he wanted his sniper gear. [REDACTED] indicated he did. Officers in Canton 11 retrieved the sniper gear and gave it to [REDACTED] who ran it to [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] then set up along another building of rooms east of the subject's location. [REDACTED] heard more gunshots and believed the subject was shooting at them. [REDACTED] then took down his position and moved back to his original position behind the black SUV. While [REDACTED] was setting up at the rear passenger side corner of the SUV, the subject shot [REDACTED]. Officers returned fire. Other officers began treating [REDACTED] and he was evacuated to an ambulance.

As the event proceeded, [REDACTED] learned they had sent a drone into the room and the subject had shot it down. He also heard that each time they tried to turn the drone back on the subject he shot at it. [REDACTED] explained there was a period

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where nothing was happening, and then the subject started firing again. At that time, he was positioned behind [REDACTED] near the front passenger side of Canton 11. [REDACTED] fired and then turned toward him with his magazine. [REDACTED] told [REDACTED] he was up. [REDACTED] explained:

"So, he moved and then I took a position kind of on the front, like where the windshield meets the hood of the armor. Uh, there was a shield across. I put my gun up. So, I can see like through a little hole and I can see diagonally through the door and I can see the, uh, this is north, so I can see the west wall.

The west wall, yeah. Um, from like right here, I can see through the door into the west wall. I can just, you know, like half a wall. So, all I can see, um, at this time, [REDACTED] comes kind of out the side. We're talking about plans and whatnot. I asked him if I can take up [REDACTED] gun. He's like, Nope. Need you here. Um, I said at that time, like, we're directing fire back when he shoots. And he's like, standby on that. So, uh, he kind of sticks his head into Captain Marino. He's like, 'we're we're directing fire, directed fire?' Uh, captain Marino says, 'Yes, accurate direct fire is our response.' Uh, another round of shooting, uh, comes out of the, the room. Um, I can tell you that I leaned, uh, out, I leaned out from the right side of the armor, uh, knowing that like we were getting information that he was on the floor between the bed and the wall and they were calling outside of the room or whatnot.

One, two, three, and four. So, I knew that he was kind of in the back of this room and he was kind of on the floor. So, uh, the side of this building, like I'll say it's three feet up, has like a decorative piece of wood. I don't know what you want to call it. Uh, but I kind of focused on that thinking he had to be below it. Um, so when I lean out, I shoot a volley. Um, so I, I skipped some instructor certificates, but one of 'em is vehicle CQB instructor where they specifically kind of teach you how to shoot through pillars of cars and hard objects and how to effectively hit something. So, I fire my first volley and I try to keep 'em like right in a group on that, that three-foot-high spot. Uh, I don't know how many I shot in the first volley, but I know I fired and I quit.

I reassessed to make sure my rounds were hitting where I wanted 'em to hit and then there was still shooting going on. Uh, I then fired my second volley, uh, gun locks back. I get outta line, drop my magazine, another guy steps up, get my gun loaded, uh, just in time to hear and uh, reiterate the ceasefire that they called. So, they called it ceasefire after that volley. Uh, so I just get back in line. Uh, started doing some, you know, some team leader stuff. We're devising a

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couple different plans we might try. Uh, OSP was just north of us, so, uh, that's the SR. SRT-1. It kind of arrives over here on scene and uh, we come up with a plan. It eventually drives over and pushes the Dodge out of the way and takes up some hardcover in front. 'cause this guy's just shooting all the neighboring units and, uh, us and the restaurant like, so we tried to wall this place off so that the rounds wouldn't, you know, strike any people or, uh, you know, neighboring, neighboring rooms or whatnot" (29:42).

██████████ was asked to expound on the directive for directed fire from Captain Marino. He explained:

"So, uh, ██████████ had just fired, uh, I believe ██████████ too, but I didn't see ██████████ fire. So when I switched, when I switched ██████████ out, 'cause he was reloading and I took up his position and we're watching this kind of like a lull in the action, so to say, and I'm kind of looking in at that angle and I, you know, I wanted to make sure that, um, you know, if we were gonna take that action, that they wanted us to take that action. Uh, you know, we try not to, I, well as a team leader, like I don't want to give instructions that aren't, uh, what the team as a whole would want to do. Uh, so ██████████ uhh, ██████████ was behind me and that's when I turned to him like, we're, we're returning on, on being shot at. And he's like, we're gonna check that. And, or he, I think he said, we're gonna check that. And that's when he asked ██████████ So, the armored door's open on the side and I'm, there's a, a man door right here, like kind of almost in the middle of the truck. Captain Marino was kind of sitting inside of it, you know, as his, uh, command post. So, ██████████ opens that door and I'm the door's kind of up here so I can kind of do this. And, uh, he says, yes, we're accurately returning directed fire. Um, should he shoot again? I think that was the gist of really that was about it. There wasn't like a huge discussion that I was part of. Okay. I was just kind of like a Yep. We're going to, I believe his words were accurate, direct, directed, accurate fire" (42:44).

At some point, OSP's armored vehicle arrived and was positioned in front of the room to help block the subject's rounds because the subject was firing, and his rounds were going toward other buildings, people, and the restaurant. ██████████ had taken up ██████████ rifle and was positioned further east of the subject's room near a dumpster. The subject then started firing at ██████████

He recalled that at another point officers were saying they could see the subject moving between the bed and the wall. He heard another exchange of gunfire followed by a lot of silence. They devised a plan to approach the room and deploy another

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camera. Once the camera was in, it appeared the subject was down. He and several other officers entered the room, called for medics, and they determined the subject was deceased.

██████████ described the training he received related to accurate and directed fire. He stated:

"We do, uh, a maneuver. We go to Ravenna Arsenal every year, probably for the last two or three years as a, the whole, so when the team trains, there's 35 of us, we go two days a month. So, the team is split during those into like 15-man teams so that everybody's work can accommodate. There are people being gone. But one week a year we all go together. Um, so that one week we spend in Ravenna using all the shoot houses and all their ranges and stuff so we can all be together. And, uh, ██████████ ran the, uh, fire maneuver type drill that, that year last, this well be this year. Uh, he ran that drill. And, um, essentially a group of guys returns accurate fire at a target. So, another group can move or they can, uh, set up what they're setting up. Um, not necessarily that you see the target, but per se there'd be somebody inside of a window and they know that we're shooting, they're shooting out at us, but we can't directly see them. But in order for us to gain an advantage to set up an, uh, a maneuver or to protect who's out there, we would directly and accurately, uh, you know, shoot for a better, like where that gunfire is coming from" (46:02).

Throughout the incident, ██████████ was unable to see the subject inside the room. He did not hear the subject say anything at any point. There were numerous PA announcements given where they announced their presence and warned that if the subject did not come out, gas would be deployed.

██████████ explained that being shot at "elevated the game." The subject was shooting at their sniper and had shot another officer. It was clear to him the subject intended to kill them and ██████████ was in fear for his life and the lives of the public.

Employment and Training Records

██████████ was hired by the CCSO as a full time Deputy on ██████████
██████████ also had previous law enforcement experience with a number of other law enforcement agencies.

██████████ attended and successfully completed the Ohio Police Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) Basic Training Class ██████████ at Traynor's Police Academy. ██████████
██████████ also took and passed the OPOTA certification examination on ██████████

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and was issued Peace Officer Certificate [REDACTED] by the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission.

[REDACTED] has completed a number of advanced training classes from a variety of sources.

On October 22, 204, [REDACTED] qualified with the CCSO on the following weapons:

- Glock 19 - 9mm - No serial number listed
- Springfield Armory Prodigy - 9mm - Serial # [REDACTED]
- Aero Freedom - 5.56 - Serial # [REDACTED]
- HK MP 5 - 9mm - no serial number listed
- Remington 870 - 12 gauge - no serial number listed

Based on the records received, [REDACTED] has no discipline related to the use of force.

Based on the records received and reviewed from OPOTA, it is noted that [REDACTED] was a duly certified and sworn Ohio Peace Officer at the time of the officer involved critical incident.

For additional information, refer to the audio and video recorded interview, [REDACTED] personnel file, and the Investigative Reports titled *2024-12-06: Involved Officer Interview* - [REDACTED] and *2024-12-19: Review of Involved [REDACTED] Personnel File*.

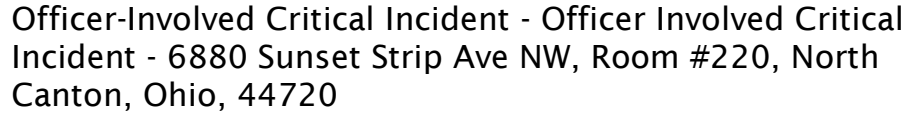
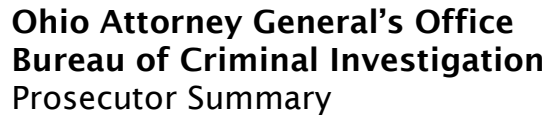
Subject Information – James Vanest

This section contains information about the subject, James Vanest.

James Vanest – Background, Computerized Criminal History

Background information was compiled on Vanest. This information included researching past police reports involving the subject, searching criminal history records, court records (if applicable), open/closed-source database inquiries, and social media posts. The information gathered was obtained from the BCI Criminal Intelligence Unit, Jackson County West Virginia Sheriff's Office, Perry Township Police Department, Ohio State Highway Patrol and the Mansfield Police Department (MPD).

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The Jackson County West Virginia Sheriff's Office was contacted and provided a copy of a police report from a prior encounter with Vanest. The report number was 24-0000459. The report related to a July 12, 2024, traffic stop and subsequent arrest of Vanest for two (2) counts of prohibited person in possession of a firearm.

The Ohio State Highway Patrol provided a report (16 442061 0201). This report detailed an allegation against Vanest while he was an inmate in the Mansfield Correctional Institution. The allegation was that Vanest put feces in the coffee of another inmate. Ultimately, the case was closed due to insufficient evidence.

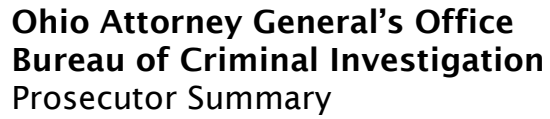
Computerized Criminal History (CCH) and/or Court Records:

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Supervisor Approval: SAS Charles Moran #67

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For additional information, refer to the agency incident reports and the Investigative Report titled *2024-11-21: Prior law enforcement contacts and social media*.

James Vanest – Autopsy

This autopsy report was authored by Harry Campbell, Chief Investigator for the Stark County Coroner's Office and Chief Deputy Coroner, Anthony Bertin. The "CAUSE OF DEATH" for Vanest was listed as [REDACTED] The "MANNER OF DEATH" was listed as [REDACTED]

CAUSE OF DEATH:

I

M

[REDACTED]

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The information deemed to be the most relevant to this inquiry is summarized below for the convenience of the reader. However, as the author is not a doctor, it is suggested that the report be viewed in its entirety to ensure no pertinent information has been omitted or described out-of-context.

A death certificate was included in the report and listed to "time of death" for Vanest as hours on page 4. The doctor who certified the death was Ronald Robert Rusnak, MD.

26a. Certifier (Check only one) <input type="checkbox"/> Certifying Physician: To the best of my knowledge, death occurred at the time, date, and place; and due to the cause(s) and manner stated. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coroner or Medical Examiner: On the basis of examination and/or investigation, in my opinion, death occurred at the time, date, and place; and due to the cause(s) and manner stated.			
26b. Time of Death 14:51	26c. Date Pronounced Dead (Month/Day/Year) NOVEMBER 18, 2024	26d. Was Case Referred to Medical Examiner or Coroner? YES	
26e. Certifier Name and Title RONALD ROBERT RUSNAK MD		26f. License number 35.057165	26g. Date Signed (Month/Day/Year) NOVEMBER 25, 2024
27. Name and Address of Person who Completed Cause of Death RONALD ROBERT RUSNAK, 3053 CLEVELAND AVE SW, CANTON, OH 44707			

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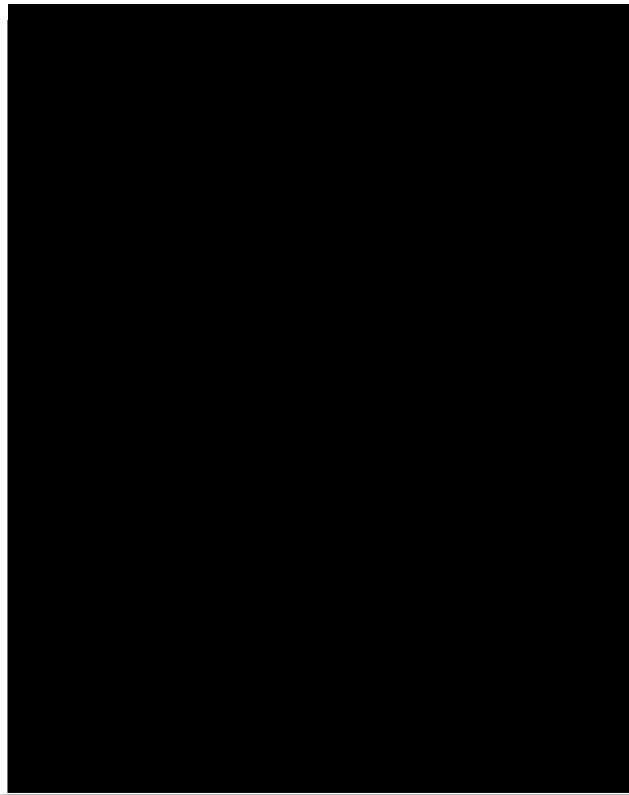
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The autopsy was performed on November 19, 2024, at 0900 hours by Daniel Sullivan, MD.

Vanest sustained [REDACTED]. The report indicated there was [REDACTED]. Below are screen shots of the "ANATOMIC DIAGNOSES" section contained on pages 6 and 7 of the report.



Page 6

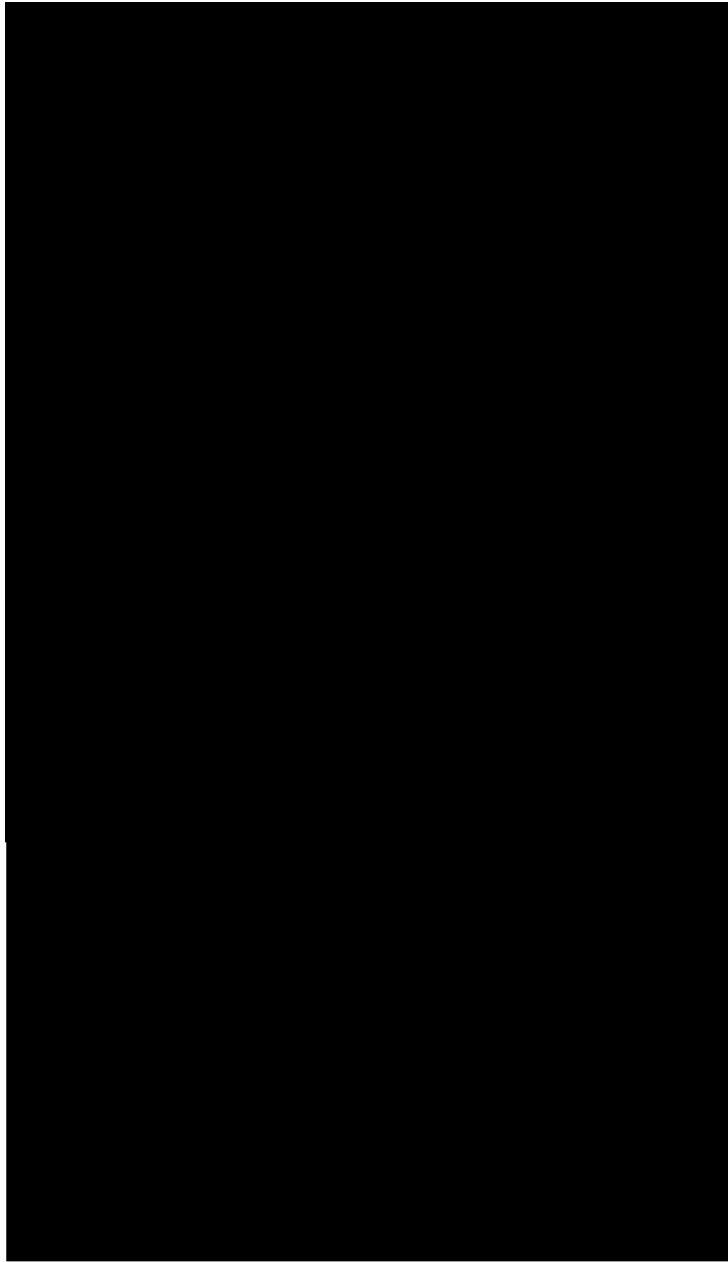
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The "TOXICOLOGY REPORT" contained the following pertinent information:

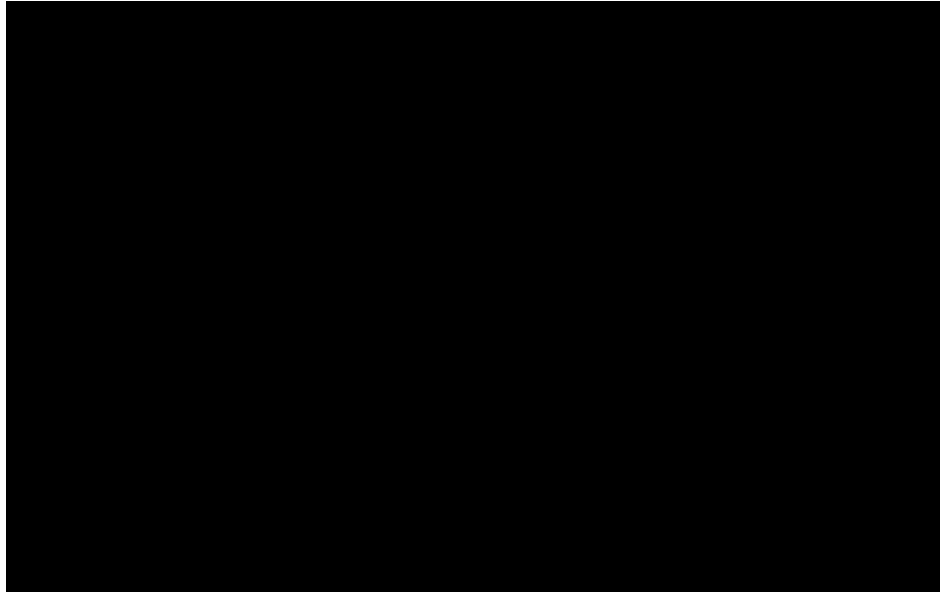
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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] (Singh & Saadabadi,
2023⁸).

⁷ Huecker MR, Smiley A, Saadabadi A. [REDACTED] [Updated 2024 Sep 2]. In: StatPearls [Internet]. Treasure Island (FL): StatPearls Publishing; 2025 Jan-. Available from: [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/\[REDACTED\]/](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/[REDACTED]/)

⁸ Singh HK, Saadabadi A. [REDACTED] [Updated 2023 Feb 13]. In: StatPearls [Internet]. Treasure Island (FL): StatPearls Publishing; 2025 Jan-. Available from: [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/\[REDACTED\]/](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/[REDACTED]/)

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Dispatch-Related Information

This section contains dispatch-related information associated with the incident. The information reviewed was obtained from the Jackson Township Police Department and the Canton Police Department.

Agency CAD Reports

The attached CAD reports documented times and personnel assigned to the call. The report contains the dispatch, en route and arrival times of the officers who responded to the incident. Below are the listed agencies' CAD information:

Canton Police Department (CPD) CAD Report

- Incident # [REDACTED]
- The call was initiated at 11:30:36 AM.
- The call type was entered as "Surveillance/Observation."

Jackson Township Police Department (JTPD) CAD Report

- Incident [REDACTED]
- The call was initiated at 10:54 AM
- The Call type was entered as "Assist Other Agency."

Dispatch Radio Traffic

Multiple audio files were provided that were related to the shooting incident. Only audio files that contained evidentiary value have been included below. For a review of all audio files provided refer to the radio traffic, phone call, and Investigative Report titled *2024-12-31: Dispatch Related Information*.

Phone Call to Jackson Township Police Department

File Name: *JTPD-[REDACTED].phone_call* (Duration: 2 minutes, 12 seconds)

United States Marshalls Service (USMS) Deputy Marshal Josh Vockas called the Jackson Township dispatcher to advise that they were at the Rodeway Inn about to execute an arrest warrant on James Vanest. Deputy Marshal Vockas provided Vanest's information to the dispatcher and requested that a marked Jackson Township Police unit respond to their location to be present in the area when they execute the arrest warrant.

Jackson Township Police Department Radio Traffic

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File name: JTPD- [REDACTED] radio_traffic_(Duration: 47 minutes, 6 seconds)

Audio file time	Unit	Description
0:00:00	Dispatch	Dispatched unit 81 to the Rodeway Inn to standby while the US Marshalls executed the arrest warrant.
0:02:09	81	"Subject inside does have a gun. They're calling for SWAT, we can get everybody here enroute."
0:02:47	81	"Pepper balls been deployed inside the room."
0:03:34	81	"...they got him, uh, on the bed with a firearm pointed toward them. Pepper ball inside the room and they're on the phone with SWAT now."
0:07:54	Unknown	"Shots fired! Shots fired! Shooting at the drone through the wall, everybody down."
0:08:10	Unknown	"Drone is down, gas deployed."
0:08:31	Unknown	"Need medics!"
0:08:33	Unknown	"Officer Down!"
0:08:54	Unknown	"Shots fired! shots fired!"
0:12:21	Unknown	"Shots fired again, shots fired out the front door. if anybody's in line, get out."
0:12:26	Unknown	"Shooting out the north wall, towards cracker barrel."
0:13:39	Unknown	"Just to advise, another drone is going in. He did start shooting last time. That was him firing out. That was him again."
0:13:46	[REDACTED]	"That's OSP trooper shooting into the apartment."
0:14:03	Unknown	"Drone flashbangs."
0:14:12	Unknown	"Suspect's down."
0:16:43	Jackson Medic 1	"Jackson Medic 1, mark pronounced at 1403 by Dr. Galla of Mercy."
0:16:54	Jackson Medic 1	"Could you put in a call for the coroner..."

Canton Regional SWAT Radio Traffic

File Name: 2412364 SWAT Radio (Duration: 2 hours, 58 minutes and 15 seconds)

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Audio File Time	Unit	Description
0:05:17	Unknown	Relayed information to dispatch regarding the subject James Vanest. Vanest had ATF warrants for firearms charges and was also a suspect in a cold case homicide. It was also mentioned that he was last seen inside the hotel room with a firearm.
0:09:06	Unknown	Advised that they had used a key to open the door which enabled them to see the male inside with a gun.
0:20:38	Unknown	Advised outside units that the subject was, "pointing a gun at the officers from the, uh, bed."
0:26:07	Unknown	"yea, Come up to the, uh, North side. Come from the Northwest, you'll see the Wyatt."
0:30:10	5	"Yea, we've made multiple announcements over the PA, We're at room 220 at the Rodeway Inn with the US Marshalls. Suspect is a James Vanest. They have, uh, extradition, uh, warrants for him and he's refusing to come out of the apartment. Break. When Marshall's initiated contact, he pointed a gun in their direction and he's refusing to come outside the apartment. We are getting ready to deploy tear gas inside."
0:33:37		"[REDACTED] to perimeter, prepare were gonna, uh, move in for launching."
0:34:24		"Perimeter units, they're moving in to launch."
0:35:24		"Okay, let's try some glass break for pepper ball, glass break for pepper ball."
0:36:00	Unknown	"copy, movement inside, um, who called that out, [REDACTED] was that you."
0:37:17	Unknown	"Drones ready for deployment."
0:37:24	Unknown	"Copy that. We're going to port that window with some glass break arounds from the pepper ball gun and, uh, make a hole big enough to fly that in. Actually, if you want to get it up there and see what you see, um, with the drone, if you could see inside that room from the outside that'll be fine too."
0:38:22	Unknown	"Whenever we're good for pepper balls, go ahead and deploy pepper balls."
0:38:30	Unknown	"Drones gonna check it first, then bring it back if we need too."
0:38:58	85	"85 to 255, do we have any visual inside, can you guys see inside with

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		the drone"
0:39:07	255	"Too much of a glare cap."
0:39:49	255	"Standby, pepper ball window breakers are gonna move up."
0:42:15	255	"It looks like the UNINTELLIGIBLE is loose, UNINTELLIGIBLE is loose."
0:42:23	Unknown	"We're gonna try to bump it open with the drone."
0:42:59	Unknown	"Drones inside."
0:43:06	Unknown	"Okay, take cover, he's shooting outside of the, outside of the apartment."
0:43:12	Unknown	"He's hunkered down behind the bed."
0:43:21	Unknown	"Okay, 40mm gas, insert more gas."
0:43:35	Unknown	"Insert more tear gas into the structure."
0:43:49	Unknown	"Drones down, drones down!"
0:44:00	Unknown	"I got shotgun ready to go."
0:44:15	Unknown	"I got multiple rounds through number 4 side."
0:44:56	Unknown	"We're preparing the robot."
0:46:04	Unknown	"Does anyone know where the last place they saw him was?"
0:46:11	Unknown	"Between the back bathroom and the bed was the last place he was seen on the drone."
0:47:03	Unknown	"UNINTELLIGIBLE 30 more 40"
0:47:07	Unknown	"Try to get that gas as deep in as you can."
0:47:30	Unknown	"If you guys can get a look at him, he's got a gun, take appropriate measures, let's safely end this."
0:48:17	Unknown	"Can we get anymore pepper balls inside that place. Get as much as we can."
0:48:49	Unknown	"Alright, let's, uh, hold off on the, uh, 40mm's, switch over to pepper balls, and insert pepper balls. Try to get them through the doorway."
0:52:51	Unknown	"Okay, let it breathe a little bit, let it breathe."
0:52:54	Unknown	"He's in there coughing, I can hear him."
0:54:54	Unknown	(Yelling in background – "...right arm") "Who got, where'd he fire from?"
0:55:26	Unknown	"Hey, do you want suppressive fire, to get him out?"
0:55:42	Unknown	"Hey, do you want suppressive fire?"
0:55:47	Unknown	(Percussion sound in the background) "10-4"
0:55:52	Unknown	"Okay, stand-by, I'm gonna put suppressive live fire in the house."
0:56:01	Unknown	(Yelling in the background) "...UNINTELLIGIBLE hit in the arm by the suspect."

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0:56:07	Unknown	"Copy, soon as I start suppressing, go ahead and move."
0:56:20	Unknown	"Stand by for suppressive fire."
0:56:43	Unknown	"Hey, did we get him? Did we get him out?"
0:57:39	Unknown	"Hey, all units, stay behind hard cover."
1:00:04	Unknown	██████ and Machamer, I got line of sight, peel off to the right."
1:00:18	Unknown	"Where do you want responding units to land at?"
1:00:50	Unknown	"Alright, ██████ and Machamer, you guys can pick that back up, I'm gonna move."
1:01:55	Unknown	██████████ you want me to activate the drone lights to improve your point of view?"
1:02:05	Unknown	"Standby, let me get into position."
1:02:17	Unknown	"Affirm, activate the drone lights."
1:02:27	Unknown	"Activate the drone lights so we can see in there."
1:03:42	Unknown	"193 can units send SWAT in first"
1:03:50	Unknown	"Bring the MRAP up to this location, copy?"
1:03:57	196	"10-4, I'm about 10 minutes out from the HQ, I'll get the MRAP started."
1:04:14	SWAT Medic 1	"I'm about 5 minutes out, I'll get the MRAP started, to get things organized."
1:04:32	Unknown	"Make sure you bring that GSR."
1:08:57	Unknown	"Movement inside"
1:09:13	Unknown	"All units, hold the perimeter, we're waiting for more, we're waiting for more."
1:11:17	Unknown	"Where was the last movement that was seen inside the building, where was the last seen movement."
1:19:03	Unknown	"Shots fired, Shots fired."
1:19:06	Unknown	"Be advised, suspects shooting outside the uh, shooting at us outside, the uh, apartment."
1:19:20	Unknown	██████ CR1, Shots fired by the police at the suspect"
1:19:28	Unknown	"Can you tell if he's down?"
1:19:33	Unknown	"I cannot tell if he's down, nope, not down, not down!"
1:19:40	Unknown	"UNINTELLIGIBLE, he's shooting out the front door, front door, he's shooting out the front door."
1:19:47	Unknown	"CR1, he's behind the bed towards the back left corner, back left corner."
1:19:56	Unknown	"Copy that. You are green if you have a shot."

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1:20:05	Unknown	"It's possible he's just reaching over the bed. I can't see his face."
1:20:11	Unknown	"You want us to suppress in that area, down low?"
1:20:20	Unknown	"Shots fired from the Wyatt, shots fired from the Wyatt."
1:20:46	Unknown	"Sniper, you got any movement?"
1:20:49	Unknown	"No movement, I still, I believe he's still in the back left corner there, back left corner, towards uh, towards, McDonalds."
1:20:59	Unknown	"Are you seeing him through the door or through the window?"
1:21:03	Unknown	"Through the door, I could just barely see movement, behind the bed on the left side."
1:21:15	Unknown	"We see what type of weapon he has?"
1:21:20	Unknown	████ he's shooting at me, he's shooting at me."
1:21:34	Unknown	"I'm looking straight through the door, I am directly East looking through the front door."
1:21:49	Unknown	"UNINTELLIGIBLE, are we good to suppress?"
1:22:25	Unknown	"Be advised, suspect is reloading his weapon, we can hear him, uh, reloading at this time."
1:23:09	Unknown	"Cease fire! Cease Fire! Hold what you got."
1:23:12	Unknown	"Alright, cease fire, hold your fire."
1:23:18	Unknown	"CR1, I gotta move, he's shot at me twice."
1:23:23	Unknown	"Yea, displace, displace, relocate."
1:23:29	Unknown	"You want suppressing fire?"
1:23:33	Unknown	"No, I'm behind cover."
1:24:09	████	"████ to Cancom, just be advised, suspect fired multiple rounds at police, police have uh, returned fire."
1:26:26	Unknown	"CR is he still alive?"
1:26:46	Unknown	"Just remember guys, stay behind cover."
1:28:09	Unknown	"CR1 are we sending a drone back in?"
1:28:19	Unknown	"I think it's OSP's."
1:28:35	Webber	"OSP wants to know if you want that truck, that pickup truck pushed South, directly South, is that what you want."
1:28:43	Captain Marino	"Yea, 10-4."
1:28:57	Webber	"They're also asking if the sniper is aware we are gonna be moving

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		right in front of him. Has the sniper moved?"
1:31:24	Unknown	"Okay, we're gonna be packing our truck up here. When OSP's armor approaches, we are gonna back the Wyatt up, so stand by for that. Move with the armor."
1:32:14	212	"212 [REDACTED] why don't you come to OSP's truck."
1:33:55	Webber	"Capt. Marino, OSP bearcat is ready to move, are you ready?"
1:34:01	Captain Marino	"Yea, 10-4, go ahead and move."
1:34:27	Unknown	"Okay, when OSP's armor moves in, we're gonna be moving the Wyatt, so stand by, stand by."
1:36:27	Captain Marino	"Yea, Marino to Castellanos, if you could have your a, your armor back up and cover those windows with your ports."
1:37:27	5	"Unit 5 to 212, do you have a visual from your port."
1:37:33	212	"Negative, we can't see anything inside the unit."
1:37:37	5	"Okay, if you have to maneuver the truck to get a visual."
1:37:44	5	"Alright, 196, we're gonna put the MRAP through that wall."
1:38:08	Unknown	"196, hold, hold, hold, MRAP hold. Alright, we're gonna insert a drone real quick and we, and then we'll go."
1:39:12	5	"Alright, 5 to 212, have the, uh, driver of the, uh, um, OSP armor get into position, position that truck so you have, uh, coverage through those ports, copy."
1:40:59	Unknown	"If we can get something to take out the rest of this glass, uh, we can get a better visual inside the unit."
1:41:53	Unknown	"Alright, Wyatt's moving, we're gonna angle it out outboard a little bit."
1:42:22	Unknown	"212, can you see yet?"
1:42:26	212	"We need this glass taken out of the window to be able to see. Uh, we have visual inside, but we can't see without the window being taken out."
1:43:02	CR1	"I have visual inside that doorway until you move the Wyatt. Do you want to keep it where it's at, or if you pull it forward, I can see inside that door to the back corner."
1:43:13	5	"Were good, we have, uh, we have coverage from the ports, um, on the Wyatt."
1:43:26	Unknown	"Okay, it looks like OSP is getting ready to deploy, trying to break that

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		window out."
1:43:46	Unknown	"UNINTELLIGIBLE, OSP is shooting."
1:44:06	Unknown	"OSP armor, we are trying to shoot out the rest of those windows so we can see in."
1:44:17	Unknown	"Hey, can we get something flammable in there and just burn him out?"
1:44:26	5	"Hey, um, 5 to 212, make sure they're not shooting burners inside."
1:45:38	Unknown	"[REDACTED] there was just movement behind that bed, on the west side of the room."
1:45:45	Unknown	"That's his last location."
1:45:49	Unknown	"He's moving around on the ground, he looks like he's crawling, on the far side of the bed, west side of the room."
1:46:08	Unknown	"Can you see a green laser inside?"
1:46:12	Unknown	"Affirm, we can see the green laser, he was to the right of that, a little bit, now we do not have eyes on."
1:46:22	Unknown	"It looks to me like he's moving towards the bathroom."
1:47:10	Unknown	"Alright, 212, we're bringing over a, uh, pepper ball gun with glass breaker rounds to, uh, pump in to the, uh, to pop that window out a little, for more visibility, copy?"
1:47:30	Unknown	"Moving again, he's still crawling around on that west side, just barely sticking up from the bed, from time to time."
1:47:39	Unknown	"If you have the shot, take it."
1:48:10	Unknown	"272, I got a good angle from my port, I see a little bit more of that glass sticking out, UNINTELLIGIBLE."
1:48:20	272	"Copy that. Use that, uh, glass breaker round and get that window knocked out."
1:48:44	Unknown	"Not bad OSP, give another one just like that, another one just like that."
1:49:12	Unknown	"Alright, he just pointed a gun at me through the port, I engaged, I need more rounds."
1:49:18	Unknown	"UNINTELLIGIBLE he's got a gun, what is it, an AR?"
1:49:22	Unknown	"Looks like a pistol."
1:50:02	Unknown	"[REDACTED] can you still see him?"
1:50:06	Unknown	"Negative, I do not have eyes on."

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1:52:01	Unknown	"Yeah, I got good vision through that window now, still no movement. That window's opened up."
1:52:09	Unknown	"Copy, can you see back, back to that back corner."
1:52:15	Unknown	"I have a little bit of an angle to see the bathroom. It's, it's hard to tell, again, I, I got no movement from my angle."
1:53:05	5	"Alright, 5 to 212, we're going to, uh, insert a robot, and then, uh, once the robot is inserted, we have a visual, we're gonna go ahead and hit that wall on the North side with the MRAP."
1:55:36	Unknown	"First thought for that drone I would check is that far side behind the bed. I have not seen any movement at all since we engaged."
1:55:55	Unknown	"[REDACTED] if you get movement, put your laser above him on the bed and I can send one through the bed."
1:56:09	Lever	"Lever to Captain Marino, looks like we have a head laying face down at the foot of the bed with a puddle of blood, maybe."
1:56:27	Captain Marino	"Okay, we're gonna insert the, uh, the drivable robot to get confirmation before we go in there."
2:13:38	Unknown	"A bang on the, uh, far side of the bed on entry, for dead check, um, we have visual confirmation, um, on the suspect being down with the, uh, robot."
2:18:02	Unknown	"Alright, go ahead make entry."
2:19:55	Unknown	"Alright, 51 in plain view, suspect down. Do we want to get a picture of him?"

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Video Recordings

A review was completed of all video footage collected throughout the investigation. This included a review of cellphone video recordings captured by witnesses, surveillance video provided by Cracker Barrel and the Rodeway Inn Motel, body worn camera (BWC) video files from officers employed with the United States Marshals Service (USMS), Canton Police Department (CPD), Massillon Police Department (MPD), Jackson Township Police Department (JTPD), Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP), and the Stark County Sheriff's Office (SCSO), and drone video provided by the CPD.

Body Worn Camera Review

BWC and in-car/dash camera videos were collected from the following agencies:

- United State Marshals Service (USMS)
 - For additional information on the review of video provided, refer to the investigative report titled *2024-12-03: Timeline of Events from Initial BWC Video Review - United States Marshall Service*.
- Jackson Township Police Department (JTPD)
- Stark County Sheriff's Office (SCSO)
- Massillon Police Department (MPD)
- Canton Police Department (CPD)
- Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP)
- Drone video from Canton Regional SWAT Team

Some of the videos were determined to have captured footage of the actual shooting incident. Other videos only audibly captured the sound of gunfire in the background, but did not portray the origination of the sound.

To the extent possible the percussive sounds believed to be gunfire have been identified as such in this report. It should be noted that those references are based on the totality of corroborating information and evidence gathered throughout this investigation.

United States Marshal Service BWC

One video was provided by the USMS.

Below is a timeline of events developed after the review of Deputy Marshal Alstrom's body-worn camera. Although the timeline below provides an overview of the incident, it

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was limited to the events captured on Deputy Marshal Alstrom's BWC.

- 11:06:24 – Alstrom exited his vehicle and approached room 220
- 11:07:09 – Alstrom knocked on the door, waited a brief time and then knocked again.
- 11:07:34 – Alstrom knocked a third time and announced “Police! US Marshalls with a warrant. Come to the door. Do it now!” He then knocked again and repeated the announcement.
- 11:07:56 – Alstrom attempted to open door with an electronic motel room key, but it did not work.
- 11:10:41 – Alstrom utilized a physical motel key to open room 220.
- 11:10:47 – the door partially opened but was stopped by a security latch on the inside of the door.
- 11:10:51 – Alstrom quickly moved away from the door while he said “Shit! Get back. He’s got a gun!”
- 11:10:57 – after moving away from the door, Alstrom said “He’s pointing a gun at us.” Another officer told a Jackson Township Police Officer to call for SWAT and they began commanding James Vanest exit the room.
- 11:11:46 – Alstrom asked another officer if he had the pepper ball launcher.
- 11:12:22 – another officer said “I didn’t even see him. Where’s was he at?” Alstrom responded saying “He’s laying in the bed with a pistol pointed right at us.”
- 11:12:34 – Alstrom announced they were going to be deploying pepper gas. He then instructed another officer to deploy it.
- 11:12:50 – eight repetitive percussive sounds were captured. Although not visually captured, it appeared that the percussive sounds were the deployment of pepper gas.
- 11:22:00 – a Jackson Township officer said, “Negotiator’s here.” Alstrom then began speaking with Jackson Twp. PD Det. Aynes, while the remaining officers maintained cover on the room.
- 11:23:04 – Det. Aynes began trying to establish verbal contact with Vanest. Det Aynes continued attempting verbal contact with Vanest by yelling his name and instructing him to come out of the room.
- 11:23:57 – Det. Aynes warned more gas was going to be deployed into the room. He provided this warning twice while asking Vanest to come to the door.
- 11:24:15 – approximately 15 repetitive percussive sounds were captured. Although not visually captured it appeared that the percussive sounds were the deployment of pepper gas.

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- 11:28:23 - Det. Aynes attempted to contact Vanest by phone in the motel room. The attempt was not successful.
- 11:29:04 - while trying to call Vanest a second time, Det. Aynes yelled to Vanest another warning that more pepper gas would be deployed if he didn't answer the phone.
- 11:32:18 - approximately 17 repetitive percussive sounds were captured. Although not visually captured, it appeared that the percussive sounds were the deployment of pepper gas.
- 11:52:01 - the Canton Region SWAT team arrived with an armored vehicle.
- 11:58:53 - the first PA announcements were made. Officers called for the subject to come out with his hands up or tear gas would be deployed into the room.
- 12:02:25 - another PA announcement was made instructing Vanest to come out of the room.
- 12:05:54 - there were four percussive sounds captured, likely the deployment of less lethal munitions.
- 12:06:50 - another percussive sound was captured, likely the deployment of less lethal munitions.
- 12:08:38 - another PA announcement was made directing the subject to come out of the room.
- 12:11:03 - approximately 19 percussive sounds were captured over a two-minute period, likely the deployment of less lethal munitions.
- 12:13:13 - a drone was deployed by the Canton Regional SWAT Team.
- 12:13:54 - seven percussive sounds were captured. Alstrom said he thought it was gunfire. Another voice could be heard yelling "get back". Alstrom and another officer moved behind a vehicle in the Cracker Barrel parking lot.
- 12:14:26 another officer said "He's shooting through the walls. I saw it coming out the side."
- 12:16:38 - Alstrom and another officer talked about the shots coming through the north side motel wall.
- 12:19:00 - SWAT officers told the US Marshals to evacuate Cracker Barrel, and they began that process.
- 12:22:35 - an officer with the USMS Task Force retrieved a pepper ball gun from a Jackson Township Police truck. He and Alstrom then joined the SWAT Team. Det. Aynes reloaded the pepper ball gun. Numerous percussive sounds (likely the deployment of less lethal munitions) were captured in the background.
- 12:24:07 - officers discussed the deployment of a robot.

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- 12:25:30 – a percussive sound was captured followed by an officer yelling “Aww Fuck!” Alstrom then said “Shit! Somebody got hit!” Multiple officers could be heard talking and organizing an extraction plan for the injured officer.
- 12:26:13 – numerous percussive sounds could be heard, which continued for approximately 45 seconds. An officer asked about flooding the place with gas. It appeared the percussive sounds were likely the deployment of gas or pepper balls.
- 12:27:21 – numerous percussive sounds were captured followed by an Officer saying “Shot’s fired. Shots fired.”
- 12:28:19 – an officer said something about suppressive fire.
- 12:39:51 – an officer yelled there was movement inside the room.
- 12:41:15 – an officer explained that the last place he saw the subject was behind the bed.
- 12:45:10 – OSP’s armored vehicle arrived.
- 12:51:10 – approximately 10 repetitive percussive sounds were captured which appeared consistent with the sound of gunfire.
- 12:51:25 – approximately 12 repetitive percussive sounds were captured which appeared consistent with the sound of gunfire.
- 12:52:12 – two percussive sounds were captured which appeared consistent with the sound of gunfire.
- 12:53:44 – numerous percussive sounds were captured. Officers referred to it as gunfire. It was repetitive and continued for approximately 22 seconds.
- 12:56:20 – multiple officers entered the OSP armored vehicle. The armored vehicle was then moved to the front of Room 220. The officers discussed using the armored vehicle to push the involved subject’s truck out of the way and it appeared that did occur. Officers then appeared to hold cover from windows and ports on the passenger side of the armored vehicle.
- 13:14:37 – percussive sounds were captured. Officers were talking about breaking out the glass window of the motel room with wooden batons. Percussive sounds followed by the sound of glass breaking were captured. Although not visually captured, it appeared an officer was firing less lethal rounds into the glass window from the turret of OSP’s armored vehicle.
- 13:16:31 – an officer inside OSP armored vehicle announced there was movement behind the bed on the west side of the room. He then added the subject was rolling to the right and crawling around on the ground.
- 13:18:27 – an officer announced there was movement again and that the subject was still crawling around on the west side. Another officer then said “There he

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is. He just popped his head up. [unintelligible] If you got the shot you can take it"

- 13:19:37 – a percussive sound was captured followed by the sound of glass breaking. An officer asked for them to take out more of the glass. Someone then said, "wooden baton". An officer then said "I have a shot. I have a shot." Another percussive sound was captured followed by the sound of more glass breaking.
- 13:20:01 – nine repetitive percussive sounds consistent with the sound of gunfire were captured. An officer then said, "Alright. He just pointed a gun at me through the port I engaged him, multiple rounds. It looked like a pistol." Officers then discuss taking out more glass. Percussive sounds (Likely wooden batons being fired) then continued, followed by the sound of glass breaking.
- 13:26:43 – an officer announced he believed the subject was down and that he could see the subject's head. Another officer then said the head was face down at the foot of the bed.
- 13:40:50 – an officer deployed a double flash bang into the room from the rear of OSP's armored vehicle. Two percussive sounds were captured and afterward officers stated there was no movement and the head was still in the same position.
- 13:43:05 – officers stated that the body part had not moved, and it remained where it was before the double flash bang was deployed.
- 13:43:32 – a percussive sound was captured and an officer said, "Bang out". Smoke was then visually captured blowing out and past room 220.
- 13:48:32 – Officers approached the entry door of room 220. A flash inside of the room followed by a percussive sound was captured before officers entered the room.
- 13:49:46 – an officer confirmed the subject was down.

[Jackson Township Police Department BWC and In-car Camera Review](#)

Nineteen (19) videos were provided by the JTPD: Twelve (12) of them were BWC videos and seven (7) were in-car/dashcam videos.

The video review revealed some of the videos did not contain any footage of the actual shooting incident. Some of the video audibly captured the sound of gunfire in the background but did not visually capture shots being fired. Two videos did capture the moment when [REDACTED] was shot. They were Det. Jeffrey Aynes' video titled "[REDACTED] 201 OIS incident", Officer Jason Hall's video titled "355 24 [REDACTED] Homicide/OIS", and Officer Anthony Richardsons' in-car camera video titled "24 [REDACTED]"

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209 ASSIST OTHER AGENCY".

Title	Officer	Source	Comments
████████ 201 OIS incident	Aynes, Jeffrey (201)	axonbody4	This video captured some activity of the SWAT officers. The detective made multiple attempts to call the subject by phone and out loud. The BWC was muted at approximately 38:49 and remained muted for the duration of the video. It captured ██████████ being shot at approximately 1:06:54 when an officer can be observed falling to the ground.
355 ██████████ Homicide / OIS	Hall, Jason (355)	fleet3	This recording was from a vehicle camera on a perimeter position. At approximately 26:30 a percussive sound was captured, and a cloud of smoke was visible coming from where a group of law enforcement officers were standing. At approximately 32:33 a loud percussive sound was captured, followed by possible yelling and an officer went to the ground. Someone said, "Officer down, officer down." The officer that went to the ground was moved out of the camera's view. Loud percussive sounds were captured throughout the video.
████████ 209 ASSIST OTHER AGENCY	Richardson, Anthony (209)	fleet3	This recording was from a vehicle camera on a perimeter position. At approximately 54:44 through 55:36 and 1:00:06 through 1:01:34 two law enforcement officers could be seen positioned on the driver's side of a pickup truck. The officers appeared to be deploying less lethal munitions. At

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			approximately 1:55:56 a SWAT vehicle was captured pushing the subject's pick-up truck out from in front of the motel room. At approximately 2:03:01 through 2:05:55 a law enforcement officer can be seen in the turret of the OSP SWAT vehicle. The officer appeared to be deploying less lethal munitions. From approximately 2:08:27 through 2:33:33 a law enforcement officer can be seen in the roof hatch deploying less lethal munitions into the front glass of the motel room. Loud percussive sounds believed to be gunfire were captured intermittently throughout the video. What appeared to be smoke near the door of the motel room could also be seen at various moments throughout the video.
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For additional information, refer to the Investigative Report titled *2025-04-02: Video Review - BWC and Dash Cam from Jackson Township Police Department*.

[Stark County Sheriff's Office BWC and In-car Camera Review](#)

Seven videos were provided by the SCSO, six of which did not capture footage of the actual shooting incident. One video, captured by [REDACTED] BWC has been summarized below.

[REDACTED] had his BWC activated throughout the duration of the incident. However, the video did not visually capture any portion of the shooting incident. Additionally, the camera angle for [REDACTED] BWC became obstructed during the recording and nothing could be visually observed after 51:22. Due to this, his BWC did not visually capture the actions of Vanest leading up to or during the time [REDACTED] fired. Percussive sounds could be heard throughout the duration of the video and no determination based upon the BWC video could be made as to which percussive sounds were the result of [REDACTED] firing.

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Title	Officer	Source	Comments
██████████ ██████████_BWC2015553- 0 (1).mp4	██████████	BWC - Motorola Solutions	This recording was from a perimeter position. The camera view was blocked or partially blocked by a vehicle and/or shield for half of the video. At 02:28 an officer could be heard giving verbal commands to "James" to exit the room with nothing in his hands.
██████████ ██████████_BWC2015553- 0.mp4	██████████	BWC – Motorola Solutions	The video began with someone giving commands for "James" to exit the "apartment" with his "hands up." The camera angle was obstructed by what appeared to be the armored SWAT vehicle. At 06:51 ██████████ appeared to remove his BWC and place it in a location where Room #220 and a gray truck became visible. At 08:04 a percussive sound and glass breaking could be heard. The right curtain hanging in the window of Room #220 appeared to move simultaneously. At 11:55 a drone could be observed hovering in front of the window of Room #220. At 16:07 a drone appeared to push open the door of Room #220 (SCSO – ██████████ BWC 1). At 16:24 the drone appeared to enter Room #220 and multiple percussive sounds could be heard. Someone could also be heard asking, "did someone just shoot?". Someone then stated, "someone is shooting" and "shots fired." At 16:30 glass in the window of Room #220 appeared to break simultaneously with the percussive sounds. At 16:40 percussive sounds could be heard, and a light gray cloud could be observed on the roof of Room #220 (SCSO – ██████████ BWC 2). At 16:41 a percussive sound could be heard, and a light gray could be observed on the outside wall of Room #220 (SCSO – ██████████ BWC 3). At 26:20 someone could be heard stating, "he, he's in

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			<p>their coughing, I can hear him.” Someone could also be heard coughing in the background. This occurred after numerous percussive sounds that were likely the result of chemical munitions being deployed into Room #220 (based on statements made from officers on scene that were audibly captured on camera). At 28:00 there was a percussive sound followed by someone yelling. This was likely the moment [REDACTED] was shot in the arm. At 28:41 [REDACTED] appeared to be holding a less-lethal device and fired approximately 45 rounds of less-lethal ammunition. At 29:30 the rifle originally utilized by [REDACTED] was visible in the camera angle. At 51:22 the camera angle began to shift. It appeared that [REDACTED] had moved the BWC from its former location and the view became obstructed. At 53:32 someone could be heard stating “he’s reloading, he’s reloading.” The statement was followed by multiple percussive sounds and someone yelling “shots fired.” The camera angle remained obstructed for the remainder of the video. Percussive sounds could be heard throughout the duration of the recording.</p>
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SCSO - [REDACTED] BWC 1



SCSO - [REDACTED] BWC 2

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SCSO - [REDACTED] BWC 3

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SCSO - [REDACTED] BWC 4

For additional information, refer to the Investigative Report titled *2025-04-24: Video Review – BWC and Dash Cam from Stark County Sheriff's Office*.

[Massillon Police Department BWC Review](#)

One video was provided by the MPD which belonged to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] appeared to fire his rifle at two separate times throughout the incident. The first time was at 06:13 and he appeared to fire 12 times. The second time was at 08:31 and he appeared to fire approximately 15 times. His BWC did not visually capture the actions of Vanest leading up to or during the time [REDACTED] fired.

The camera angle was obstructed throughout the video due to various factors including, but not limited to, vehicles, law enforcement personnel, and [REDACTED] rifle. Room #220, where the involved subject, James Vanest (Vanest), was located, was not visible on [REDACTED] BWC until 01:05:00. Percussive sounds could be heard throughout the entirety of the video. The most noteworthy percussive sounds, as determined by this author, will be indicated. Additionally, various

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communication and tactical strategies could be heard throughout the video from various law enforcement personnel on scene. Again, the most notable statements as deemed by this author will be annotated below.

Title	Officer	Source	Comments
U- [REDACTED]_Roadway_Inn_ shooting(nantonide s@massillonohio.g ov).mp4	[REDACTED] [REDACTED]	Axon Body 3	At 4:30 percussive sounds could be heard and someone said, "shots fired." Someone then said that the "suspect" (Vanest) was shooting from inside the "apartment" towards officers. At 05:18 percussive sounds could be heard and someone said, "still shooting." At 05:49 someone said, "he's reloading." At 05:58 percussive sounds could be heard and someone said, "shots fired." At 06:09 [REDACTED] asked an unknown person (likely Captain Marino) if they wanted "suppressive fire"; Somone then replied that if he had a shot, "to take it." At 06:13 [REDACTED] fired his rifle 12 times from behind what appeared to be the SWAT armored vehicle (<i>MPD Image 1</i>). At 07:04 someone said, "he's shooting at me." At 07:50 someone said, "he's reloading." At 08:31 numerous percussive sounds could be heard followed by [REDACTED] firing his rifle approximately 15 times from behind the SWAT armored vehicle (<i>MPD Image 2</i>). Percussive sounds could be heard after [REDACTED] stopped firing. [REDACTED] then moved his position further behind the armored vehicle and he appeared to reload his rifle with a new magazine (<i>MPD Image 3</i>). At 08:56 someone could be heard saying "cease fire" and then someone else said they were shot at twice (referring to Vanest shooting at them). At 26:58 [REDACTED] began moving from his location

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			behind the armored SWAT vehicle to a perimeter position behind some parked vehicles. At 34:25 a percussive sound could be heard in the distance followed by multiple other percussive sounds and the sound of glass breaking. At 34:49 rapid percussive sounds could be heard and then someone said, "he's pointing a gun at me through the port." Someone could be heard saying the gun being used by Vanest looked like a "pistol." The video concluded with [REDACTED] appearing to stand on the outside of Room #220 after SWAT personnel appeared to make entry into the room.
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For additional information, refer to the Investigative Report titled *2025-05-01: BWC from Massillon Police Department*.

[Canton Police Department BWC Review](#)

Nine (9) videos were provided by the CPD.

Sergeant Eric Lee previously stated during his interview that he only deployed less lethal devices and ammunition during the incident. It appeared Sergeant Lee utilized four different devices throughout the incident and fired approximately 83 rounds of less-lethal ammunition. His BWC did not visually capture the actions of Vanest leading up to or during the time Sergeant Lee deployed the less-lethal devices, however, based on statements and the general context at the times he fired, it appeared he was not directly engaging with Vanest.

[REDACTED] did not have his BWC activated at the time he fired during the incident. The videos from [REDACTED] BWC captured the period after the shooting incident and did not capture any of Vanest's actions.

[REDACTED] appeared to fire his rifle one time during the incident. At 17:22 [REDACTED] appeared to fire nine times. Cartridge casings that were likely being ejected from [REDACTED] firearm were captured in the video in addition to the recoil from his firearm. His BWC did not visually capture the actions of Vanest leading up to or during the time [REDACTED] fired.

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██████████ did not have his BWC activated at the time he fired during the incident. The videos from ██████████ BWC captured various points throughout the incident but did not capture any of Vanest's actions.

██████████ appeared to fire a rifle at two separate times throughout the incident. The first time was at 49:17, and he appeared to fire five times. The second time was at 51:48, and he appeared to fire approximately one time. His BWC did not visually capture the actions of Vanest leading up to or during the time ██████████ fired.

██████████ appeared to fire his rifle one time during the incident. At 16:52 ██████████ appeared to fire his rifle seven times. His BWC did not visually capture the actions of Vanest leading up to or during the time ██████████ fired.

Title	Officer	Source	Comments
EricLee_██████████_B WC2101947-0.mp4	Lee, Eric	Motorola Solutions BWC2 - 101947	The video began with Sergeant Lee standing near an armored SWAT vehicle holding what appeared to be bags of less-lethal ammunition in his hands. At 05:36 Sergeant Lee and another (unknown) officer began moving and eventually stood adjacent to a gray truck (likely the truck belonging to Vanest). From their position, the window to Room #220 could be observed. At 05:40 a percussive sound could be heard, and recoil from Sergeant Lee's less lethal device could be observed (<i>CPD – Lee BWC 1</i>). Additionally, the curtain in the window appeared to move simultaneously with the percussive sound (<i>CPD – Lee BWC 2</i>). At 05:46 Sergeant Lee could be observed loading another round of ammunition into his less lethal device. Sergeant Lee proceeded to fire two more less-lethal rounds. Movement in the window of Room #220 could be observed. At 06:09 another officer could be observed firing a shot gun (likely a less-lethal shot gun) three times in the direction of Room #220. Sergeant Lee returned to the armored vehicle and selected another less lethal device. He then moved his position and was now behind a black SUV. Someone could be heard saying "I'm ready for some glass breakers when you guys are.". At 11:00 Sergeant Lee and another officer

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			<p>moved closer to Room #220 and stood next to a gray truck. Sergeant Lee then fired his less-lethal device 17 times towards the window of Room #220. Defects in the glass window of Room #220 could be observed after the numerous percussive sounds (CPD – Lee BWC 3). At 14:56 Sergeant Lee could be observed loading another less-lethal firearm with ammunition (CPD – Lee BWC 4). Sergeant Lee appeared to take a position near the front of the armored SWAT vehicle. At 15:10 a percussive sound could be heard, and the recoil of Sergeant Lee's less lethal device could be observed. Sergeant Lee then loaded a second less-lethal round into the device and moved to the rear of the armored vehicle. At 15:36 a faint percussive sound could be heard and Sergeant Lee's camera angle shifted slightly likely due to recoil from his less lethal device. Sergeant Lee then discarded a cartridge casing, loaded a new round of ammunition and fired one more round of less-lethal ammunition. At 16:40 Sergeant Lee could be observed loading another round of less lethal ammunition into his less lethal device. At 18:15 the door to Room #220 became visible. The door appeared to be open and defects in the window could also be observed. Moments later, Sergeant Lee discharged his less lethal device three times. Sergeant Lee appeared to be aiming for the open doorway of Room #220 observed (CPD – Lee BWC 5). At 19:21 Sergeant Lee discharged his less lethal device three more times. His reflection could be observed in the window of the black SUV he was standing next to. At 20:44 Sergeant Lee appeared to utilize a different less lethal device and fired approximately 40 rounds. At 23:45 Sergeant Lee fired approximately 13 more rounds from his position next to the black SUV. At 25:36 a loud percussive sound could be heard and then someone began yelling. This appeared to be the moment [REDACTED] was shot. The camera angle at the time of the percussive sound was pointed toward the ground. Numerous percussive sounds could be heard after this; however, the camera angle was obstructed and did not</p>
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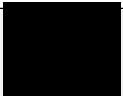





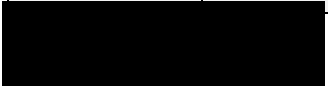

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			visually capture anyone who had fired. At 54:02 the camera angle captured an unknown officer discharging their firearm an unknown number of times (<i>CPD – Lee BWC 6</i>). At 01:51:12 Vanest was captured in the video lying on the ground in Room #220. A small dark figure could be seen lying next to his leg as officers could be heard discussing firearms lying under Vanest (<i>CPD – Lee BWC 7</i>). A firearm could also be observed lying on the bed (<i>CPD – Lee BWC 8</i>). The video concludes with Sergeant Lee assisting with scene management.
  02_BWC2134 873-0.mp4		Motorola Solutions BWC2 - 134873	The video began with  arriving at the incident location where he entered an armed SWAT vehicle. The camera angle was obstructed by the interior of the armored vehicle and by  gun throughout the duration of the video resulting in Room #220 not being visible. At 17:03 the sound of glass breaking could be heard. At 17:22 someone could be heard saying “I have a shot, I have a shot” followed by nine percussive sounds. Recoil from  firearm could be observed in addition to a cartridge casing that was ejected from his firearm (<i>CPD –  BWC 1</i>). At 17:34 someone could be heard stating, “alright he just pointed a gun at me through the port [unintelligible]... it looked like a pistol.” The sound of glass breaking continued while officers could be heard discussing breaking out at window. At 39:40 a smoke detector alarm could be heard. The video ends with  exiting the armored vehicle.
 650_BWC204 2202-0.mp4		Motorola Solutions BWC2 - 042202	The video captured the arrival of the first Canton PD armored SWAT vehicle to the scene. At 08:45 verbal commands could be heard ordering the occupants of Room #220 to exit. The announcement also stated that chemical munitions were going to be utilized if the occupants (of Room #220) did not comply. At 15:24 someone could be heard saying “gas out, we’re ready” and five faint percussive sounds could be heard (<i>CPD – BWC  1</i>).

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			Someone then said, "glass break with the pepper ball gun." At 16:40 another faint percussive sound could be heard. After the faint percussive sounds, glass breaking could be heard on and off over the course of the following few minutes. The video did not capture the actual breaking of glass.
823_BWC204 2202-0.mp4		Motorola Solutions BWC2 - 042202	The video captured [REDACTED] standing behind the armored SWAT vehicle. Throughout the video multiple conversations about tactical operations took place. At 20:09 someone said, "he had no reaction from the flashbang, no reaction at all." At 20:31 someone said, "they're cuffing him." At 24:48, it appeared as though [REDACTED] and multiple other officers began moving towards the entrance to Room #220. [REDACTED] then appeared to stand behind multiple officers and then make entry into Room #220 (25:28). At 26:05 [REDACTED] was handed what appeared to be a fire extinguisher. A small fire could then be observed in Room #220. The fire extinguisher handled by [REDACTED] appeared to malfunction. At 28:21 someone said, "he's got a gun in his hand." Someone then said, "he's still got his finger on the trigger." At 29:14 Vanest was briefly captured in the video. He appeared to be lying on the ground on his left side with a red substance surrounding him (likely blood). At 32:00, [REDACTED] exited Room #220. The video ended with [REDACTED] walking in the parking lot approaching other officers on scene.
81700_BWC2 056953- 0.mp4		Motorola Solutions BWC2 - 2056953	The video captured [REDACTED] arriving at the incident location in his marked patrol vehicle. At 02:00 someone could be heard giving commands for "James" to exit the room with his hands up. At 03:15 commands could be heard again for "James" to exit the room with his hands up. In addition, the person giving commands stated tear gas would be utilized if he (Vanest) did not comply. At 05:07, someone said, "gas out, be ready" followed by six percussive sounds. [REDACTED] took a position behind a black SUV and the blue entry door of Room #220 was briefly visible. Additional commands were given throughout

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			<p>the duration of the video. At 09:00, a buzzing sound could be heard, and a small black figure could be observed moving laterally towards the entrance to Room #220. This was likely a drone that was utilized during the incident (CPD – ████████ WC 1). The drone could be observed moving away from Room #220 at 09:27. At 10:44 someone could be heard saying "it's going to be a while, they're going to take the window out" followed by multiple faint percussive sounds and the sound of glass breaking. At 12:53 a buzzing sound could be heard again, and a small black figure (drone) could be observed moving laterally towards Room #220. From ████████ position behind the black SUV, the blue entry door of Room #220 became visible. The door appeared to be closed and at 13:15 and then began to open (CPD – ████████ WC 2). At 13:29 a percussive sound could be heard followed by six additional. Officers could then be heard saying "is he shooting?", "shots fired", and "he's shooting the drone." At 14:20 someone could be heard saying "drone down, drone down." At 15:05, at percussive sound could be heard followed by someone stating, "shots fired." At the time of the percussive sound a small light gray cloud of smoke could be observed near the front of an unknown officer's firearm (CPD – ████████ WC 3). The unknown officer who fired the round then appeared to eject a cartridge casing from his firearm (CPD – ████████ BWC 4). At 15:24 another percussive sound could be heard, and the same officer could be observed firing one round towards Room #220. A small cloud of light gray smoke and recoil could also be observed. At 15:37 another unknown officer could be observed moving into position behind the armored vehicle. The officer pointed his firearm at Room #220, ejected one round, then appeared to fire two rounds based on the apparent recoil of the gun and the light gray cloud that appeared in front of the firearm. The visual cues coincided with the percussive sounds that could be heard. At 24:36, ████████ appeared to switch positions with another officer who was holding a rifle on a tripod</p>
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			<p>(likely [REDACTED]). Both officers remained behind the black SUV. At 25:05 a percussive sound could be heard, and an officer could be heard yelling. The camera captured [REDACTED] on the ground with an apparent injury to his right arm (visible blood). Officers began rendering aid to [REDACTED] on scene. [REDACTED] assisted with removing [REDACTED] from the scene and then took a position behind a black SUV. Numerous percussive sounds could be heard in the background. [REDACTED] moved back to his position behind the black SUV. At 27:51 someone could be heard saying "I'm getting on that sniper rifle." [REDACTED] then grabbed the rifle that was affixed to a tripod. [REDACTED] then appeared to move to various locations throughout the scene in an effort to get a visual on Room #220 (based on statements made; CPD – [REDACTED] BWC 7). At 49:17 a percussive sound could be heard followed by a second percussive sound that appeared to be the result of [REDACTED] firing his sniper rifle. Recoil of the gun could be observed in the video (CPD – [REDACTED] BWC 8). A third percussive sound could be heard followed by [REDACTED] firing his rifle a fourth time. The pattern was repeated with [REDACTED] firing his rifle a fifth time. At 49:51 someone could be heard saying "shots fired by the police at the suspect." Additional percussive sounds could be heard in the background. Someone then provided information that "he" (likely Vanest) was located in the back left corner of the room. Someone then said, "copy that, you are green if you have a shot." At 51:48 a percussive sound could be heard, and recoil could be observed from [REDACTED] firearm. Someone then said (likely [REDACTED]) "he's shooting at me." Another officer could then be heard saying, "hey, he's shooting at the sniper, get out of there." At 53:18 the sound of rapid percussive sounds could be heard. At 53:52 [REDACTED] could be observed talking on a radio stating he needed to move his position due to being shot at twice by Vanest. [REDACTED] moves to various</p>
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			locations throughout the video setting up his rifle in different locations. At 01:41:48 an alarm could be heard. Near the end of the video, [REDACTED] entered Room #220 where medics could be observed rendering aid. At 01:57:22 someone could be heard stating, "suspect was confirmed dead at 1:57."
737_BWC210 1634-0.mp4		Motorola Solutions BWC2 - 101634	The video began with [REDACTED] inside the armored vehicle speaking with other officers. At 16:52 [REDACTED] appeared to move to the front of the armored vehicle and point his firearm towards a building. Percussive sounds could be heard and the recoil from [REDACTED] firearm could be observed [REDACTED] fired approximately 7 rounds. At 01:12:52 [REDACTED] had made entry into Room #220 with other officers. There was a firearm that could be observed lying on the bed (the same firearm observed in Sergeant Lee's BWC – see figure CPD – Lee BWC 8). A portion of the room appeared to be on fire. Officers could be observed extinguishing the fire. At 14:59 someone could be heard stating, "his finger is still on the trigger." At 01:15:48 [REDACTED] appeared to have removed something from the area near Vanest. Moments later a second firearm could be observed lying on the bed (CPD – [REDACTED] BWC 1). At 01:16:45 [REDACTED] appeared to be holding a pillow with two firearms sitting on top (CPD – [REDACTED] BWC 2). The remainder of the video captured medical aid being rendered to Vanest and scene management.

For additional information, refer to the Investigative Report titled *2025-05-05: Video Review – BWC from Canton Police Department*.

[Ohio State Highway Patrol BWC Review](#)

Six (6) videos were provided by OSHP. None of the Ohio State Highway Patrol Officer appeared to fire their firearms. Trooper Mike Vitullo fired less lethal munitions and Sergeant Christopher Castellanos deployed two flash bangs. The BWC from Sergeant Castellanos visually captured cartridge casings which appeared to be ejected from Canton Police [REDACTED] rifle at the time he was firing from inside the OSP Armored vehicle.

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Trooper Mike Vitullo appeared to fire two different less-lethal devices at three separate times throughout the incident. The first time was at 13:14:41 and he appeared to fire 5 times. The second time was at 13:16:01 and he appeared to fire approximately 3 times. The third time was at 13:20:03 and he appeared to fire 8 times. His BWC did not visually capture the actions of Vanest leading up to or during the time Trooper Vitullo fired.

Summaries of each BWC that captured relevant information to the shooting incident have been provided below.

Title	Officer	Source	Comments
OSP BWC - Canton_USMS_Shooting_Jackson_Township-3.mp4	Trooper Mike Vitullo	Axon Body 4 D01A6225C	The video began with multiple troopers and officers gathering gear and entering the OSHP armored SWAT vehicle. Trooper Vitullo took a position in the turret of the armed vehicle. At 13:13:42, Trooper Vitullo was handed a less-lethal device that was likely loaded with "wooden baton" rounds (based upon conversation audibly captured in the video). At 13:14:41 a percussive sound could be heard, and Trooper Vitullo's body camera shook slightly. This was likely the result of recoil from the less-lethal device Trooper Vitullo deployed. Trooper Vitullo deployed three additional rounds of less lethal ammunition from the device. On the fourth shot at 13:15:20, a percussive sound could be heard, and an object could be observed moving in the direction of Room #220 at a high rate of speed (<i>OSHP – Vitullo BWC 1</i>). The object observed on camera was likely the projectile deployed from the less-lethal device. At 13:16:01 Trooper Vitullo reloaded his less-lethal device with four additional rounds of "wooden baton" (<i>OSHP – Vitullo BWC 2</i>). Trooper Vitullo fired one additional round of the "wooden baton" munition and then appeared to have a malfunction with his less lethal device. Trooper Vitullo appeared to switch to a different less-lethal device and proceeded to fire two additional "wooden baton" rounds. At 13:20:03 multiple percussive sounds could be heard in rapid

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			succession. This was likely when Canton Police Department [REDACTED] fired his rifle from his position inside the OSHP armored SWAT vehicle. Trooper Vitullo then proceeded to fire eight additional "wooden baton" rounds. At 13:25:40 Trooper Vitullo appeared to place a drone on the roof of the OSHP armored vehicle. Trooper Vitullo exited the armored vehicle and at 13:53:26 his body cam audio was muted. The video ended approximately two minutes later.
OSP BWC - Canton_USMS_Shooting_Jackson_Township-4.mp4	Trooper Hector Burgos	Axon Body 4 D01A6225C	The video began with Trooper Burgos at a perimeter position. At 12:52:16 percussive sounds could be heard and then someone said "hey, he's shooting at the sniper, get out of there." In the minutes to follow numerous percussive sounds could be heard. Multiple troopers and officers then appeared to enter the OSHP armored SWAT vehicle. At 13:13:23 someone could be heard saying "wooden baton" four times in a row and Trooper Burgos could be observed handing what appeared to be less-lethal ammunition to another officer inside the armored SWAT vehicle. At 13:20:00 an officer could be heard stating "I have a shot, I have a shot" followed by multiple percussive sounds. This was likely when [REDACTED] of the Canton Police Department fired his gun. At 13:21:35 a percussive sound could be heard and an officer standing in the turret could be observed. The officer's right arm appeared to recoil at the same time as the percussive sound. Trooper Burgos could then be observed handing additional "wooden baton" rounds to the officer standing in the turret. Someone also could be heard saying "wooden baton." At 13:27:06 someone could be heard saying "let them know we got a head down." At 13:40:45 someone could be heard saying "bang out" followed by two percussive sounds. Someone then could be heard saying "I

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			have no movement on my end" (likely referring to Vanest not reacting to the flashbang that was deployed). Trooper Burgos remained in the armored SWAT vehicle for majority of the video. After exiting the vehicle, entry to Room #220 had already been made, and scene management was taking place.
OSP BWC - Canton_USMS_Shooting_Jackson_Township-5.mp4	Trooper Austin Skipper	Axon Body 4 D01A6850D	Numerous percussive sounds could be heard throughout the duration of the video. At 12:52:27, percussive sounds could be heard and Trooper Burgos said "Hey! He's shooting at the sniper." At 13:07:05, Trooper Skipper utilized the armored vehicle Bear One to contact the subject's pick-up truck and push it away from the front of Room #220. At 13:14:33, radio confirmation was given to discharge wooden batons for the purpose of breaking out the subject motel room window. At 13:16:34, an officer can be heard saying, there was movement behind the bed. The officer then said the subject was crawling. At 13:19:48, an officer said "Hey. You said our guys have already engaged too, correct?". An officer said "I got movement...behind those pillows. I have a shot. I have a shot." At 13:20:03, an officer then fired 9 times. After the gunshots an officer said " Alright. He just pointed a gun at me through the port I engaged him [unintelligible] more rounds. It looked like a pistol." Trooper Vitullo then continued firing wooden batons. At 13:40:42, Sergeant Castellanos deployed a flash bang to assess whether the subject responded to it. At 13:43:36 Sergeant Castellanos deployed another flashbang. At 13:48:38 a percussive sound could be heard and a bright light could be observed in the window of Room #220. Someone could also be heard stating "they're making entry." The remainder of the video included

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			scene management after entry into Room #220 was made.
OSP BWC - Canton_USMS_Shooting_Jackson_Township-6.mp4	Sergeant Chris Castellanos	Axon Body 4 D01A5766Z	<p>The video began with Sergeant Castellanos arriving on scene at a perimeter location. At 12:44:00 Sergeant Castellanos began gathering information from officers who were already on scene. One officer could be heard saying "he [Vanest] was firing at us through that wall." The officer appeared to be pointing in the direction of the outside wall of Room #220. At 13:07:05 a gray truck became visible from the front windshield of the OSHP armored vehicle. The driver of the armored vehicle (Trooper Austin Skipper) began driving the armored SWAT vehicle and made contact with the gray truck ultimately pushing it away from the front of Room #220. At 13:13:21 Trooper Hector Burgos could be observed handing Sergeant Castellanos less-lethal ammunition while also saying "wooden baton" multiple times. At 13:20:04 multiple percussive sounds could be heard. Ejected cartridge casings could be observed coming from the area where [REDACTED] was positioned. This was likely the moment [REDACTED] fired his gun. At 14:40:53 Sergeant Castellanos appeared to throw a flashbang from the rear of the OSHP armored SWAT vehicle. Moments after, two percussive sounds could be heard. At 13:41:26 an alarm could be heard in the background. At 13:43:33 Sergeant Castellanos appeared to throw another flashbang from the rear of the OSHP armored SWAT vehicle. At 13:48:24 officers could be observed moving outside the OSHP armored SWAT vehicle. The officers appeared to be approaching Room #220. The video ended with Sergeant Castellanos exiting the armored SWAT vehicle.</p>

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For additional Information, refer to the Investigative Report titled *2025-05-21: Video Review – BWC from Ohio State Highway Patrol*.

[Canton Regional SWAT Drone Video](#)

One video file was provided that contained a recording from the drone utilized in the shooting incident. The video did not contain any sound.

The video recording did capture Vanest shooting a handgun from his position behind the bed. Below is a summary of the video recording.

The video began with the doorway of Room #220 visible, and the door was closed. The drone then appeared to push the door to Room #220 open and the interior of the room became visible. The drone then entered Room #220.

- Inside the room there appeared to be a bed on the left wall. The bed had white sheets and there was a pile of pillows stacked up on the edge of the bed near the back wall.
- At 00:00:35 the camera angle became briefly blurred while the camera angle quickly shifted. This was likely when Vanest shot at the drone. Numerous small figures could be observed travelling throughout the room.
- At 00:00:40 a small shift could be observed on the right side of the stack of pillows. This was likely the result of Vanest firing his gun.
- At 00:42 a small portion of Vanest's body became visible on the right side of the pillow stack. At 00:00:43 a large flash could be observed, which was likely the result of Vanest firing his gun (Drone 1).
- At 00:00:44 Vanest could be observed behind the bed/stack of pillows (Drone 2). The drone camera angle briefly shifted, likely as a result of Vanest shooting at the drone.
- At 00:00:55 Vanest's head could be observed behind the stack of pillows. He appeared to be holding a firearm in his hands based upon the repeated muzzle flash that could be observed (Drone 3).
- At 00:00:56 Vanest could be observed pointing his firearm in the direction of the drone (Drone 4). Moments later, muzzle flash could be observed.
- After the muzzle flash, the drone shifted, and the camera angle appeared to capture the ceiling, a window, and various items on the ground. This was likely when the drone was shot down by Vanest.

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- At 01:54:21, a light could be observed in what appeared to be the doorway of Room #220. An object could be observed moving and then a flash occurred. This was likely a flashbang deployed by officers.
- Moments later, a shield then became visible with the word "police" marked on it. This was the moment when officers entered into Room #220.
- At 01:56:34, the camera angle began to shift rapidly. It appeared as though someone had picked the camera up. Nothing of value was observed for the remainder of the video.

After the drone was shot down by Vanest, the camera angle remained fairly steady throughout the remainder of the video. It appeared as though a few times the drone was attempting to move without success. Large clouds of smoke could be observed at various points throughout the duration of the video. This was likely the chemical munitions deployed by Canton SWAT officers.

Small figures travelling throughout the room were visibly captured. These were likely projectiles fired by both Vanest and officers. However, due to the lack of percussive sounds, it could not be said with certainty what figures were projectiles and who was firing them.

Near the end of the video, an armored SWAT vehicle became visible through the window of Room #220. A small porthole appeared to open on the side of a vehicle. This was likely when officers were firing from the armored SWAT vehicle. Due to the structure of the vehicle, no officers could be observed inside the vehicle.

Vanest's entire body was not captured in the video. It was determined that Vanest was the figure observed behind the pillows based upon the totality of information learned throughout the investigation.



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Drone 1

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Drone 2



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Drone 3



Drone 4

For additional information, refer to the Investigative Report titled *2025-05-28: Video Review – Drone Video*.

[Surveillance Video](#)

Surveillance video was provided by the Cracker Barrel and the Rodeway Inn Motel. The videos provided were reviewed in their entirety.

[Cracker Barrel Surveillance Video](#)

The video footage provided was from a surveillance camera mounted on the south side of Cracker Barrel. The video did not contain any sound but visually captured some of the incident. Images depicting the camera angle have been included below.

The video was 5 hours, 11 minutes, and 42 seconds in length. According to the video time stamp, the recording began on November 18, 2024, at approximately 0958 hours. A manual check of the frame rate revealed the video was recorded at 10 frames per second. Due to this, the quality of the video was reduced and limited the ability to

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identify officers or gunshots being fired. Throughout the review, there were times when officers or agencies were identified. Those identifications were based on information learned during the investigation. References to time correlate to the time stamp on the video recording. A summary of the video has been provided below.



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10:27:34 A Marshall's black SUV arrived and parked in a space east of Room 220.

11:06:13 Multiple unmarked law enforcement vehicles parked in front of Room 220. Four officers exited their vehicles and approached the door.

11:10:57 Officers quickly moved away from the door and appeared to take positions of cover.

11:23:38 Additional marked police vehicles and officers began arriving

11:52:20 The first SWAT vehicle (Canton 11/WYATT) arrived and parked near the front of Room 220. Officers exited the vehicle and congregated near the back of it.

12:18:00 An officer [REDACTED] took up a position near Room 301.

12:22:53 The officer [REDACTED] returned to a position near the back of the Marshall's black SUV.

12:25:05 There was an abrupt movement of officers near the back of the Marshall's black SUV (likely the moment [REDACTED] was shot). Officers gathered and knelt near

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the officer (likely [REDACTED]) who was lying on the ground near the back of the Marshall's black SUV.

12:26:50 The officers stood up and began running north toward the Cracker Barrel parking lot. They then turned and ran west through the parking lot and out of camera view.

12:28:55 An officer (likely [REDACTED]) moved from the area where [REDACTED] was shot to the passenger side of a black SUV parked parallel to Room 301. The officer appeared to be setting up a rifle (likely a sniper set up). The officer adjusted his position several times until standing up and running to the east end of the Cracker Barrel parking lot and out of camera view.

12:47:01 The Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSP) Armored vehicle (SRT 1) arrived in the Cracker Barrel parking lot.

13:01:40 The OSP SRT-1 drove west through the Cracker Barrel parking lot and out of camera view.

13:06:21 The Canton 11/WYATT moved in reverse, away from Room 220 while OSP SRT-1 drove east, parallel to Room 220.

13:07:03 The OSP SRT-1 turned south and drove in front of Room 220 and pushed a light-colored pick-up truck (James Vanest's truck) away from Room 220.

13:08:03 Canton 11/WYATT returned to its position in front of Room 220.

13:08:43 A second Canton armored vehicle (Canton 03) arrived and parked along the north wall of Room 220.

13:48:22 A team of officers gathered along the passenger side of Canton 11/WYATT and then made their way to the door of Room 220.

13:48:55 A cloud of smoke was visible near the door of Room 220. The team then appeared to enter the room.

13:49:50 Team members appeared to exit the room. The remaining officers in the area then began securing their gear and weapons.

13:56:17 Officers began securing the area with crime scene tape.

The remainder of the video depicted officers present in the area likely awaiting BCI arrival.

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[The Rodeway Inn Surveillance Video](#)

Two camera angles were provided by the Rodeway Inn. The videos were both approximately 3 hours and 36 minutes in length. Neither video captured any audio during the recording. Both cameras visually captured the arrival of officers on scene to the shooting incident and the positioning of officers and vehicles on scene. Officers who fired their rifles during the incident could not be distinguished based upon the lack of audio and poor video quality. One officer could be positively identified (CPD Sergeant Eric Lee) while deploying less lethal munitions into Room #220.

For additional details refer to the video recordings and the investigative report titled *2025-07-19: Video Review – Rodeway Inn Surveillance Video*.

[Cellphone Video Recordings](#)

Cellphone video recordings were received by Jonelle Young (Young) and James Belcher (Belcher) who both were residents at the Rodeway Inn at the time of the shooting incident. The footage provided contained portions of the incident.

[Jonelle Young Cell Phone Video Room 327](#)

This file contained video footage recorded by Young, on her cellphone. The video was recorded from the area south of the Rodeway Inn in a parking lot (*Map Figure 1*).



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Map Figure 1

The video was 1 minute and 42 seconds in length. The footage showed the area of Room #220 where the officer-involved shooting occurred. Room #220 was not captured in the video recording. However, the gray truck allegedly driven by Vanest could be observed in the recording. The details most relevant to this investigation have been included below:

Throughout the duration of the video, a female voice (likely Young) could be heard describing the incident. The female stated that officers were using “tear gas” (i.e. chemical munitions) and that the subject (Vanest) was shooting at officers. The female also mentioned officers setting out a “pedestal” which was likely the tripod used by North Canton Police Department (NCPD) [REDACTED] prior to him getting shot.

At 00:51 an officer could be observed standing next to a black SUV parked in the parking lot of the Rodeway Inn. A percussive sound could be heard, and the officer appeared to deploy a chemical munition in the direction of Room #220.

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After the officer deployed the chemical munition, the same female could be heard asking, "Is that tear gas?" The female then discussed "backing up" to get away from the effects of the chemical munition.

At 01:03, a percussive sound could be heard. However, the origination of the sound was not visually captured in the video.

The same female could then be heard repeating that "he (Vanest) was shooting." The video then ended.

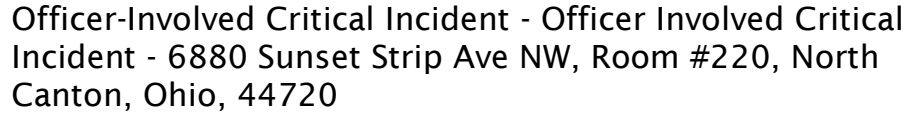
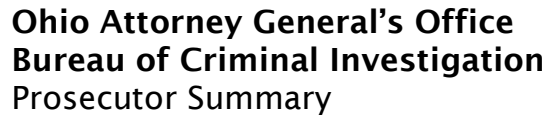


Young Cellphone 1

[James Belcher Cell Phone Video Room 305](#)

This file contained video footage recorded by Belcher, on his cellphone. The video was recorded from the inside of a room at the Rodeway Inn which was located in the building east of the shooting incident (*Map Figure 2*)

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Two of the recordings provided included relevant information for the shooting incident. The other three videos did not capture any relevant information.

The video was 41 minutes and 58 seconds in length. The camera angle appeared to show multiple officers standing behind a black SUV parked in the parking lot of the Rodeway Inn. Room #220 was not visible. Throughout the duration of the video, numerous percussive sounds were audibly captured. Not every percussive sound will be noted below, only those determined by the author to provide relevant information to the investigation. Additionally, the origination of the percussive sounds could not always be determined.

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Throughout the duration of the video, commentary by the occupants of Room #305 could be heard. Commands given by officers in the armored vehicle could also be heard.

At 01:09, a large, armored SWAT vehicle (Canton 11) could be observed pulling into the parking lot near the area of Room #220. Someone could also be heard saying, "Here comes the fucking bearcat... that's the SWAT team there."

At 02:12, Canton 11 parked and multiple officers could be observed exiting the rear of the vehicle outfitted with various tactical gear and firearms. Officers could then be observed taking positions of cover from the rear of the vehicle. An officer could also be observed in the turret located at the top of the vehicle.

The officers remained in their position of cover without notable change for approximately twelve minutes.

At 14:40 three officers could be observed moving from behind the Canton 11 to the rear of a black SUV that was parked on the left side of the armored vehicle. Officers continued moving to the left side of the black SUV and they were no longer observable within the camera angle. This was likely when officers moved into a position closer to Room #220 to deploy less lethal munitions.

At 14:54 a percussive sound could be heard. This was likely the deployment of less-lethal munitions into Room #220. Five additional percussive sounds could be heard. The three officers then appeared to move back to the rear of the black SUV.

At 16:11 a percussive sound could be heard and one of the officers standing at the rear of the black SUV appeared to fire their less lethal firearm into the ground behind the black SUV. This was likely an accidental discharge of the weapon and did not appear to strike anyone (*Belcher Cellphone 1*).

At 20:07 two officers could be observed moving on the left side of a black SUV towards the area near Room #220. Faint percussive sounds were captured moments after the officers were no longer visible from the camera angle. This was likely the deployment of less lethal munitions.

Officers continued to move between the rear of Canton 11 and the rear of the black SUV. Numerous percussive sounds were audibly captured.

At 20:15, a faint buzzing could be heard, which was likely the drone utilized by Canton SWAT officers to enter Room #220. The faint buzzing was followed by a loud percussive sound that was likely when Vanest shot at the drone from his position

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behind the bed in Room #220. The video did not visually capture the moment the drone was shot.

After the percussive sound, someone could be heard saying, "Hey, did someone just shoot?" The question was then followed by multiple loud percussive sounds.

At 25:08, an officer could be observed firing a less lethal round in the direction of Room #220. The officer was likely Canton Police Department (CPD) Sergeant Eric Lee (Lee), who reportedly fired numerous rounds of less lethal munitions.

At 25:29 a percussive sound could be heard, and a small grey-like cloud could be observed near a cluster of officers. The officer appeared to fire additional rounds after ejecting cartridge casings on the ground. This was likely an additional deployment of less lethal munitions.

At 27:35 an officer appeared to deploy multiple less lethal munitions from the rear of the black SUV. The officer then moved to the left of the black SUV and deployed additional rounds.

At 29:58 an officer could be observed deploying numerous rounds of less lethal ammunition. Multiple faint percussive sounds could be heard, and a grey-like cloud could be observed at the front of the less lethal firearm. This was likely when pepper balls were being deployed into Room #220.

At 30:03 the officer continued to deploy the less lethal munitions from the rear of the black SUV. A large grey-like cloud could be observed near the front of Canton 11 (*Belcher Cellphone 2*).

Numerous rounds of less lethal munitions continued to be deployed from the rear of the black SUV. In the meantime, it appeared as though an officer began setting up a tripod and long rifle at the right rear of the black SUV. This was likely North Canton Police Department (NCPD) [REDACTED] who was assigned as the [REDACTED] during the deployment.

At 34:51 a loud percussive sound could be heard, and [REDACTED] appeared to react to something striking him. [REDACTED] then fell to the ground. Loud yelling could then be heard, and [REDACTED] right arm appeared to be injured (*Belcher Cellphone 3; Belcher Cellphone 4*). This was likely the moment when [REDACTED] was shot by Vanest.

Once [REDACTED] was on the ground, officers began rendering aid to him.

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At 35:32 the officer in the turret of the armored vehicle appeared to switch firearms and began deploying less lethal munitions in the direction of Room #220. Numerous percussive sounds could be heard during the timeframe that [REDACTED] was rendered aid.

[REDACTED] was assisted by other officers and left the area where he was shot. Percussive sounds could be heard in the background.

At 36:29 the camera angle panned to the area near Cracker Barrel and officers could be observed running while assisting [REDACTED].

At 36:41 loud percussive sounds could be heard in rapid succession.

Another officer (likely CPD [REDACTED]) grabbed the rifle and tripod previously used by [REDACTED] and moved to a different location in a grassy area behind a black SUV.

At 38:49 someone could be heard yelling "get away from the window." The camera angle moved rapidly, and loud yelling could be heard in the background, likely from the room occupants.

At 39:40 yelling continued in the background and the camera angled moved and began capturing officers taking cover behind Canton 11.

The video ended with officers standing behind Canton 11.

Video #2 - VID_20241118_125027206

The video was 7 minutes and 16 seconds in length. The camera angle captured an officer sitting on a grassy strip of land that divided the parking lots of Cracker Barrel and the Rodeway Inn. The officer was holding a long rifle which was pointed in the direction of Room #220. The officer was likely CPD [REDACTED].

At 00:03 a loud percussive sound could be heard.

AT 00:44 multiple rapid percussive sounds could be heard. [REDACTED] remained seated with a long rifle positioned in front of him.

At 01:00 additional rapid percussive sounds could be heard while [REDACTED] remained in his seated position with the rifle.

At 01:48 [REDACTED] appeared to fire one round in the direction of Room #220. This was based on the percussive sound and the observable recoil from the firearm.

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██████████ also appeared to discharge a fired cartridge casing (*Belcher Cellphone 5*).

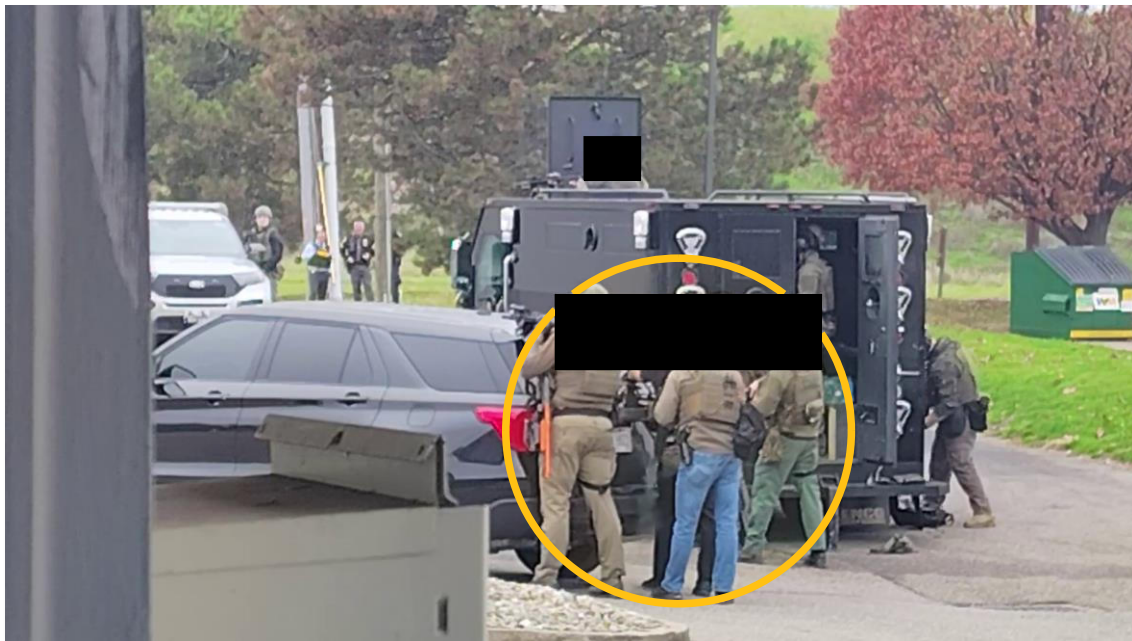
At 03:05 a percussive sound could be heard, and ██████████ appeared to duck out of the way.

At 3:18 rapid percussive sounds could be heard.

At 03:29 the camera angle changed and panned to officers standing behind Canton 11. Numerous percussive sounds could be heard.

At 03:34 multiple officers could be observed standing behind Canton 11. One officer was standing at the left rear corner of the armored vehicle and appeared to have fired his gun. A small grey-like could be observed near his rifle (*Belcher Cellphone 6*). Numerous percussive sounds could be heard in succession, followed by an alarm beeping in the background.

The video ends with officers standing behind Canton 11. One officer was pointing a firearm in the direction of Room #220 from the left rear side of the armored vehicle. Another officer could be observed in the turret of the armored vehicle pointing a firearm in the direction of Room #220.



Belcher Cellphone 1

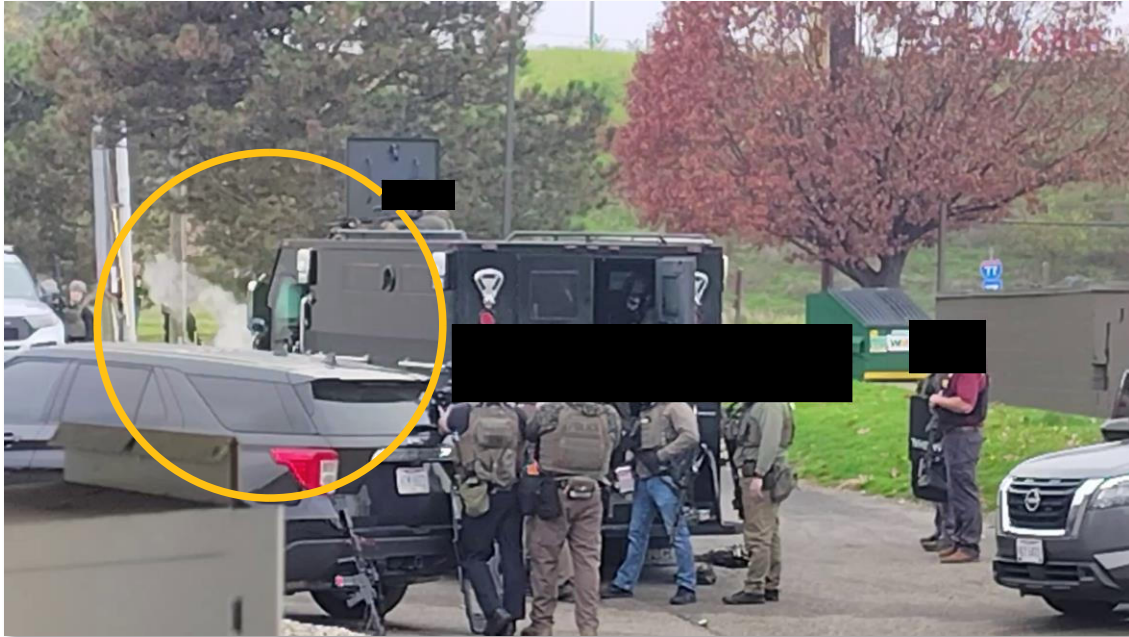
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Belcher Cellphone 2

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Belcher Cellphone 3



Belcher Cellphone 4

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Belcher Cellphone 5

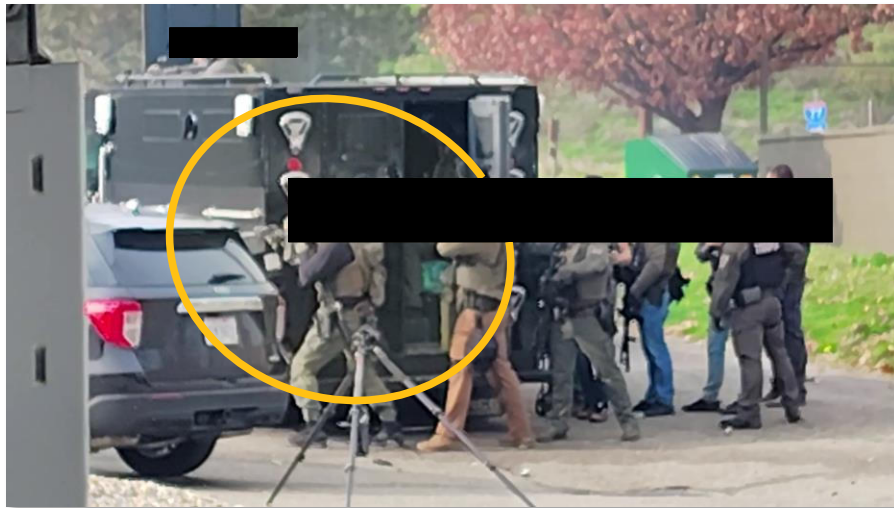
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Belcher Cellphone 6

For additional details refer to the cellphone video recordings and the investigative report titled *2025-06-18: Cellphone Video Review*.

BCI Laboratory Firearm Analysis

Multiple firearms and cartridge casings were recovered from the scene inside Room #220 and additional firearms were collected from the gray Dodge 3500 truck. The items of evidence were submitted to the BCI Firearms laboratory for analysis. SA Armstrong received the results of the analysis on February 25, 2025, and noted the following:

- All firearms collected were deemed operable
- Nine (9) fired 10 mm cartridge casings were collected by BCI CSU from Room #220 (Matrix Items 12 (2 casings), 14 (1 casing), 21 (1 casing), and 22 (5 casings))
 1. The source was identified as the Springfield Armory, model XDM Elite, 10mm semi-automatic pistol S/N BE277600, which was collected from Room #220 (Matrix Item #9).

Below is a table depicting the lab results received:

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Lab Item #	Matrix Item #	Crime Scene Item #	Description	Result
1	9	10	Springfield Armory, model XDM Elite, 10mm semi-automatic pistol, SN: BE277600	Operable and source identification for Lab Items #3, #5, #6, and #7 (Crime Scene Items #14, #16, #24, #25; and Matrix Items #12, #14, #21, #22).
2	8	9	Ruger, 38 Special, Revolver, SN: 540-45090	Operable
8	45	48	Romarm, Model WASR-10, 7.62X39mm semi-automatic rifle, SN: A1-33596-15 RO	Operable
9	46	49	CVA, Model Scout, .45-70, single shot rifle, SN: 61-06-133257-23	Operable
10	47	50	Dickson, Model ErmoX XXPA, 12 Gauge semi-automatic shotgun, SN: 204216591	Operable

For additional information, refer to the Investigative Reports titled *2025-11-21: Evidence submitted to BCI Lab* and *2025-02-25: Lab Reports Received and Reviewed*.

Conclusion

Based upon the tangible/physical evidence, video and audio recordings, statements from uninvolved law enforcement officers, statements from witnesses and the totality of the investigation, it was concluded United States Marshals Service Deputy Marshal Christopher Alstrom conducted an investigation into James Vanest regarding a felony warrant for his arrest. Deputy Marshal Alstrom located Vanest at 6880 Sunset Strip Avenue Room #220 in North Canton, Ohio.

Deputy Marshal Alstrom and other officers on scene attempted to make contact with Vanest at his room. After numerous attempts to order Vanest out of the room, officers opened the door to Room #220 and observed Vanest lying on the bed pointing a firearm at them.

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Canton Regional SWAT Team was requested to respond to the scene for assistance. Once on scene, officers took cover behind armored vehicles and various other vehicles parked in the parking lot. Officers provided countless commands to Vanest to have him exit the room and surrender. Officers also utilized numerous rounds of less lethal and chemical munitions in an attempt to gain compliance from Vanest.

A drone was deployed into Room #220 and was quickly shot down by Vanest. A short time later, Vanest began shooting his gun in the direction of officers resulting in [REDACTED] being shot in the arm.

Vanest continued to ignore verbal commands given by multiple officers on scene.

A team activation was given and additional Canton SWAT personnel and OSP SRT members arrived at the scene with their armored vehicles. Officers took up positions inside the armored vehicles allowing them to better see inside Room #220.

Volleys of gunfire from both officers and Vanest continued throughout the duration of the incident. Some of the periods when officers fired would have been considered suppressive fire, meaning they did not visually observe Vanest but were trying to prevent Vanest from continuing to fire in the direction of officers and Interstate 77.

One officer [REDACTED] was able to observe Vanest hiding behind a stack of pillows positioned on the bed. The officer observed Vanest pointing a firearm in his direction. Vanest was subsequently shot by officers.

For a period of time after the final volley of gunfire, officers continued to give Vanest commands to exit the room. There was no response from Vanest and less-lethal munitions were utilized to assess whether Vanest was responsive. An unmanned ground vehicle was used to enter Room #220 and provided a visual of Vanest who was lying unresponsive on the ground behind the bed.

Officers on scene feared Vanest was feigning his unresponsiveness and was lying in wait for them. Officers proceeded with caution and entered Room #220 and located Vanest deceased with a firearm in his hand.

Multiple other firearms were observed by officers who entered the room.

In total, nine officers fired their rifles during the shooting incident. throughout the duration of the incident, Vanest continued to fire his gun in the direction of law

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enforcement officers. According to officers on scene, he posed a hazard to not only officers on scene, but the general public who remained in the area of the Rodeway Inn and vehicles travelling on Interstate 77 which was located near the motel.

Numerous officer and civilian witness statements concluded that Vanest did not comply with lawful orders given by the police. Multiple statements also indicated that Vanest fired his gun first. Civilian witnesses reported that officers utilized less-lethal munitions prior to any lethal gunfire, and they gave Vanest multiple opportunities to surrender without incident.

At total of 39 rounds of less lethal munitions where the cartridge casings could be identified were collected by CSU Agents. This number does not account for the many rounds of pepper ball munition that were fired by officers on scene.

Additionally, a total of 147 5.56/.223 cartridge casings were collected during crime scene processing of the parking lot. These cartridge casings were identified as those that were fired by officers on scene. Due to various factors during the incident, it is unknown if this was the total number of rounds fired by officers but could provide an estimate to the reader.

During crime scene processing of Room #220, a total of two guns, 4 additional loaded magazines, and fifteen 10mm and .38 Special cartridge casings were collected as evidence. Three additional firearms and numerous magazines and rounds of ammunition were located in Vanest's truck.

Lab reports concluded that the firearms collected from Room #220 and the gray Dodge truck were operable and were also the source of the numerous cartridge casings collected.

The conclusion was based on the totality of the investigation. Throughout the investigative process, investigators continually evaluated the physical evidence in conjunction with audio and video recordings, forensic findings, witness statements, involved officer statements and other information to ensure all relevant facts and circumstances surrounding this incident were obtained.

This investigation was focused on the officer-involved shooting incident and the law enforcement use of force that led to the death of Vanest.

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Contact Information

The preceding information comprises only a portion of facts and circumstances collected during the investigation of the officer-involved shooting incident. For further review of specific information or documentation collected during the investigation, please refer to the individual reports, documents, and files from which this summary was derived. Any questions regarding the content or context of the information contained in this document can be directed to the attention of Special Agent Allison Fletcher who can be reached via email at allison.fletcher@OhioAGO.gov or by telephone at 330-217-3605.

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