



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



2022-1115
Officer Involved Critical Incident – SR 339 near mile marker 3,
Belpre (L)

Investigative Activity: Interview with Officer
Involves: Sgt. Billy Johnson (W)
Date of Activity: 05/27/2022
Activity Location: Johnson, Sgt. Billy – Business – 309 4th Street , Marietta, OH
45750, Washington County
Author: SA James Poole

Narrative:

On May 27, 2022 at approximately 1014 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent James Poole (SA Poole) interviewed Sergeant William 'Billy' Johnson (Sgt. Johnson) at 309 4th St., Marietta, OH. The interview was conducted to gain more knowledge regarding an Officer-Involved Critical Incident (OICI) that occurred on Thursday, May 19, 2022, at SR 339 near mile marker 3, Belpre, OH. Washington County Sherriff's Office (WCSO) deputy was involved in a vehicle pursuit with an unknown subject. The involved vehicle crashed into a civilian truck then ultimately spun-out and crashed into a ditch. As the deputy approached the vehicle, shots were fired. The involved party, later identified as Devon Taylor (Taylor), died from unknown injuries.

This interview was audio recorded, and a copy of the recording was saved electronically within the case file. Please refer to the recording for specific quotes. The following is a summation of the interview.

SA Poole identified himself and advised Sgt. Johnson that their conversation was voluntary, and he could end the interview at any time. Sgt. Johnson voluntarily agreed to talk with SA Poole.

Sgt. Johnson explained he has worked 8 years at the Washington County Sherriff's Office and is currently a Sergeant for the uniformed patrol division.

Sgt. Johnson stated he was at home when he received a phone call from Captain Lockhart requesting his assistance on a situation regarding a barricaded suspect in a vehicle. Sgt. Johnson gathered his gear and met Captain Lockhart and Lieutenant Gherke at 339 Park Rd. which was down the street from the incident. Sgt. Johnson explained they all got into Captain Lockhart's unmarked cruiser and arrived at the scene around 0500 hours.

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Sgt. Johnson explained he was wearing a tactical vest, carried a protective ballistic shield, and carried his issued Smith and Wesson M&P 2.0 duty pistol. Sgt. Johnson clarified he did not have his body camera due to the fact he responded from his home.

Sgt. Johnson stated that Captain Lockhart commanded Lieutenant Gherke and Sgt. Johnson in a tactical "V Formation" up to Taylor's vehicle. Sgt. Johnson said his responsibility was to hold a ballistic shield while he broke any windows with his issued ASP. Sgt. Johnson explained he first broke the driver's side rear window, but could not see inside due to the air bags being deployed. He then broke the driver's side window, where they found Taylor slumped over and unresponsive. Sgt. Johnson clarified, that is when Captain Lockhart asked for Deputy Aultman to check Taylor for any signs of life, where he did not find any. Sgt. Johnson said while Deputy Aultman was checking for signs of life, he saw the barrel of a gun in between Taylor's body and the center console.

Sgt. Johnson stated that was when Little Hocking Fire Department arrived and pronounced Taylor.

Sgt. Johnson then stated he helped with scene security and ultimately helped download all body worn cameras that were at scene to provide for BCI.

SA Poole asked if Taylor ever said anything or was responsive. Sgt. Johnson stated, "No and no."

SA Poole asked if there were commands given to Taylor. Sgt. Johnson said when they showed up, the officers at scene were giving Taylor commands, but they received no response.

SA Poole asked if Sgt. Johnson believed he followed all policies and procedures throughout the incident. Sgt. Johnson said, "Yes."

SA Poole asked Sgt. Johnson if he ever discharged his weapon during the incident or had seen any other deputies discharge their weapon. Sgt. Johnson stated, "No and no."

Interviewed concluded at 1029 hours.

Attachments:

Attachment # 01: 2022-05-27 Sgt William (Billy) Johnson