



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



2022-1356

Officer-Involved Critical Incident – 1659 S. Main Street, Akron, Ohio
 44301

Investigative Activity: Interview with Law Enforcement
 Involves: Captain Donna Holden (O), Euclid Police Department (O),
 BCI (O)
 Activity Date: 7/5/2022
 Activity Location: Euclid Police Department –
 545 East 222nd Street, Euclid, Ohio 44123
 Authoring Agent: SA Charles Moran #67

Narrative:

On July 5, 2022, at 1258 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Chuck Moran (Moran) and SA Cory Momchilov (Momchilov) interviewed Euclid Police Department (EPD) Captain Donna Holden (Holden).

Captain Holden explained that several ranking officers at the EPD interviewed a potential police officer candidate, Dupre Whatley (Whatley), on June 29, 2022. Captain Holden said Whatley was “engaging” and he spoke about his background. Captain Holden said Whatley told them about his “best friend” or “close friend” that was recently involved in the incident in Akron. Captain Holden said Whatley “needed to stop and collect himself” and it was “definitely an emotional response.”

Captain Holden said Whatley provided details about his interaction with his friend, Jayland Walker. Whatley said he had numerous conversations with Jayland Walker about his wife/girlfriend dying in a car accident. Captain Holden said Whatley spoke about how Jayland Walker was “very depressed and upset” about the loss and “He wished it was him instead of her.”

Captain Holden said Whatley spoke about talking with Jayland Walker numerous times by phone about Jayland Walker being upset, and Jayland Walker asked Whatley about “interactions with police.” Captain Holden said Whatley told Jayland Walker, “No man. Don’t do that. If you ever interact with the police make sure you show your hands. Don’t do the kind of things your saying.” Captain Holden stated, “So, Mr. Whatley was trying to talk his friend out of doing something rash and that’s kind of officer he was would want to be with the Euclid Police Department is bridge the gap between the community and persons who maybe aren’t complying with police. ‘Make sure you comply with police. Don’t do anything ridiculous.’ Mr. Whatley would say, ‘Reach out to me if you’re going through a hard time.’ And one of the key things he said was, ‘Make sure you show your hands,’ and “Don’t do what it is you’re talking about doing.’ ”

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SA Momchilov asked Captain Holden if Whatley spoke about any other specifics that Jayland Walker was talking about. Captain Holden said Chief Meyer obtained some further details from Whatley about how he did not want his friend to do the stuff he was talking about, and he did not want his friend to have a bad interaction with the police and to call him before he did anything.

SA Momchilov asked Captain Holden if she believed that Whatley was talking about that Jayland Walker wanted to commit suicide-by-cop. Captain Holden responded, "Yes. That was the feeling. When he left the room, it was kind of like...that was an unusual interview and it kind of resonated with the timeliness." Captain Holden explained how it seemed like Whatley was trying the "bridge the gap" of community and police relations and that was the type of candidate that the EPD was looking to hire.

SA Moran asked Captain Holden about Whatley's explanation of what Jayland Walker was asking him, and if it was her impression that Jayland Walker was asking Whatley about "tactical and police judgmental decisions" because Whatley was a law enforcement officer. Captain Holden responded, "Based on what Whatley was saying, it seemed like he was trying to talk his friend out of...I'm sorry, maybe convincing his friend that cooperating with police is a better path. That whatever it is that precipitated the conversation that, 'Make sure you follow commands.' I believe was one of the things he said and 'Show your hands' were two key things that he was trying to explain, or describe to us, that he would portray to this friend or any friend."

Captain Holden said Whatley's father had been in prison for manslaughter. There was an "expectation" in Whatley's family that police are "bad." Captain Holden said Whatley explained the work he has done to "overcome that" and how his father was now "proud him." Captain Holden said Whatley used that explanation and "bridged it right into this friend in Akron who he's trying to convince him to cooperate with police. 'Don't put yourself in a situation. Don't put the police in that situation.' So, it all led, it all blended together."

SA Moran asked Captain Holden if Whatley mentioned anything about the timing of his conversations with Jayland Walker. Captain Holden said Whatley did not specifically mention when those conversations occurred. Captain Holden said Whatley emphasized to his friend, "If you ever need me, call me." Captain Holden said she believed from the interview with Whatley that the conversations were somewhat recent. SA Momchilov asked, "Did he indicate this was after his [Jayland Walker] fiancée was killed?" Captain Holden replied, "Oh, absolutely. It was the depression because the fiancée died that he felt that it should have been him instead of the fiancée and he [Whatley] said, 'It doesn't work like that,' and that, 'You're here and you need to be here.' "

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Captain Holden said she knew about the incident that occurred in Akron but did not know any specific details.

The interview with Captain Holden was audio recorded.

Attachments:

The audio recorded interview with Captain Holden was attached to this report.

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