



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



2024-3775

Officer Involved Critical Incident - 1055 East Avenue,
Akron, Ohio 44307, Summit County

Investigative Activity: Interview with Officer Michael Shaffer
Involves: Officer Michael Shaffer (W)
Activity Date: 12/20/2024
Activity Location: 121 South Main Street, Akron, Ohio
Authoring Agent: SA Cory Momchilov #64

Narrative:

On Friday, December 20, 2024, at 1338 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Cory Momchilov (SA Momchilov) and SA John Lieber (SA Lieber) interviewed Officer Michael Shaffer (Officer Shaffer) who was accompanied by his attorney, Jacob Will, from the Ohio Defense Firm. The interview took place at 121 South Main Street, Akron. Also present was Akron Police Union President Brian Lucey and Akron City Assistant Law Director Christopher Reece.

The interview was audio and video recorded.

Prior to the interview, Officer Shaffer read, understood, and signed the BCI Criminal Investigation Notification form.

Officer Shaffer was identified as being a police officer who witnessed and/or had some level of involvement in the November 28, 2024, officer-involved shooting which occurred in the area of 1055 East Avenue, Akron, Ohio. Reportedly, Officer Shaffer did not discharge a firearm during the course of the incident. The purpose of the interview was to obtain all relevant information about the incident known or observed by this officer.

Officer Shaffer stated that his radio call sign on November 28, 2024, was Car 10. He has been employed by the Akron Police Department for approximately 8 months and does not have any prior law enforcement experience. During the incident, Officer Shaffer wore his standard police uniform. He also wore an external ballistic vest and duty belt. Officer Shaffer was the passenger in Car 20 which was marked with Akron Police emblems and emergency lights. He considered himself to be well-represented as a police officer during the incident. He stated he was not under the influence of any substance that would impair his memory or judgment during the incident or during the interview with BCI. He does wear corrective lenses.

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Officer Shaffer was wearing a body-worn camera at the time of the incident. Officer Shaffer was asked if he had viewed any body-worn camera footage from the incident. Officer Shaffer stated he had and "watched all of them" and the footage was posted on YouTube.

Officer Shaffer graduated from the Akron Police Department Academy approximately 2 months ago. Officer Shaffer is currently in field training and Officer Dylan Ostrander (Ostrander) is his field training officer.

Officer Shaffer was asked to explain how he became involved in the incident and what he observed.

Officer Shaffer explained that he and Officer Ostrander had just finished up a report and were stationary at Sherbondy Hill. (Officer Ostrander was driving, Officer Shaffer was the passenger). Officer Shaffer explained that they then drove east down Vernon Odom Boulevard and approached the intersection of East Avenue when they heard "Signal 5" (Emergency Radio Traffic Only) broadcasted over the radio. Officer Shaffer stated, "When we heard Signal 5 traffic, they stated they were at V-Odom and East Avenue. So, we stopped our cruiser in the middle of the road, looked around and we're like, we don't see anybody and then we seen Officer Fields and Loar off to the right in the grass, you know, chasing. That's when we flipped on our lights and, you know, began to chase alongside them in the cruiser."

Officer Shaffer continued, "We were paralleling on the street as they were chasing in front of the school and we got up next to them and that's when we heard what I thought to be 3 or 4 shots go off and then when we heard that, we flipped the car around and then we jumped out and got in-line next to the other officers and gave commands for the suspect to put his arms out to his side."

Officer Shaffer later stated that he could not see what the subject was doing when he heard the shots.

SA Momchilov asked Officer Shaffer if he could tell who was firing when he heard the shots. Officer Shaffer stated that he had no idea.

SA Momchilov asked Officer Shaffer to describe what occurred after he got on-line. Officer Shaffer stated, "We called out to the suspect, we saw head movement and he had his arms tucked up underneath his body and we were calling out for him to put his arms out to his side."

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SA Momchilov asked if the subject was complying with the commands. Officer Shaffer stated, "No." SA Momchilov asked if the subject was still moving. Officer Shaffer replied, "Very minimally."

Officer Shaffer explained that they waited for a body shield and once they had "enough coverage" they approached the subject. Officer Shaffer advised that he holstered his firearm and handcuffed the subject. Officer Shaffer stated the subject was then searched and a semi-automatic handgun with an extended magazine was located in his right front pocket.

SA Momchilov stated, "You said the firearm was in his right front pocket, was it a zipper pocket?" Officer Shaffer replied, "zipper pocket, yes." SA Momchilov asked Officer Shaffer if he had to unzipper the pocket. Officer Shaffer replied, "Yes."

SA Momchilov asked Officer Shaffer if any officer on scene told him what occurred. Officer Shaffer replied, "No." SA Momchilov asked Officer Shaffer if he had discussed this incident with any officers. Officer Shaffer replied, "No."

SA Momchilov asked Officer Shaffer if he was basing his statement on what he observed on the body-worn camera footage or from his memory. Officer Shaffer stated, "From what I remember."

SA Lieber stated to Officer Shaffer, "You guys said you waited for a shield, is that part of, tell me a little bit about that, is that part of training to like wait, or like, what was the instance, why did you guys wait for a shield?"

SA Shaffer replied, "Being a rookie, that's the first time, that's not something, I don't think we trained in the academy for a situation like that. So, I just relied on senior officers and just followed the lead of the senior officers."

The interview was audio recorded and video. The audio recording was attached to this report. The video recording was placed into the item section of the physical case file, labeled as Item F. The signed BCI Criminal Investigation Notification form is also attached to this report. Please see the attachments for further details.

References:

Item F: Officer Michael Shaffer video interview

Attachments:

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1. Ofc. Michael Shaffer interview
2. Criminal Invest. Notification-Shaffer

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Criminal Investigation Notification

1. This investigation is being conducted in order to determine whether any criminal laws have been violated on the part of those involved in this incident. Specifically, to collect facts and information to be provided to the prosecutor and/or grand jury in order for them to determine whether the conduct involved is authorized or prohibited by criminal statutes.
2. Your participation in this interview is voluntary and you may decline to answer or cease the interview at any time. You are entitled to have an attorney present if you wish.
3. The criminal investigation is separate from any internal, administrative investigation which your employer may or may not be independently conducting. You are not being compelled to give any statement or answer any questions. This is not a "Garrity" interview (where you could be required to answer).

Michael Shaffner
Printed Name of Interviewee

12/20/24 13:37
Date / Time

Michael Shaffner
Signature of Interviewee

Jon Lieber
BCI Agent (Printed)

S/A J. Lieber #50
BCI Agent (Signature)