

On Sunday, January 23, 2022, at 12:08pm, Mr Paul Courtemanche called 911 from his mobile phone while in his apartment at 1 Baron Park Ln, apt 23. Officer Jillisa Smith was working as the desk officer and answered the 911 call. Courtemanche reported over the phone that he had mental health issues, he had a knife, and that he did not know what he was going to do with it. Smith remained on the line with Courtemanche for approximately 12 minutes and 40 seconds in total which continued throughout the following events.

After obtaining the initial information over the phone, Jillisa dispatched Officer Aurise Miedico (ID 151) and Officer Roberto Reyes (ID 107, Rob) to the location. She explained over the air that they were responding for a Q5 (possibly suicidal) male who stated that he had a knife and didn't want to put it down. She continued the dispatch advising officers to use caution and that he was unsure if he wanted to hurt officers or himself. She also reported that he stated that he was alone in the apartment. She then returned to the 911 line to continue the call.

Rob and Aurise acknowledged and started to the Lord Baron Complex. Rob responded from the road and Aurise radioed that she was responding from the station. Rob asked Aurise over the air to bring a 40mm less lethal with her as he did not have one in his cruiser. Aurise copied and asked if Rob had a shield (acrylic) in his cruiser.

I (ID L112) radioed that I would be responding to the scene as well and asked Rob as the senior officer to hold outside until we could get all of us on scene. He acknowledged.

Concurrent with those transmissions, Aurise called my cell phone to ask if I could bring the 40mm launcher because there wasn't one in the deployment room. I told her I would and I asked her to take an acrylic shield to the scene. After we hung up, she located the 40mm less lethal and the shield and responded from the station. (Each cruiser is outfitted with various pieces of equipment. There are not enough shields for every cruiser and we have five 40mm less lethal launchers distributed across approximately 10 line cruisers. Aurise is a junior officer and has not been trained in the use of the 40mm less lethal. Approximately half of the department is trained to use the 40mm.)

Before leaving the building, I stopped in dispatch to speak with Officer Smith (Jillisa) and Officer Cochran (Tristan, who was covering the other dispatch desk at the time of the call). I asked if we had any in-house information or past history with Courtemanche and also asked if he had any BOP or criminal history. I was advised that the department did not have any history with him and there was no BOP found. I listened for a minute to the 911 conversation that Jillisa was having with Courtemanche and was pleased with how she was handling it. I asked Tristan to notify the Fire Department of the situation and ask for them to respond and stand-by with and ambulance for a section 12. I then exited the building, retrieved the 40mm launcher and accompanying reload bag from my cruiser, and responded to the call in the shift commander cruiser, unit 40.

While traveling to Baron Park Ln, I considered the situation and what additional resources we may need to handle the call. Sgt Didonato messaged me while I was en route to let me know he was working a detail in town if we needed additional equipment or officers. I was glad to know he was working and on the air as he and I work together as members of the NEMLEC SWAT

Unit. I was considering the possibility that this call could result in a SWAT callout for a barricaded person with a knife. That is a call that we handle regularly as part of the team. More information would be needed before we could determine if that was the best course of action.

My plan upon arrival was to hold position outside the building and gather information from the officers who had already arrived to see what other resources we needed. That would allow us to develop a team strategy to handle the situation with the officers, tools, and resources needed - all while allowing Jillisa to continue to negotiate with Courtemanche over the phone. She had radioed at some point that the call was ongoing and that she was trying to talk him down.

I was on Terrace Hall Ave nearing the complex when I heard Aurise radio, "151 Shots fired!" I picked up speed in the cruiser. However, time seemed to slow down in my mind, not knowing who fired and frantic to know if Aurise and Rob were ok or if they had been shot. Not knowing what had happened on scene, it was a very difficult few seconds. I had already turned into the complex and was rounding the bend looking ahead for the scene when Rob radioed, "Control, shots fired by the police, shots fired by the police!" Immediately upon hearing Rob's transmission, time seemed to return to a normal process. I pulled up on scene and called off approximately 20 seconds after the initial shots fired call. I also radioed Sgt. Didonato to respond to the scene having just received a message from him that he was on the air.

I got out of the cruiser and moved to the location where Rob and Aurise were in the parking lot between buildings one and three. As I scanned the scene, Rob was near the subject on the ground finishing handcuffing the subject who was face down. Aurise was moving back toward the cruisers (returned a moment later with a medical bag). Two firefighters were already close by and beginning medical on Courtemanche with Rob. One of the other firefighters was running from the fire engine (parked a distance beyond the cruisers at the far side of building one) with medical equipment. The ambulance which was staged a short distance away in the complex by the tennis courts was moving up to the scene. I had passed them just seconds before.

I looked around the scene and did not see anyone close enough to effect scene safety. I did see one individual a distance away past the front doors of building one. I believed the person to be a female and do not recall anything further about her. At the time, my only concern regarding bystanders was to ensure they were far enough away, did not constitute a danger, and that they were not in danger themselves.

There were multiple people attending to Courtemanche from the time I first saw the scene until he was transported from the scene in the ambulance. Rob and Aurise continued to assist until it was clear there were enough fire medics and personnel to care for him. I asked them to step away from the medical which was being handled by no less than 4 fire fighters and medics. However, Rob continued to work through the call and made a radio transmission to dispatch calling for more units to help secure the scene.

It was clear that Courtemanche was no longer a threat so I removed his handcuffs with the assistance of FF Duprez so they could get him onto a backboard and ready to transport. I then radioed that I had command on scene and advised additional units to respond to the Turnpike Ext side of the complex and to keep the roadway clear for ambulance egress.

I went to Aurise to check on her. She was pale and breathing at a shallow and rapid rate. Her eyes were red with dark rings around them. She had what appeared to be blood spatter on her face around her nose, mouth, and cheeks. I would estimate about 4 or 5 droplets. It was clear she was in a mild state of shock. I asked her to take three box breaths with me (4 seconds in, 4 second hold, 4 seconds out). She did so and I told her she would be ok.

I asked her to tell me what happened. She said that her and Rob were standing by the cruisers (she motioned to the area behind and left of the cruisers). She said Courtemanche came out of the building and started charging at them with a knife. She said they gave commands and he just wouldn't stop. She said he just kept coming at us. Rob fired the less lethal and it didn't stop him, she said, he kept coming at me. She continued to say that she tripped backwards and fell. She looked up and saw him right there. Her eyes looked up as if describing that he was right above her. "I thought, that's it, I'm dead." She said.

She was pointing and motioning to the areas as she described them. She continued and at some point dropped the shield she was holding while backing up and firing at him. I asked how many rounds she fired, she said she didn't know, maybe two but she didn't know. I again told her she would be ok and everything is over. I encouraged her to keep box breathing and escorted her to my cruiser and sat her in the front passenger seat and told her I would be right back. I told her to focus only on her breathing.

I returned to do the same with Rob. He had a similar paleness to his face and I could tell he was in a heightened state of vigilance. He was breathing heavy and continued to look around as if looking for additional tasks to perform. I asked him to take a couple slow, deep breaths and then tell me what happened. He focused in on me and said, "It was crazy Dan. He came out at us with a knife and just wouldn't stop." He continued to explain that he had the 40 (less lethal) because Aurise isn't certified to use it. He said he hit him with it (foam 40mm round) and it did nothing. He said [Courtemanche] was right on top of Aurise. I asked how many rounds were fired and he believed two. He said that she tripped and fell backwards onto the ground. I asked where Courtemanche came from. He pointed to the front doors of building one and tracked his finger across the grass and to the left of the cruisers onto the street and continued to follow a path around the cruisers to where Courtemanche went down in the mouth of the parking lot between building one and building three.

To clarify, I asked if he could show me how and where each of them moved. He pointed and motioned to the area by the cruisers where he and Aurise moved from and where they were when he fired the less lethal and where Aurise was when she fired her Glock pistol. By his description and by the location of the items on the ground in the area, it was clear they had both retreated a good distance during the event.

There was a foam 40mm projectile on the grass area in front of building one. I noticed the acrylic shield on the ground near where he described Aurise's position when she fired. There was a filet knife (6 inch blade with a wooden handle) lying on the ground in the same area to the left side of the scene. As I looked around, I could see at least two bullet casings on the ground, one to the left side and one to the right under the front end of the vehicle in the parking lot. (Later another

casing was pointed out to me that I hadn't seen at the time.) There was a black cell phone just a couple feet from where Courtemanche fell to the ground. The physical evidence on the scene appeared to match the story as it was described to me by both officers.

I escorted Rob to his cruiser and asked him to sit in the driver's seat and just try to focus on his breathing to lower his heart rate. He agreed. Although he was clearly shaken up by the incident, he asked about Aurise and said, "She had no choice, Dan. He was right on top of her." I told him that I understood.

I went back to check on Aurise. I was concerned that shock might be setting in and there was indication that she hit her head on the pavement when she fell backwards. I do not recall who mentioned that she hit her head as she fell (It was later confirmed that Aurise had a large bump on the back of her head from the fall). An ambulance was called to transport her to the hospital. She was having difficulty controlling her breathing and she had begun crying and was clearly distraught. I felt it was important to take her firearm from her at that time for all of the above reasons and knowing she would be leaving the scene shortly. I removed her weapon from the holster, necessarily clearing it and locking it open for safety reasons. I placed the unloaded weapon (along with the magazine I had removed from the mag well and the round removed from the chamber) on the ground inside the secure scene by where it was discharged knowing the investigators would need it for the investigation.

Officer Papsedero was on scene and I asked him to remain with her until the ambulance arrived for her transport. I returned and told Rob that he needed to go to the hospital as well for evaluation. He agreed and Officer Papsedero escorted them with the ambulance.

By that time, Sgt Didonato, Officers Outerbridge, Sage Costa were also on scene and had secured the inner and outer perimeter with caution tape. Additional officers radioed that they were responding to the scene and I turned my focus to the larger incident command needs.

Notifications were made to Chief Browne, Deputy Chief Kirchner, the detective bureau, and CPAC. Officer Saledas also responded to the scene with the command post.

Sgt. Abaskharoun and Officer Zaccagnini were sent, in addition to Papsedero, to the hospital to be with both of the officers transported. Sgt Abaskharoun would act as the supervisor at that location.

The incident is still under investigation by the Middlesex District Attorney's office. Additional information regarding the ongoing incident will follow in subsequent reports.

Respectfully Submitted,



Lt. Dan Hanafin