



LOWER COLUMBIA MAJOR CRIMES TEAM

23-11694

OFFICER INVOLVED SHOOTING INVESTIGATION

PRESS RELEASE 4

SEPTEMBER 22, 2023

The Lower Columbia Major Crimes Team (LCMCT) has completed its investigation of the officer-involved shooting incident, involving Longview Police Department, which occurred on September 2, 2023.

LCMCT investigators have interviewed several witnesses, conducted scene processing, reviewed dispatch records, body worn camera footage and other evidence during this investigation. Investigators have been able to confirm the following information:

At 1400 hours of September 2, 2023, Cowlitz 911 received a report of a male subject passed out in his vehicle. Staff at Minami Teriyaki, 1208 15th Ave, Longview, reported the male driver was passed out while in their drive through line. The staff were unable to wake the subject. Medical units responded to the scene and administered Narcan (Naloxone) to the subject, who then regained consciousness. The subject reportedly became aggressive and threatened medical units before driving away, while showing symptoms of impairment.

Officers with the Longview Police Department (LPD) responded to the area and located the suspect vehicle, an orange Dodge Challenger, near 15th Ave and Hudson St. The uniformed officers were operating marked patrol vehicles and attempted to stop the suspect vehicle. The driver was later identified as Louis Earl Johnson, Jr., age 30, of Seattle. Officers reported Johnson attempted to elude, ran a red light, drove at high speeds, slammed on his brakes, and put the vehicle in reverse during the pursuit. Officers attempted to perform a Pursuit Intervention Technique but were not able to stop the suspect vehicle.

When the pursuit reached the area of 19th Ave and Florida St, officers were able to block the vehicle in. Johnson, still in the driver's seat of the vehicle, produced a pistol and fired multiple shots at Longview Police Officer Matt Dennis, which struck the officer's patrol vehicle. Officer Dennis, Officer Bri Cummo and Officer Seth Libbey returned fire. One round struck Johnson in the chest. Officers immediately removed Johnson from his vehicle and rendered first aid. Johnson was declared deceased at the scene. No officers were injured.

LCMCT investigators determined Johnson was unlawfully in possession of a 9mm semiautomatic pistol. The pistol was determined to be an illegally manufactured firearm bearing no serial number. Johnson was wearing a holster for this pistol and a spare magazine on his hip.

Body camera footage from Longview Police officers showed Officer Dennis taking cover inside his vehicle as it was being struck by gunfire from Johnson. Officer Dennis then drew his own weapon and returned fire. Investigators found that five rounds fired by Johnson struck Officer Dennis' patrol vehicle in the hood and windshield area. One round fired by Johnson went through the patrol vehicle's windshield and passed through the front passenger headrest. Officer Dennis' K-9 partner was in the rear of the patrol vehicle but was not injured.

Body camera video also showed Johnson pointing the pistol out his vehicle's driver door window. The video showed Johnson drop the pistol onto the hood of Officer Dennis' patrol vehicle after officers fired shots. Investigators found five spent 9mm casings from Johnson's pistol and recovered suspected narcotics from Johnson's vehicle.

The investigative case file will be turned over to the Cowlitz County Prosecuting Attorney's Office for review.

Troy Brightbill

Chief Criminal Deputy

Cowlitz County Sheriff's Office