

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case Number: 21-01099CFANO

STATE OF FLORIDA,

Plaintiff,

VS.

CORNELIUS TREVON WHITFIELD,

Defendant.

DEPOSITION OF:

DANIEL GODSALL

TAKEN BY:

Counsel for the Defendant

DATE:

August 12, 2022

TIME:

2:15 p.m. - 2:28 p.m.

PLACE:

Pinellas Co. Justice Center
14250 49th Street - 1100
Clearwater, FL

REPORTED BY:

Tamara M. Pacheco, RPR
Notary Public, State of FL

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APPEARANCES

THEODORA TAKTIKOS-DANZIG, ESQUIRE

Assistant State Attorney

14250 49th Street North

Clearwater, Florida 34620

Attorney for the State of Florida

JESSICA MANUELE, ESQUIRE

JULIA SEIFER-SMITH, ESQUIRE

Assistant Public Defenders

14250 49th Street North

Clearwater, Florida 34620

Attorneys for the Defendant

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EXHIBITS

(No exhibits were marked for identification.)

1 WHEREUPON,

2 DANIEL GODSALL

3 (the deponent herein, being first duly sworn, was examined
4 and testified as follows:)

5 EXAMINATION

6 BY MS. MANUELE:

7 Q Could you please state your name and occupation
8 for the record.

9 A Officer Daniel Godsall.

10 Q And how are you employed?

11 A Law enforcement officer with the City of
12 St. Pete.

13 Q How long have you been with St. Pete PD?

14 A Sixteen years.

15 Q Any prior law enforcement experience?

16 A No.

17 Q All right. We're here today because you've been
18 listed as a witness in the State of Florida versus
19 Cornelius Whitfield regarding the homicide of Darren
20 Barnes that occurred back February 1st/February 2nd of
21 '21. Are you familiar with the circumstances?

22 A I'm familiar.

23 Q And did you write a supplemental report
24 detailing your involvement?

25 A I did.

1 Q Do you have that report with you today?

2 A I do.

3 Q Have you had an opportunity to review it?

4 A Yes.

5 Q And was there anything in your supplement that
6 you found to be inaccurate or that you'd like to change?

7 A No.

8 Q All right. What was your call sign back in
9 February of '21?

10 A My call sign has changed so many times, I
11 couldn't even begin to tell you. It might have been 361D,
12 as in Delta or David.

13 Q Okay. Any other might or maybes if that one we
14 can't find?

15 A I've worked every single zone in the district,
16 so I couldn't even begin.

17 Q Does any of it ever stay the same, even the
18 number or the letter part?

19 A The letter part has stayed the same for the
20 last -- I don't know -- almost fourteen years for me.

21 Q Is the letter the shift?

22 A Yeah.

23 Q And then the number is, like, the zone kind of
24 thing?

25 A Usually zone but we go all over the place.

1 Q St. Pete, every other agency -- I feel like you
2 guys have the hardest time keeping track of what your call
3 signs are. They change.

4 A Especially because I've worked that district my
5 entire career, so it's -- like I said, I've worked every
6 single zone. And I know I've been up in what we call the
7 60 zone for a long time, but I've been 61, I've been 62,
8 63 and 64 at some point. So right now I'm 62, but I could
9 have been 61 then.

10 Q Okay. Tell me how you became involved in the
11 case.

12 A So on that evening, I had been dispatched as one
13 of the responding officers to the Emerald Pointe complex
14 reference a call for officer.

15 Q Were you riding by yourself that night?

16 A Yeah. We typically ride by ourselves.

17 Q Okay. And would you have been wearing a
18 body-worn camera?

19 A Yes.

20 Q Was that activated?

21 A After I arrived at the scene, yes.

22 Q Are you on scene before anyone makes entrance
23 into the apartment, or do you come shortly after they've
24 entered the apartment?

25 A The exact order I couldn't tell you, but I know

1 that when I arrived, shortly after I entered the apartment
2 with Officer Hollister.

3 Q Okay. Hollister is a female; is that right?

4 A That's correct.

5 Q Okay. I did see your body-worn camera then. I
6 just wasn't sure if that was you.

7 As far as you know, had you ever responded to
8 this particular unit before for any calls?

9 A Not that I recall.

10 Q Okay. As far as you know, had you ever had any
11 contact with Rodney Green, the man shot in the face, or
12 his brother, Deronrick Green prior to that night?

13 A I couldn't recall an incident of that.

14 Q Nothing that stuck out though when you came in
15 contact as knowing them or anything?

16 A No.

17 Q The brother Deronrick, where -- at some point he
18 is outside the apartment before his brother is taken by
19 ambulance. Is that right?

20 A Right. I remember a distraught male and one
21 that appeared to be bleeding from his mouth from what I
22 could tell.

23 Q Okay. You remember two males you're saying?

24 A Right.

25 Q Okay. I guess did you -- were you aware of what

1 their relationship was or if there was any relationship
2 between the two?

3 A No.

4 Q So the distraught male, the one that's not
5 injured, did you -- was he on scene before you got there,
6 or did he arrive after? Do you know?

7 A I know the distraught one, he did appear injured
8 from what we could tell because he had blood coming from
9 his mouth. He was definitely there when we arrived. I
10 can't say whether he arrived, like, long before or if he
11 had been inside or whatever, but I know when we arrived he
12 was there.

13 Q Okay. I'm sorry, I thought we were talking
14 about two different ones, the guy that was injured and
15 then the distraught one. So not the guy that's injured,
16 the other guy.

17 A Right. Because we had one --

18 Q Not the dead guy.

19 A Correct.

20 Q Okay. So you said you had one --

21 A There's the other one, whatever his name is, the
22 distraught male that I observed along with Officer
23 Hollister who appeared to have blood coming from his
24 mouth.

25 Q Do you remember the other male that was there

1 that you not bleeding?

2 A I don't recall one that wasn't bleeding.

3 Q That was yelling outside about who had done
4 this?

5 A That is possible. I haven't had any access to
6 review body-cam footage, so I couldn't speak on that.

7 Q Okay. So do you -- because the man bleeding, he
8 is inside the apartment when police come to the door. He
9 answers the door. Is that your recollection or --

10 A I recollect that, yes.

11 Q Okay. And then he indicates that his friend is
12 dead on the floor. He doesn't know that he's dead, but
13 there's a gentleman who's --

14 A who he sees on the floor that appears to be
15 deceased.

16 Q Right. And then there's another man who is
17 uninjured but is very emotional and hysterical. I don't
18 think he ever enters the apartment, but he is outside with
19 the gentleman who is bleeding. Do you remember him --

20 A That sounds accurate.

21 Q Do you know if he was on scene when you first
22 got there or if he came after?

23 A I couldn't tell you.

24 Q Okay. And at some point you -- there's a
25 female, a Laquanda Green who you have contact with at the

1 scene also, right?

2 A That's later after we already go inside and
3 clear the place and scan it for any possible evidence in
4 plain sight.

5 Q Okay. So you guys -- when you exit -- who is
6 messing with the TV? Do you remember if you were messing
7 with the TV in the apartment?

8 A I don't recall messing with the TV, so I
9 couldn't speak as to whoever might have been messing with
10 the TV.

11 Q Okay. When you have contact with Laquanda
12 Green, is that after Rodney has already left in the
13 ambulance, or is Rodney still on scene?

14 A As far as I'm aware, he probably would have left
15 in the ambulance by this point because I was directed by
16 supervisors to stand by with Laquanda, along with Officer
17 Robison at that time.

18 Q Do you know if Laquanda and the male, the
19 uninjured alive male on scene arrived at the scene
20 together or not?

21 A No, I don't.

22 Q Do you know what kind of vehicle either of them
23 did arrive in?

24 A I wouldn't be able to attest to that.

25 Q Okay. And I forgot to ask you. Were you a

1 patrol unit back in February of '21?

2 A Correct, as I am now.

3 Q Have you ever done Major Crimes, like, as a
4 detective?

5 A No. Not as a detective, no.

6 Q According to your report, you indicated that
7 Laquanda Green was given permission by Acting Supervisor
8 Guess to sit in her vehicle in the parking lot.

9 A Correct.

10 Q Are you saying that she was given permission to
11 sit in Laquanda Green's vehicle, or she was given
12 permission to sit in Officer Guess's vehicle.

13 A She wasn't in a cruiser from what I recall, no,
14 but I couldn't say whether that was her vehicle or someone
15 else's.

16 Q Gotcha. When you are transporting her to the
17 station, would you have had either your body-worn camera
18 or COBAN activated?

19 A I don't have COBAN.

20 Q That answers that one. What about your BWC?

21 A During transport, no.

22 Q Do you recall any -- do you recall what
23 Ms. Green's demeanor was during transport?

24 A During transport she seemed okay.

25 Q Did her demeanor change at some other point?

1 A I know when we were waiting at the interview
2 room at our police headquarters and it was taking a long
3 time for detectives to get to her and talk to her, she was
4 wanting to be finished up because it was taking them a
5 long time.

6 Q That's like when you guys are waiting on the
7 detectives to get there?

8 A Correct.

9 Q And as far as how she knew to respond to the
10 scene, do you -- do you have any information about that?

11 A I don't.

12 Q would you be able to testify about any
13 statements made by the uninjured male that was on scene --

14 A No.

15 Q -- that was transported also? Do you remember
16 seeing him at the station also?

17 A If that's the one that was transferred by
18 officer Rose --

19 Q Yeah.

20 A -- then I would have at least kind of crossing
21 at some point.

22 Q Okay. would you be able to testify to anything
23 about any words he said?

24 A No. No.

25 Q As far as you know, have you ever had any

1 contact with Cornelius Whitfield?

2 A Not that I can think of.

3 Q Were you involved in his arrest?

4 A No.

5 Q There's another case that Mr. Whitfield has
6 pending. It's a triple homicide. Were you involved in
7 that case at all?

8 A No.

9 Q When you -- I guess were you responsible for
10 transporting Mr. or Ms. Green from the station after they
11 spoke to detectives?

12 A I only transported Laquanda Green to the
13 station.

14 Q Did you transfer her back from the station to
15 anywhere?

16 A No. Because about 2:30 in the morning, I was
17 relieved by Officer Bunich.

18 Q So they were still there at 2:30. Once you were
19 relieved, did you ever -- so I guess from the time you
20 transport Laquanda, do you stay at the station with her
21 until you're relieved?

22 A Correct.

23 Q And then once you were relieved, did you ever
24 respond back to the scene?

25 A No. I was actually past my normal check-off

1 when I was cleared.

2 Q Okay. And any of the next following days were
3 you asked to do any work out at the scene either while
4 they're processing or anything like that?

5 A No.

6 Q Did you have any other involvement in this case
7 other than what we've discussed?

8 A No.

9 MS. MANUELE: Any questions?

10 EXAMINATION

11 BY MS. SEIFER-SMITH:

12 Q What time did your involvement in that case
13 start?

14 A I know I was dispatched around 12:04 a.m.

15 Q So when you said 2:30, was that just
16 two-and-a-half hours later?

17 A Roughly.

18 Q Okay. So it wasn't like the following day to
19 2:30?

20 A Correct.

21 Q And what time -- you said it was past your
22 normal check-out.

23 A I normally check off at two, two in the morning.

24 Q So it was just a half-hour past that?

25 A Correct.

1 Q Did you have any conversations with any of the
2 detectives that were involved in the investigation?

3 A No.

4 Q Did you have any kind of, like, contact with
5 them on the scene? And by contact, I mean, you said no
6 conversation, but like see them arrive at the scene.

7 A Not that I recall.

8 Q Okay. And how about at the station?

9 A No.

10 Q And in terms of the change in demeanor for
11 Ms. Green that you described, it was just that she got, I
12 guess, kind of anxious or irritated about the amount of
13 time it was taking?

14 A Correct.

15 Q About how much time were you in her presence or
16 engaged with her?

17 A I'd say about -- what time? So it would have
18 been approximately almost 12:30 in the morning or short of
19 when I was first with her. So you're looking at roughly
20 about two hours timeframe that I was present with her.

21 Q Okay. The detectives hadn't come to speak with
22 her before?

23 A Correct. Yeah, because that's including
24 standing by with her there, transporting her to the
25 station, and standing by with her at the interview room

1 until I was relieved by officer Bunich.

2 Q And it seems like that was just about the sum
3 and total of the time that you were involved in the case,
4 about two, two-and-a-half hours?

5 A Correct.

6 MS. SEIFER-SMITH: I don't think I have any
7 other questions.

8 MS. TAKTIKOS-DANZIG: None from the State.

9 MS. SEIFER-SMITH: I know you -- do you have
10 anymore questions?

11 MS. MANUELE: Huh-uh.

12 BY MS. SEIFER-SMITH:

13 Q I know you said that you didn't have an
14 opportunity to review your body-worn camera before coming
15 in for deposition.

16 A I can't access it.

17 Q Okay. If you do get access to it in the future
18 and you review it and you feel as though you left
19 something out from our conversation today, would you be so
20 kind as to call our office or the State Attorney's office?

21 A Of course.

22 Q Is that fair?

23 A Uh-huh.

24 MS. SEIFER-SMITH: Great. Thank you.

25 (Deposition concludes at 2:28 p.m.)

1 COUNTY OF PINELLAS)

2 STATE OF FLORIDA)

3 CERTIFICATE OF OATH

4

5 I, the undersigned authority, certify that
6 DANIEL GODSALL personally appeared before me on the 12th
7 day of August, 2022, and was duly sworn.

8 witness my hand and official seal this 28th day
9 of October, 2023.

10

11

Tamara M. Pacheco

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Tamara M. Pacheco, RPR
COMMISSION #942612
EXPIRES: March 30, 2024

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ERRATA SHEET

IN THE CASE OF: STATE OF FL v. CORNELIUS WHITFIELD
NAME OF DEPONENT: DANIEL GODSALL
CASE NUMBER: 21-01099CFANO

Please read the transcript of your deposition.
If you feel you need to make corrections, please note on
this page. DO NOT mark on the transcript itself.
Sign and date the transcript below.

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Signature

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF FLORIDA)

COUNTY OF PINELLAS)

I, Tamara M. Pacheco, certify that I was authorized to and did stenographically report the Deposition of DANIEL GODSALL; that a review of the transcript was requested; and that the transcript is a true and complete record of my stenographic notes.

I further certify that I am not a relative, employee, attorney or counsel of any of the parties, nor am I a relative or employee of any of the parties' attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am I financially interested in the action.

Tamara M. Pacheco

Tamara M. Pacheco, RPR