

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

Case Numbers: 21-01099CFANO

STATE OF FLORIDA,

Plaintiff,

VS.

CORNELIUS TREVON WHITFIELD,

Defendant.

DEPOSITION OF:

TABATHA GERRY

TAKEN BY:

Counsel for the Defendant

DATE:

October 23, 2023

TIME:

2:35 P.M. - 2:48 P.M.

PLACE:

Pinellas Co. Justice Center  
14250 49th Street - 1100-4  
Clearwater, FL

REPORTED BY:

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

Pages 1 - 17

JTP REPORTING (727) 422-8287

## APPEARANCES

THEODORA TAKTIKOS-DANZIG, ESQUIRE

THOMAS KOSKINAS, ESQUIRE

Assistant State Attorney

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Clearwater, Florida 34620

Attorney for the State of Florida

JESSICA MANUELE, ESQUIRE

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## EXHIBITS

(No exhibits were marked for identification.)

1 WHEREUPON,

2 TABATHA GERRY

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 Yeah. Tabatha Gerry, and I'm a police officer  
10 with the St. Petersburg Police Department.

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

12 A February will be four years.

13 Q Any prior law enforcement experience?

14 A Yes.

15 Q Where was that?

16 A I worked at a sheriff's office in North Carolina  
17 for three-and-a-half years.

18 Q What county?

19 A Lee County Sheriff's Office.

20 Q You said, I'm sorry, how many years?

21 A Three-and-a-half in North Carolina.

22 Q And what unit are you currently assigned to?

23 A The Downtown Deployment Team.

24 Q How long have you been with that unit?

25 A December -- first week of December will be two

1 years.

2 Q We're here today because you've been listed as a  
3 witness in the State of Florida versus Cornelius Whitfield  
4 regarding the homicide of Darren Barnes that occurred back  
5 on February 1st/February 2nd of 2021.

6 A Yes.

7 Q Are you familiar generally with the  
8 circumstances?

9 A Yes.

10 Q And did you write a supplemental report  
11 detailing your involvement?

12 A Yes.

13 Q Do you have a copy of that report with you  
14 today?

15 A Yes.

16 Q Have you had an opportunity to review it?

17 A Yes, ma'am.

18 Q Was there anything in your report that you found  
19 to be inaccurate or that you would like to change?

20 A No.

21 Q And likewise, is there anything in your report  
22 that in reviewing it you realized was incomplete or that  
23 you should have included something that you failed to that  
24 you would like to add?

25 A No, ma'am.

1 Q Okay. What unit were you assigned to back in  
2 February of '21?

3 A So I was still on midnights in District 2, so my  
4 schedule was 10 p.m. to 8 a.m. on patrol.

5 Q And that night were you riding as a one-man  
6 unit?

7 A Yes.

8 Q Were you in a marked cruiser?

9 A Yes.

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

11 A I remember the call coming out over the radio.  
12 Due to the circumstances of the initial complainant  
13 stating that he believed his friend was dead, Dispatch  
14 sent several units to the apartment complex. I arrived  
15 shortly on scene with two other officers prior to making  
16 entry into the apartment.

17 Q And who were the officers that you were with  
18 when you guys entered?

19 A Officer Hollister and Officer Godsall.

20 Q The initial complainant, do you know if that was  
21 Rodney Green or if that was Deronrick Green, if you know?

22 A I don't recall. I didn't know the complainant's  
23 name.

24 Q Okay. But the complainant information you had  
25 was that complainant called and said friend was dead?

1 A Yes.

2 Q Did the complainant, if you recall, indicate  
3 that they were injured themselves?

4 A Not that I recall, no.

5 Q Okay. When you guys -- are there any lay  
6 witnesses outside when you first approach?

7 A No.

8 Q Have you -- I'm sorry, I should have asked you  
9 this. In Lee County -- well, I guess, have you ever  
10 worked Major Crimes/Homicide in St. Pete?

11 A Not in St. Pete. I was a detective sergeant in  
12 North Carolina prior to leaving and moving back home here.

13 Q And was that like with the major crimes or  
14 homicide?

15 A We did every case and forensics out in the  
16 field. It was a small department. We didn't have a lot  
17 going on. They're like you get to do everything. Okay,  
18 thank you.

19 Q How long were you in that role?

20 A About four months before I decided it was time  
21 to come home, I've got to come home.

22 Q And when you -- there's some discussion when you  
23 had entered, and you were trying to figure out how  
24 somebody's injuries occurred. You were trying to figure  
25 out if they were shot. Was that the person on the ground

1 or the person that was moving about that was injured?

2 A It was going to probably be both individuals  
3 because I know the individual who was on the floor upon  
4 entry, I wasn't going to just assume how he was injured,  
5 but I mean, you could tell that he was injured and  
6 probably no longer alive. And then the other individual,  
7 I remember him profusely bleeding from his mouth as he was  
8 trying to speak, so I assumed he was injured as well.

9 Q And was he -- the individual who was still  
10 moving around, Rodney, was he able to provide any  
11 information about what had happened?

12 A He said he did not recall. From what I remember  
13 him saying, he was sleeping. He woke up, and he found his  
14 friend. And that was from the initial. Now, I don't know  
15 if somebody else got something different once they got him  
16 calmed down. He was very, very distraught once we  
17 arrived.

18 Q Am I correct that he didn't even realize he was  
19 shot also for some period of interaction with you all?

20 A Yes, ma'am.

21 Q At one point you, like, check one of the bedroom  
22 windows, and you indicate I didn't see anything on the  
23 window. What was it you were looking for at that time?

24 A I don't recall anything about the window, but I  
25 do know once we initially arrived and went in, the



1 complainant was in the living room. At some point, the  
2 other officers directed him outside and had someone stand  
3 by. I remember going -- the kitchen was on the right. It  
4 was a very short hallway. There was a bedroom off to the  
5 end of the hallway, and I know I remember clearing the  
6 scene just to make sure there was nobody else. I remember  
7 asking him if there were any weapons in the house. I did  
8 notice in the bedroom where he stated he was sleeping,  
9 there was some blood in the bed, and there was kind of a  
10 blood trail I guess of him coming out of the bedroom and  
11 that was --

12 Q So was it based on him saying that he was, like,  
13 hit or something in the bedroom? Were you trying to  
14 verify that or see if you could find any evidence or  
15 corroboration of that?

16 A Yeah. Just due to his injury and the initial  
17 scene of the blood trail coming out and him stating that  
18 he was asleep in that bedroom but he didn't recall what  
19 had happened, yeah.

20 Q And am I correct that you noticed that the blood  
21 was coagulating already?

22 A Yes. On the individual who was right by the  
23 door, upon entry, there was a pretty decent circular  
24 pattern of blood around his head, and it appeared that the  
25 blood closest to his head had already started kind of

1 coagulating. You could see that from just kind of  
2 standing next to him on entry.

3 Q Did that give you any information as far as like  
4 trying to estimate the time that everything had occurred?

5 A So that's -- then initially, once we had the  
6 complainant and we kind of just asked him very brief  
7 questions -- because like I said, he was a bit of a mess  
8 at the time, which I don't blame him. But once he  
9 couldn't really give us any information, I wasn't able to  
10 build any kind of timeline to know how long his friend had  
11 been there versus how long he had been sleeping before he  
12 realized he was injured. So I wasn't able to get an  
13 initial timeframe.

14 Q Okay. There -- do you remember anything about  
15 the temperature in the apartment, whether it seemed extra  
16 cold, extra warm, normal room temperature?

17 A I know outside, just due to the fact it was  
18 February and I remember that night, it was very, very  
19 cold. I remember once the scene had been secured, I  
20 started the crime scene log, and I actually remember  
21 asking my sergeant if I could pull my vehicle back around  
22 to face the apartment -- there were two poles, and I swear  
23 my Taurus just barely fit -- because it was so cold  
24 outside. But as far as the temperature inside, I don't  
25 recall, but I know it was very cold outside.

1           Q     Okay. Do you remember if there was a ceiling  
2 fan at all in the living room?

3           A     Not that I recall.

4           Q     Okay. Where -- so I think maybe -- where you  
5 pulled your car up with the two poles, is that where you  
6 stayed put with the log? Was that the entrance to the  
7 crime scene?

8           A     Yes. So initially I started the crime scene  
9 log, and then I would get out of my vehicle and mark more  
10 things down and get back in. I positioned my vehicle  
11 facing the apartment door just so that I could make sure  
12 that it would stay secure while I was trying to not freeze  
13 out in the weather. So I would kind of go in my car and  
14 outside of my car.

15          Q     Where was the entrance to the scene?

16          A     I don't recall where they ended up putting the  
17 entrance, but I just remember being inside of the crime  
18 scene facing the door just to make sure it was secured  
19 because I know we waited a while for detectives to come  
20 out.

21          Q     Do you remember which side of the building you  
22 would have been on?

23          A     So I know -- I want to say it would be like the  
24 back side. So if you come in Emerald Pointe and you're  
25 kind of driving through and you see all the main parts

1 from the parking area, it would have been on the opposite  
2 side of the building where it was a grassy area that  
3 butted up to the fence line for the apartment complex.

4 Q Okay.

5 A So you basically would have to walk around the  
6 building to get to that apartment. You wouldn't be able  
7 to see if it you just pulled up and parked. You would  
8 have had to walk around the back side of the building.

9 Q Okay. After Mr. Green, Rodney Green was  
10 transported to the hospital, did you ever have any  
11 subsequent contact with him?

12 A I did not.

13 Q The -- his brother, Deronrick that was on scene,  
14 did you ever have any contact with him?

15 A The individual that was in the doorway when we  
16 made contact initially?

17 Q The living guy that was uninjured.

18 A I know that there was the individual initially  
19 on the floor, and then I know the other victim that was  
20 injured. Those are the only two people that I recall that  
21 I had any interaction with. I don't remember a third  
22 person.

23 Q Okay. And the -- you indicated the door  
24 wouldn't open fully because Mr. Barnes' feet were kind of  
25 in the way.

1           A     Yes.

2           Q     Do you know -- was the door open like as much as  
3     it could open? So like if I were to watch that video,  
4     that would be an accurate kind of where -- how far the  
5     door was able to open?

6           A     Yeah. So from what I recall is that once we  
7     made approach to the apartment door, the apartment door  
8     was open slightly. Which once we kind of walked up and  
9     saw, that gave us the exigency to go in and make sure, Oh,  
10    my gosh, what's going on. Let's secure the scene.

11                So it was open just enough. It did open a  
12    slight bit more, but when we made entry initially, we were  
13    very cautious to make sure we didn't disturb the body that  
14    was on the ground because he was kind of right in the  
15    doorway. His head was this way towards the hallway. His  
16    feet were here. So when the door opened, we just tried to  
17    kind of go over him and around to not disturb him.

18          Q     Gotcha. You then stayed at the scene I guess  
19    until you're relieved early morning?

20          A     Yes.

21          Q     Once you left, were you ever asked to do any  
22    additional follow-up or investigation?

23          A     No.

24          Q     When Mr. Whitfield was arrested I think  
25    February 16th, did you have any involvement in either that

1 arrest or that investigation, separate investigation at  
2 all?

3 A No.

4 MS. MANUELE: I don't have any other questions.

5 MR. KOSKINAS: That's it. Thank you very much  
6 for coming in.

7 (Deposition concludes at 2:48 p.m.)  
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1 COUNTY OF PINELLAS )

2 STATE OF FLORIDA )

3 CERTIFICATE OF OATH

4  
5 I, the undersigned authority, certify that  
6 TABATHA GERRY personally appeared before me and was duly  
7 sworn.

8 witness my hand and official seal this 20th day  
9 of December, 2024.

10  
11 Tamara M. Pacheco

12 Tamara M. Pacheco, RPR  
13 COMMISSION # 474485  
14 EXPIRES: March 30, 2028  
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IN THE CASE OF: STATE OF FL V. CORNELIUS T. WHITFIELD  
NAME OF DEPONENT: TABATHA GERRY  
CASE NUMBER: 21-01099CFANO

PAGE	LINE	ERROR/AMENDMENT	REASON FOR CHANGE
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Date



## 1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

2 STATE OF FLORIDA )

3 COUNTY OF PINELLAS )  
4

5 I, Tamara M. Pacheco, certify that I was  
6 authorized to and did stenographically report the  
7 Deposition of TABATHA GERRY; that a review of the  
8 transcript was requested; and that the transcript is a  
9 true and complete record of my stenographic notes.

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

15 Tamara M. Pacheco16 Tamara M. Pacheco, RPR  
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