

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:

NICHOLAS CARDINAL

TAKEN BY:

Counsel for the Defendant

DATE:

October 23, 2023

TIME:

9:38 a.m. - 9:47 a.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 - 14

JTP REPORTING (727) 422-8287

APPEARANCES

THEODORA TAKTIKOS-DANZIG, ESQUIRE

THOMAS KOSKINAS, ESQUIRE

Assistant State Attorney

14250 49th Street North

Clearwater, Florida 34620

Attorney for the State of Florida

JESSICA MANUELE, ESQUIRE

Assistant Public Defender

14250 49th Street North

Clearwater, Florida 34620

Attorney for the Defendant

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EXHIBITS

(No exhibits were marked for identification.)

1 WHEREUPON,

2 NICHOLAS CARDINAL

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 Nicholas Cardinal, police officer with the
10 St. Pete Police Department.

11 Q And how long have you been with St. Pete?

12 A Eleven years.

13 Q Any prior law enforcement experience?

14 A No.

15 Q We're here today because you've been listed as a
16 witness in the State of Florida versus Cornelius Whitfield
17 regarding the homicide of Darren Barnes that occurred back
18 on February 2nd -- 1st or 2nd of 2021. Are you familiar
19 generally with the circumstances?

20 A No, I am not.

21 Q Okay. And did you write a supplemental report?

22 A I did.

23 Q And did you have an opportunity to review that
24 this morning?

25 A I just did.

1 Q Okay. Does that at all refresh your
2 recollection or not really?

3 A I don't recall specifics. I do remember
4 assisting on this case.

5 Q Okay. As far as your limited involvement, do
6 you have a little recollection of that? Not necessarily
7 the details of the whole homicide.

8 A I have no -- I do not know the details of the
9 homicide. I assisted them. It was pretty regular for me
10 to come out and assist them looking for specific things on
11 an investigation like that without really having too much
12 information on the big picture.

13 Q So in reviewing your supplemental report, is
14 there anything that you recall that --

15 A No.

16 Q -- you should have included that you failed to
17 include?

18 A No.

19 Q Or anything in your report that you somehow
20 recall is inaccurate that you would like to change?

21 A No. No.

22 Q What was your call sign back in February of '21?

23 A My call sign was D37.

24 Q Okay. And at some point you respond to Emerald
25 Pointe Apartments. Is that right?

1 A The area.

2 Q Did you actually make it to the apartment
3 complex do you know?

4 A I don't believe so. I believe this is all --
5 I'm seeing addresses. I believe this is all in the
6 general vicinity of the apartment complex. I don't recall
7 specifically being in the complex itself. I believe I was
8 canvassing the outskirts looking for a vehicle or anything
9 suspicious on cameras or witnesses.

10 Q What -- approximately what time are you
11 responding to do this canvass?

12 A It would have been that morning when I came in,
13 I believe. It doesn't say on the supplement when I wrote
14 it. I don't recall. It would have been in the morning.

15 Q So the shooting happens right around midnight.

16 A Okay.

17 Q I guess, do you recall what shift you were
18 working in February of '21?

19 A I was part of the Financial Crimes Unit at the
20 time, and so we would work 8 to 4. This occurred the
21 night before. I can say with almost certainty that we
22 would have come in at 8 o'clock that morning, and they
23 would have pulled us initially to come and help out.

24 Q Gotcha. Would you have been wearing a body-worn
25 camera?

1 A I would not. I was in plain clothes.

2 Q would any of your interactions that are
3 referenced in your supplement be recorded in any way?

4 A Not by me, no.

5 Q Do -- looking at 310 72nd Avenue Northeast, you
6 indicate you spoke with a female resident. The name isn't
7 included in your supplement. would you have notes or some
8 record of who you spoke to at that address somewhere else?

9 A I have no notes. I would have collected more
10 information if there would have been something that was,
11 you know, deemed pertinent at the time or something
12 significant, but for the sake of expediency, we were
13 moving -- you know, trying to find somebody who actually
14 witnessed something or -- this one specifically are you
15 referring to? which one?

16 Q She indicated -- a female resident who indicated
17 a male voice yelling around 1 a.m.

18 A Yeah. So, I mean, she heard a voice. She
19 couldn't describe it. Had no observations that were
20 deemed pertinent at the time, other than a voice
21 screaming. So I did not get her information, no.

22 Q Okay. The 250 72nd Avenue Northeast, you
23 indicated there was a Ring doorbell that's motion
24 activated and no motion was detected. Did you check to
25 see if this would capture motion on the street, on the

1 sidewalk, like how close the motion would need to be, or
2 did you get any information about that?

3 A I didn't deem that relevant at the time because
4 we were just looking for footage that would help the case,
5 and I was asking these people to check their cameras.
6 They were checking them. Some of them were checking them
7 right in front of me, and they were saying there is no
8 motion. At that point, they don't have any observation.
9 I don't personally diagnose their camera, whether it's
10 working at that point. If it doesn't have footage, I move
11 on.

12 Q Right. But you're trying to figure out if
13 there's any pedestrians or vehicles in the area, right?

14 A Yeah.

15 Q And so if they say it's not motion activated, do
16 you ask, like, how close would somebody have to be in
17 order to motion activate your camera to figure out if
18 there could still have been pedestrians or vehicles that
19 went by?

20 A No.

21 Q Anybody that you left a business card with, did
22 you do any follow-up, or that was if they happened to --

23 A I did not follow up. It would --

24 Q And if they -- I'm sorry.

25 A I believe if I handed a business card, it would

1 have been I asked them to call if they found anything
2 relevant. I would have given them the timeframe and what
3 I was looking for.

4 Q Okay. But if they don't follow up on their own,
5 is there any -- is there, like, any procedure in place for
6 law enforcement to follow up with them?

7 A In this particular case, my task was on that day
8 to do a preliminary search to see if there's anything, but
9 no, there was nothing standard in place to reach back out
10 to them as far as I know.

11 Q Okay. So there's like the 7401 First Street
12 Northeast, you spoke to a male resident who was going to
13 check the motion activation and call you if anything was
14 captured.

15 A Yes.

16 Q Are we just to assume if you didn't get a call
17 that nothing was captured?

18 A Yes.

19 Q would that call go to you? Is it your card
20 you're leaving, or are you leaving cards for --

21 A It was my direct line.

22 Q And then so was there -- as far as evidence you
23 entered, was there two videos from evidence.com?

24 A Yes.

25 Q Okay. You indicate, "See Rulison's follow-up

1 for additional addresses." were you and he canvassing
2 together?

3 A She, yes. We kind of worked as a team kind of
4 in close proximity to each other. For example -- I don't
5 recall how it was divvied up. But she would do the north
6 side of the road, and we'd do the south -- I'd do the
7 south side, and we'd move together.

8 Q Would Rulison have been wearing a body-worn
9 camera at the time?

10 A No.

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

12 MR. KOSKINAS: That's it.

13 (Pause. Discussion held off record and the
14 following resumed:)

15 Q (By Ms. Manuele) On the -- when Mr. Whitfield
16 was arrested in mid February, you were called out for a
17 SWAT situation, but you never made it to the scene. Is
18 that correct?

19 A No. I was sent back to the training center to
20 load up the truck. By the time we had arrived to the
21 scene, it was completely over. I had no observations of
22 it. I can't speak to that at all.

23 Q As far as you know, have you had any involvement
24 with Cornelius Whitfield?

25 A I don't believe so.

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MS. MANUELE: Thanks, officer.

MR. KOSKINAS: Okay. That's it.

(Deposition concludes at 9:47 a.m.)

1 COUNTY OF PINELLAS)

2 STATE OF FLORIDA)

3 CERTIFICATE OF OATH

4
5 I, the undersigned authority, certify that
6 NICHOLAS CARDINAL personally appeared before me and was
7 duly 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: NICHOLAS CARDINAL

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 NICHOLAS CARDINAL; 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. Pacheco*16 Tamara M. Pacheco, RPR
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