

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: DARLENE HOLLISTER
TAKEN BY: Counsel for the Defendant
DATE: October 23, 2023
TIME: 1:36 P.M. - 1:48 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

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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 DARLENE HOLLISTER

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 Darlene Hollister, and I work for
10 St. Petersburg Police Department, police officer.

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

12 A Since October of 2012.

13 Q Any prior law enforcement experience?

14 A No.

15 Q And what unit are you currently assigned to?

16 A I'm currently assigned to patrol, District 2.

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

22 A Yes.

23 Q And you I believe authored the initial report.
24 Is that correct?

25 A Yes.

1 Q Okay. Any other supplements that you wrote or
2 just that initial report?

3 A Just the initial.

4 Q Okay. Do you have a copy of that with you
5 today?

6 A I do.

7 Q Have you had an opportunity to review it?

8 A I have.

9 Q Was there anything in your report you found to
10 be inaccurate or that you'd like to change?

11 A No, ma'am.

12 Q And likewise, was there anything when you're
13 reviewing your report you were like, oh, I probably should
14 have included that, or that was something I accidentally
15 left out that you would like to add?

16 A No, ma'am.

17 Q Okay. Other than your report, did you review
18 any other reports or material in preparation for depo
19 today?

20 A No.

21 Q Okay. Going back to February of 2021, what unit
22 were you assigned to at that time?

23 A I was assigned to patrol, District 2,
24 midnight-shift.

25 Q And what was your call sign back then?

1 A 162 Alpha.

2 Q And you said midnight-shift. What hours was
3 that shift?

4 A 10 p.m. to 8 a.m.

5 Q How did you become involved in this
6 investigation?

7 A I was dispatched to this call.

8 Q And prior to being dispatched to the call, were
9 you aware of any calls of, like, shots fired or anything
10 else from the general area that you were later able to
11 figure out was connected to this call?

12 A No.

13 Q Were you riding a one-man unit?

14 A Yes.

15 Q And when you responded to the scene, am I
16 correct you're one of the very first officers involved?

17 A I was one of the first.

18 Q First officers on scene.

19 A Yes.

20 Q Walk me through what happens when you -- I think
21 your body-worn camera is activated.

22 A I manually activated my body-worn camera, and I
23 was the one that knocked on the door, made contact with a
24 black male subject who was later identified as Rodney
25 Green. So he opened the door, let us in. He turned on

1 the lights, and I could see a black male subject on the
2 floor.

3 Q And was it readily apparent -- like, I guess did
4 you have any timeframe based on your observations of when
5 this had occurred?

6 A Based on my observations, very -- you know, just
7 occurred recently, very recently.

8 Q There is some discussion on some of the
9 body-worn cameras about some coagulated blood, that the
10 blood has been there a while it appears, like this was
11 kind of old. Were those any of your observations, or was
12 that other --

13 A My observations were I did see a puddle of blood
14 from the male on the ground, his head area.

15 Q As far as were you able to make any observations
16 on whether that blood had started coagulating or not?

17 A I don't. I don't recall.

18 Q And Mr. Green, Rodney Green, he is I guess
19 essentially unable to tell you guys what happened. Is
20 that right?

21 A Initially.

22 Q Initially. At some point was he able to tell
23 you?

24 A While I was on scene, I didn't get any
25 statements from him. Other officers spoke with him, but

1 from what I was told from officers is that his statements
2 were very limited on scene at that time.

3 Q Okay. And I think you were actually trying to
4 ask him what happened, and he just kind of kept saying I
5 don't know. I was asleep, and I got hit. I was asleep,
6 and I got hit. Right?

7 A Something like that. He did have blood coming
8 from his face.

9 Q Okay. And shortly after you arrived, there's
10 another lay witness that arrives on scene, correct?

11 A Correct.

12 Q Did you obtain any statements from that
13 individual?

14 A I did not obtain any direct statements from him.
15 Another officer spoke with him.

16 Q Was that Officer Robison?

17 A Yes, according to my report.

18 Q Okay. It looks like there was maybe two women
19 and a man that first arrived on scene. Is that you,
20 Gerry, and Robison? There might be a second guy.

21 A It would have been myself, Officer Gerry, and
22 Officer Godsall.

23 Q Godsall. Okay. So is it Godsall that's outside
24 when you guys first go in the apartment or that's outside
25 with the male initially?

1 A I don't recall. I tried to -- I guess we don't
2 have access to see our body-camera footage before coming
3 to these. It's locked.

4 Q Oh, really. That seems not helpful.

5 MR. KOSKINAS: That's weird. You can see it.

6 MS. MANUELE: Yeah.

7 MR. KOSKINAS: We can see it. I don't know why
8 they prevent you guys from seeing it.

9 A I don't know. That's a different discussion.
10 So I can't recall who was where.

11 Q Gotcha. Okay. So I guess as far as
12 observations and everything, how -- at what point do you
13 turn off your body-worn camera?

14 A I turned off my camera once we secured the scene
15 and I was no longer with any citizens or witnesses and the
16 scene was secure.

17 Q Okay. The TV when you guys first enter is on
18 pretty loud. Is that right?

19 A Yes.

20 Q Okay. So I believe -- tell me if this sounds
21 right to you. You are -- you make contact with Mr. Green
22 when he first opens the door, and then you kind of do a
23 quick sweep through, but then you're outside with
24 Mr. Green until the paramedics essentially take him off
25 scene. Is that right?

1 A I don't recall exactly where I was with him.
2 Paramedics did arrive, and I did do a sweep to make sure
3 there was no other subjects inside the apartment.

4 Q Okay. And you had indicated that in your time
5 with Mr. Green, he wasn't able to provide any information.
6 Were you advised that he provided any information in the
7 ambulance, or you're just assuming some time down the road
8 because there's an arrest?

9 A I have no idea when he would have provided any
10 other statements.

11 Q Okay. Did you -- did you observe anything in
12 any of the bedrooms as far as to indicate where Mr. Green
13 would have been laying in bed?

14 A I only did a sweep to see if there were any
15 other subjects.

16 Q You did not ride in the ambulance with
17 Mr. Green. Is that right?

18 A Correct.

19 Q Did you ever have any contact with some lay
20 witnesses that showed up?

21 A Not that I recall.

22 Q I had in my witness summary that you had maybe
23 talked to some family, but I don't see it in your report.
24 I don't know if that was my mistake or if it was not
25 included. Do you remember talking to anybody in the

1 parking lot, a female in the parking lot at all?

2 A I don't recall.

3 Q The only lay witness you recall seeing was the
4 man that showed up really soon after you all?

5 A Yes. And another officer talked --

6 Q Dealt with him mostly. Okay. Were you
7 responsible for transporting any civilian witnesses to the
8 station?

9 A No.

10 Q Were you responsible for participating in any
11 kind of canvass?

12 A No.

13 Q Were you asked to do any follow-up investigation
14 either like on a separate date or anything at a different
15 location?

16 A No.

17 Q As far as you know, have you ever had any
18 contact with Cornelius Whitfield?

19 A Not that I recall.

20 Q Nothing that sticks out. What about Rodney
21 Green? As far as you know, have you had --

22 A No.

23 Q -- any contact with him other than this?

24 A Not that I recall.

25 MS. MANUELE: I don't believe I have any other

1 questions.

2 MR. KOSKINAS: That's it. You're all set.

3 Thank you.

4 (Deposition concludes at 1:48 p.m.)

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COUNTY OF PINELLAS)
STATE OF FLORIDA)

CERTIFICATE OF OATH

I, the undersigned authority, certify that
DARLENE HOLLISTER personally appeared before me and was
duly sworn.

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

Tamara M. Pacheco

Tamara M. Pacheco, RPR
COMMISSION # 474485
EXPIRES: March 30, 2028

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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 DARLENE HOLLISTER; 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