

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

Case Number: 22-09348CFANO

STATE OF FLORIDA,

Plaintiff,

VS.

JUAN ARIEL MOLINA-SALLES,

Defendant.

_____ /

DEPOSITION OF:	HEZRON GOMES
TAKEN BY:	Counsel for the Defendant
DATE:	November 19, 2024
TIME:	10:33 a.m. - 10:40 a.m.
PLACE:	ZOOM videoconference
REPORTED BY:	Tamara M. Pacheco, RPR Notary Public, State of FL

Pages 1 - 13

ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCE APPEARANCES

ELIZABETH CONSTANTINE, ESQUIRE

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MARIA DELIBERATO, ESQUIRE

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INDEX

HEZRON GOMES	PAGE:
Examination by Ms. DeLiberato.....	4
Certificate of Oath.....	11
Certificate of Reporter.....	12
Errata/Signature Page.....	13

EXHIBITS

(No exhibits were marked for identification.)

1 WHEREUPON,

2 HEZRON GOMES

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

5 EXAMINATION

6 BY MS. DELIBERATO:

7 Q Good morning. Could you please state and spell
8 your name for the record.

9 A Deputy Hezron Gomes. First name is H-E-Z-R-O-N.
10 Last name is Gomes, G-O-M-E-S.

11 Q And how are you employed?

12 A I'm employed with the Pinellas County Sheriff's
13 office.

14 Q My name is Maria DeLiberato. I'm an assistant
15 public defender. Myself and Nichole Blaquiere represent
16 Juan Molina-Salles. We're here for your deposition.
17 Present for the State is Nathan Vonderheide and Elizabeth
18 Constantine.

19 It's Pinellas County Sheriff's Office case
20 number 22-305232. I note that you authored one
21 supplement. It's actually Supplement 1. Is that correct?

22 A Correct.

23 Q Have you had a chance to review your report
24 before our deposition today?

25 A Yes, I have.

1 Q Okay. If you have it there in front of you,
2 you're more than welcome to refer to it if you need to
3 during your deposition. Just let me know that's what
4 you're doing.

5 A No problem.

6 Q Before we begin, can you just sort of walk me
7 through your law enforcement background. When did you
8 start working at PCSO?

9 A I've been with the Pinellas County Sheriff's
10 office since 2017. I've worked in patrol my whole career.
11 Prior to that I was employed with the Temple Terrace
12 Police Department for three years, from 2014 to 2017, so a
13 total of ten years in law enforcement.

14 Q Okay. And in your time with Temple Terrace or
15 PCSO, have you ever had any complaints sustained against
16 you for any reason?

17 A No.

18 Q And so at the time of this incident,
19 September 22, 2022 into the 23rd, were you working as a
20 patrol deputy?

21 A I was actually working as a community policing
22 officer that day.

23 Q Okay. What's that?

24 A Basically, it's just another unit within Patrol
25 operations where we just engage with the community with

1 community issues and everything like that.

2 Q How was it that you got called to this
3 particular scene? I guess it was sort of the next morning
4 on the 23rd.

5 A Yeah. So I got a call from my sergeant telling
6 me that a deputy had died, and he told me to respond to a
7 staging area, which is a Publix parking lot located at
8 10496 Roosevelt Boulevard, to assist with this case.

9 Q And had you -- I assume you were just kind of
10 waking up and going to work. So had you heard what
11 happened or was the first information from your sergeant?

12 A Yeah. My first information was from my
13 sergeant.

14 Q Did you know Deputy Hartwick personally or
15 professionally?

16 A I knew him professionally through work. I met
17 him through work, but we weren't personal friends or
18 anything like that.

19 Q Do you remember kind of the last time you had
20 seen him or spoke to him before the accident?

21 A I don't. It probably would have been some time
22 a couple of months before just because I believe he was on
23 patrol and I was on CP, so I didn't have a lot of contact
24 with him.

25 Q Did you know anything -- did he ever talk to you

1 about the Archer-Western construction detail or anything
2 like that?

3 A No.

4 Q Did you know anything about that particular
5 detail?

6 A Just from working it.

7 Q When did you work it?

8 A I worked it regularly. Up until then -- at that
9 time, it was probably a couple of months since I worked
10 it. Recently I worked it regularly.

11 Q Okay. Any difference that you noticed
12 personally, either additional instruction, safety
13 instructions, or anything like that from before the
14 accident working it to now working it?

15 A No.

16 Q Okay. Did they ever instruct you about a safety
17 vest or stay in your car or anything like that?

18 A No.

19 Q Okay. What are your instructions when you're
20 working that detail?

21 A Just to go where they direct you to and turn my
22 emergency lights on to alert traffic construction is going
23 on.

24 Q Okay. Anything else?

25 A (Shakes head.)

1 Q So you go to the staging area at the Publix.
2 what's happening there? Is there like a command bus or
3 something like that?

4 A No. This is a staging area for the deputies.
5 Basically, we were staging and getting ready to go out
6 with K9 to assist to try to locate Mr. Molina at the time.
7 We were staging, and then we were notified that he was
8 located, at which point I responded to the scene where the
9 command bus was at.

10 Q And did you learn anything about
11 Mr. Molina-Salles? Anything about his background or
12 anything like that?

13 A (Shakes head.) No, other than he was an
14 employee from Archer-Western. That's all.

15 Q And did you actually see him once he was taken
16 into custody?

17 A No. I never had any contact with him.

18 Q And by the time you got there -- you said you
19 got to the scene. Did you actually ever get to the
20 accident space or just --

21 A I get up to the beginning of the scene where the
22 crime scene tape starts, at which point I took over the
23 crime scene log, just documenting who came in and out of
24 the crime scene.

25 Q Okay. And how long did you do that for?

1 A So I arrived at the -- the crime scene log
2 position at 0900, the command post, and then I remained
3 there until 1343. That was when the crime scene was
4 released.

5 Q Okay. And the crime scene command post was
6 I-275 near Exit 30. Does that sound right?

7 A Yes, correct.

8 Q And that was kind of the outer edge -- was that
9 the outer edge of the crime scene?

10 A Yeah. That was the very beginning of the crime
11 scene where they had posted up the command bus and had
12 taped the whole scene off.

13 Q Okay. So you were tasked with noting anybody
14 that came in and out of the entire crime scene?

15 A Correct.

16 Q until the scene was released?

17 A Correct.

18 Q And then what do you do with the crime scene
19 log?

20 A After that I went to the North District Station
21 and submitted the crime scene log as evidence for the
22 property and evidence section.

23 Q Okay. Anything else that you did in relation to
24 this case?

25 A No.

1 Q Did you attend any briefings, meetings either in
2 your department or at the State Attorney's office?

3 A No, ma'am.

4 Q Did you do any research into the case and look
5 to see what my client was charged with or anything about
6 his background or his immigration status or anything like
7 that?

8 A No, ma'am.

9 Q Have you kind of followed the case at all as it
10 wound through the court system, or you just get the
11 subpoena and respond?

12 A Just got a subpoena and responded, yeah.

13 MS. DELIBERATO: I don't have any further
14 questions. I'm not sure if my co-counsel has any
15 questions or if the State does.

16 MS. BLAQUIERE: No.

17 MS. CONSTANTINE: I have no questions. Thank
18 you.

19 MS. DELIBERATO: Thank you so much for coming in
20 this morning. I appreciate your time.

21 (Deposition concludes at 10:40 a.m.)
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23
24
25

1 COUNTY OF PINELLAS)

2 STATE OF FLORIDA)

3 CERTIFICATE OF OATH

4

5 I, the undersigned authority, certify that
6 HEZRON GOMES personally appeared before me and was duly
7 sworn.

8 witness my hand and official seal this 13th day
9 of January, 2025.

10

11

Tamara M. Pacheco

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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 videoconference Deposition of HEZRON GOMES; 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

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ERRATA SHEET

IN THE CASE OF: STATE OF FL v. JUAN MOLINA-SALLES
 NAME OF DEPONENT: HEZRON GOMES
 CASE NUMBER: 22-09348CFANO

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.

PAGE	LINE	ERROR/AMENDMENT	REASON FOR CHANGE

 Signature

 Date