

ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCE APPEARANCES

ELIZABETH CONSTANTINE, ESQUIRE

NATHAN VONDERHEIDE, ESQUIRE

Assistant State Attorneys

14250 49th Street North

Clearwater, Florida 34620

Attorneys for the State of Florida

MARIA DELIBERATO, ESQUIRE

NICHOLE BLAQUIERE, ESQUIRE

Assistant Public Defenders

14250 49th Street North

Clearwater, Florida 34620

Attorneys for the Defendant

INDEX

ATEKA SANFORD	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 ATEKA SANFORD

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

5 EXAMINATION

6 BY MS. DELIBERATO:

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

9 A Ateka Sanford, A-T-E-K-A, S-A-N-F-O-R-D.

10 Q And how are you employed?

11 A I am employed with Pinellas County Sheriff's
12 Office.

13 Q As what?

14 A As an assistant supervisor in the Forensic
15 Science Division.

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

21 Sheriff's case number 22-305232, I have that
22 you authored one -- that you authored one supplement,
23 Supplement 77. Is that right?

24 A That is correct.

25 Q And then I note that you approved quite a few

1 others, but 77 is the only one that you personally
2 authored?

3 A Correct.

4 Q Have you had a chance to review that before our
5 deposition today?

6 A Yes, I have.

7 Q Okay. Great. If you need to refer to it at all
8 or any of the other supplements, you're welcome to do so.
9 Please just let me know that's what you're doing. Can you
10 give me just a background on how long you've been with
11 PCSO?

12 A I've been with the Sheriff's office almost
13 twelve years now, and I've been with in the Forensics
14 Science Division the entire time.

15 Q And do you have any particular, like, area of
16 specialty, certification, anything like that or just
17 general forensics?

18 A General forensics. I have a certificate and
19 associate's degree in crime scene technology.

20 Q Okay. And did you know Deputy Hartwick
21 personally or professionally?

22 A Professionally. I had worked with him and been
23 on calls with him.

24 Q Do you remember kind of the last time you had a
25 conversation with him before his passing?

1 A Not off the top of my head, no.

2 Q Did you know anything about the Archer Western
3 Construction detail that he had been working?

4 A No.

5 Q Okay. And that's not something you would ever
6 work as a forensic science specialist, right?

7 A Correct, yeah. No, we don't do off-duty
8 details.

9 Q So I have your report. I don't need to go
10 through it in super detail, but I just want to know kind
11 of from your recollection, tell me how it was you got
12 called out to the scene, what your role was, and what you
13 did.

14 A Okay. I was the on-duty supervisor at the time
15 the incident occurred, and I responded to the scene, along
16 with other personnel as a scene supervisor.

17 Q Okay. And when you got to the scene, do you
18 know about what time that was?

19 A I would have to refer to my report. I arrived
20 on scene at 1:29 a.m.

21 Q Okay. And was Deputy Hartwick still on scene?
22 The medical examiner had not transported him yet?

23 A Yes, he was still on scene.

24 Q Okay. And what did you do when you got on
25 scene?

1 A The first thing I did is I met with our
2 lieutenant at the time and we had a briefing.

3 Q What information did you learn?

4 A Just very basic information. At that point,
5 they had discovered Deputy Hartwick on the side of the
6 road. They weren't sure exactly what happened and
7 suspected a possible hit-and-run with a vehicle. It was
8 still early stages at that point.

9 Q And did you -- were there other forensic science
10 specialists on the scene at that point kind of arriving,
11 and was it your job to tell them to do what, like who to
12 do what?

13 A Yes. So I had several other forensic
14 specialists arriving on the scene, and I was responsible
15 for assigning the individual duties.

16 Q And did you yourself collect or document any
17 evidence?

18 A No, I did not.

19 Q Okay. You just directed them to do it?

20 A Correct.

21 Q How long did you stay on scene?

22 A I'd have to refer to my report. It looks like I
23 cleared the scene at 8:19 in the morning.

24 Q And it looks like you were supervising King,
25 Mauck, Temple, Meade, Richarz and Klotz?

1 A Correct.

2 Q And then Supervisor Klein is the assistant
3 supervisor?

4 A So Supervisor Klein, she's also an assistant.
5 We're both assistant supervisors on different shifts. She
6 just responded due to the size of the scene to give
7 assistance.

8 Q Okay. Any other forensic techs that I missed
9 that you were supervising that evening?

10 A No one that I was supervising.

11 Q Okay. Were you still on scene when my client,
12 Mr. Molina-Salles was ultimately located?

13 A I -- I'm not sure. I'm not sure when he was
14 located, so I can't say if I was on scene at that time or
15 not.

16 Q Did you do any processing of him?

17 A No.

18 Q Did you direct anybody to do any processing of
19 him?

20 A No.

21 Q Did your -- did you direct anyone to do any
22 processing of Deputy Hartwick's body, or was that strictly
23 for the medical examiner?

24 A I did direct Specialist King to do some
25 photographs of him, and then Specialist King, I'm not sure

1 if she continued to do processing at that part of the
2 scene. Supervisor Klein had kind of taken over the
3 processing of Deputy Hartwick after the photographs.

4 Q Okay. But you yourself didn't collect any
5 evidence, right?

6 A No.

7 Q Didn't run any scans, take any photographs,
8 anything like that?

9 A No.

10 Q And did you interview any witnesses?

11 A No.

12 Q After you cleared the scene, did you do any
13 further work on the case?

14 A No, I did not.

15 Q Check any property into evidence? Check any
16 property out of evidence? Anything like that?

17 A No.

18 Q Did you conduct any or attend any briefings
19 either in your department or at the State Attorney's
20 office about this particular case?

21 A No. The only additional I had was approving the
22 reports for the people that I had supervised on scene.

23 Q Okay. And is that just they kind of write their
24 supplement. It comes up in the computer. You review it
25 for accuracy and then sign off?

1 A Correct.

2 Q Okay. Did you do any independent research into
3 this case, into my client, into his background? Anything
4 like that?

5 A No, I have not.

6 Q Any understanding what he's charged with or what
7 he's facing or anything like that?

8 A No.

9 Q Okay. And I assume you haven't followed the
10 case as its wound through the court system. You just sort
11 of responded to your subpoena here today.

12 A Correct.

13 Q Okay. And I don't expect you are tasked -- you
14 haven't been tasked to do any additional work, any
15 subsequent testing or anything like that?

16 A I have not, no.

17 MS. DELIBERATO: Okay. I don't have any further
18 questions. I'm not sure if my co-counsel does.

19 MS. BLAQUIERE: No.

20 MS. DELIBERATO: Thank you so much.

21 (Deposition concludes at 10:27 a.m.)
22
23
24
25

1 COUNTY OF PINELLAS)

2 STATE OF FLORIDA)

3 CERTIFICATE OF OATH

4

5 I, the undersigned authority, certify that ATEKA
6 SANFORD personally appeared before me and was duly sworn.

7 witness my hand and official seal this 30TH day
8 of JANUARY, 2025.

9

10

Tamara M. Pacheco

11

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

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

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 ATEKA SANFORD; 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

