

DCSO details timeline of Wednesday officer-involved shooting

BY JAMES MAYSE
MESSENGER-INQUIRER

A man fatally shot by Daviess County sheriff's deputies Wednesday night had killed his ex-wife and shot her mother just minutes before, then later tried to strike deputies with his vehicle, officials said Thursday.

Jonathon Severs, 30, of Owensboro, later struck a Daviess County Sheriff's Office patrol car head-on and exchanged gunfire with deputies before being shot and killed, according to the Kentucky State Police.

KSP identified Tracy Peace, 37, of Owensboro as the woman Severs is believed to have killed. Peace was found deceased with a gunshot wound in Severs' vehicle.

Severs and deputies exchanged gunfire at 10:48 p.m. in the 9700 block of Morgantown Road.

Daviess County Sheriff Brad Youngman, Ohio County Sheriff Adam Wright and other public safety officials outlined the timeline of events at a news conference Thursday afternoon. KSP identified Severs and Peace after the news conference.

The first call about Severs was made to Owensboro-Daviess County 911 at 4:23 p.m., when a dispatcher was told Severs said he was going to "load up all of his guns and harm himself," Youngman said.

Wright said Ohio County deputies went to the New Cut Road home to check on Peace and look for Severs. Computer-aided dispatch reports say deputies did not locate Severs but spoke to Peace and family members



Photo by Greg Eans, Messenger-Inquirer | geans@messenger-inquirer.com

Daviess County Sheriff Brad Youngman speaks Thursday during a press conference with updated information on the officer-involved shooting that occurred Wednesday night. Standing behind, from left, is Daviess County Emergency Management Agency director Mike Page, Daviess County Public Safety director Jeremy Smith, Ohio County Sheriff Adam Wright, and Whitesville Fire Department chief Derek Mills.

there, "who said (Severs) hadn't been there for a year."

Reports say Severs' phone pinged at multiple locations throughout the evening. An Owensboro Police Department patrol officer spotted Severs' vehicle at 9:59 p.m. and attempted to stop him, but Severs drove off and was not pursued, which is "not an uncommon situation" since Severs was not being sought in connection to a crime, Youngman said.

At 10:09 p.m., a Daviess County sheriff's deputy spotted Severs' vehicle near County Heights Elementary School. The deputy had to find a place to turn around but was unable to locate Severs, Youngman said.

About 10 minutes later, Severs' mother called dispatch, saying Severs had called and was threatening suicide, and gave dispatchers the address of the New Cut Road home.

"She further stated a disturbance was taking place and (Severs) was beating on the door" to the home, Youngman said.

A 911 call from Peace's mother was made at 10:20 p.m., when she told dispatchers Severs had gotten inside.

"Four minutes later, while our dispatcher was on the phone with them, the dispatcher, in the background, could hear shots being fired," Wright said.

When the first OCSO deputy arrived at the home, he found Peace's mother, who had been shot multiple times in the torso and legs, Wright said. Peace's three children were also in the home but were not injured.

Wright said Peace's mother "was trying to prevent (Severs) from coming into the bedroom where her daughter was" when she was shot.

Peace's mother was flown to University of Louisville Health, where she was in stable condition Thursday, Wright said. Her name was not released as of Thursday.

Peace was abducted from the home. At 10:32 p.m., DCSO deputies saw Severs' vehicle, and Youngman said Severs "almost struck several officers who were outside their cruisers, staging" while he was fleeing the area.

A pursuit took place, which ended a minute later with Severs striking a DCSO patrol vehicle head-on, KSP reports say.

At that point, Severs fired at deputies from inside the vehicle, then got out of the vehicle and attempted to flee.

Youngman said Severs was in a field when he and deputies exchanged gunfire, and Severs was struck.

Peace was found in Severs' vehicle, deceased from a gunshot wound, KSP reports said.

Responders from the Whitesville and Daviess County fire departments

attempted to provide medical aid, but both Peace and Severs "were beyond care and were deceased," Youngman said.

"The entire DCSO, as well as all of the agencies represented alongside me are saddened by the events that led to (Peace's) death, and our thoughts and prayers to her and her loved ones at this time," Youngman said.

No deputies were injured when Severs nearly struck the deputies or when he struck the patrol car with his vehicle, Youngman said.

The investigation was turned over to the Kentucky State Police, which is standard procedure when a deputy is involved in a shooting, Youngman said. All evidence of the incident has been turned over to KSP.

"I will tell you four deputies were involved," Youngman said. The names of the deputies were not released at the request of KSP, Youngman said.

"Those officers, as it turns out, were about to begin

their regular days off," Youngman said.

Those deputies will be offered crisis services and will be interviewed by KSP.

"They'll be working in some regard, even if it isn't on the road responding to calls," Youngman said.

The KSP press release says there is no definitive timeline for the length of its investigation.

"To protect the integrity of an ongoing investigation, it is KSP's standard operating procedure not to release specific details until vital witnesses have been interviewed and pertinent facts gathered, the release says. Timelines to complete investigations vary based on the complexity of the case."



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