

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF STATE POLICE

Date: 05/13/2019

Time Started: 0900 hours

Time Ended: 1205 hours

WITNESS STATEMENT OF

I, Peter Salvatore, date of birth 07/20/1990,

Of 250 Silas Deane Highway, town / city of Wethersfield.

Make the following statement, without fear, threat, or promise. I have been advised that any statement(s) made herein which I do not believe to be true, and which statement is intended to mislead a public servant in the performance of his/her official function, is a crime under C.G.S. section 53a-157. X

I have been a Wethersfield Police Officer since September 2013. I have been a member of the Army National Guard since September of 2011 and am currently a Staff Sergeant assigned as a Military Police Instructor. I have briefly reviewed the dashcam videos that captured this incident, but this statement is based on my recollection of the incident.

On Saturday, April 20, 2019, I was working normal shift, which is evening shift, 1600 hours to 2400 hours, and was assigned to District 5 patrol. I was wearing my assigned Wethersfield Police uniform and driving a marked Wethersfield Police Department (WPD) Cruiser. At approximately 1745 hours while traveling north bound on Silas Deane Hwy in the area of Hewitt St, I observed a dark colored sedan with heavily tinted windows stopped at the exit to the parking lot of Santander Bank, 1221 Silas Deane HWY, with its left turn signal on (to head north bound on Silas Deane HWY). The Infiniti caught my attention as it was in the driveway of a closed business and had heavily tinted windows. At this point, I could not see the occupants of the vehicle. I turned into the parking lot of 1177 Silas Deane Hwy, which is just north of the Santander Bank (on the same side of the road) where I could watch the sedan. Although there was a gap in traffic that would have allowed the sedan to pull north onto the Silas Deane Hwy, the sedan eventually turned south bound and then into the driveway for Puritan Furniture, 1210 Silas Deane HWY. I waited to see if the sedan was turning around to head north bound. After what I believed was a reasonable amount of time, to turn around, more than a couple of minutes, I exited the driveway of 1177 Silas Deane Hwy and turned into the driveway of Puritan Furniture at 1210 Silas Deane Hwy.

The driveway of 1210 Silas Deane Hwy is where Puritan Furniture is located and also has driveways for Liberty Bank, 1190 Silas Deane Hwy, LasikPlus, 1206 Silas Deane Hwy, and Hartford Medical Group, 1260 Silas Deane Hwy.

I believed that it was unusual that a vehicle would leave Santander Bank and head across the street to another bank as both banks were closed for the day. At this point, I believed that the sedan was trying to elude me. As I headed down the driveway towards Puritan Furniture I observed the sedan parked in the middle of the parking lot at Liberty Bank with the rear of the vehicle facing me. The other businesses in this parking lot were closed at the

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Witness: Det. [Signature] #937 Signature: X [Signature]

Witness: _____

Personally appeared the signer of the foregoing statement and made oath before me to the truth of the matters contained therein.

If notarized, endorse here: Det. [Signature] 931

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time. There were no other vehicles in the parking lot and the sedan was parked in the middle of the parking lot, not near the ATM or bank. Since it was raining, I thought that if the sedan was going to the ATM, they would have parked near the bank. I parked at Puritan Furniture in a way that I would be able to see the sedan leaving the parking lot of Liberty Bank. After approximately 5-10 minutes, I drove into the parking lot of Liberty Bank to observe the vehicle more closely. I drove through the parking lot behind the parked sedan, now identified as a black Infiniti bearing CT registration 484YOS. I continued through the parking lot as I searched the license plate through COLLECT. A check of COLLECT under 484YOS showed that the registration came back to a suspended registration on a Hyundai out of Bristol. Unsure if I had run the plate properly, with an "O" or "D" in the registration, I ran the license plate as 484YDS and received no return. I only drove past the rear of the Infiniti and due to its heavily tinted windows, I could not see if there was anyone in the vehicle. I never saw anyone get out of or enter the Infiniti. I exited the parking lot of the Liberty Bank and positioned my cruiser behind the Hartford Medical Center, where I could see the Infiniti if it exited the parking lot. Where I was positioned, I could not see the Infiniti and the Infiniti could not see me. I also did not see anyone inside the Liberty Bank.

I had been waiting another approximately 5-10 minutes when I observed the Infiniti leaving the parking lot at a higher than usual rate of speed than casually leaving the lot. I immediately radioed dispatch, which I typically do prior to a motor vehicle stop, that I would be attempting to initiate a motor vehicle stop with the Infiniti on the Silas Deane Hwy. As I turned onto the Silas Deane Hwy, I saw the Infiniti now operating at a high rate of speed weaving in and out of traffic on the wet roads ahead of me. I activated my marked police car's (car 25), emergency lights and siren and began to catch up to the Infiniti.

I caught up to the Infiniti near CVS, 1078 Silas Deane Hwy, and the Infiniti stopped in front of Goodyear, 1020 Silas Deane Hwy. I radioed Officer Martins (304) to see if he was in the area to assist me. At this time, based on the Infiniti's actions and knowing that the registration was a misuse, I believed the Infiniti might attempt to flee even after it had pulled over. Officer Martins told me over the radio that he was not in the area. I then used my cruiser's public address system (PA) and ordered the driver to turn off the vehicle. I saw the

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Witness: DET. [Signature] #937 Signature: X [Signature] #470

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brake lights turn off on the vehicle and believed that the driver had complied and put the vehicle in park. When I thought that it the vehicle was in park, I exited my cruiser to approach the operator. When I was in between my cruiser and the Infiniti the operator sped off at a high rate of speed. I immediately radioed dispatch that the vehicle took off from me.

I ran back to my cruiser and immediately saw another cruiser with activated police emergency lights in the southbound lanes up ahead of me prior to Maple St. I believed that there was going to be a pursuit and that a second Wethersfield Police Department (WPD) unit was in the area to assist me. I heard LT Connolly radio that stop sticks were authorized. I was watching the Infiniti but I could see the WPD cruiser lights approach the center of the road. I couldn't see from where I was how the other WPD cruiser was positioned. As I began to catch up to the Infiniti, from my perspective, I thought the Infiniti crossed in front of the WPD cruiser and lost control, fish tailing from the far right travel lane on the north bound side to the south bound lanes. As I continued north on the Silas Deane, I saw the Infiniti stopped, facing south bound, in the driveway to 955 Silas Deane Hwy. I then saw the Infiniti and the marked WPD cruiser hit each other near the front driver side area of the Infiniti. From my vantage point, I could not see exactly where the WPD cruiser struck the Infiniti or who initiated the contact. I approached the vehicles where I would be adjacent to the passenger side of the other WPD cruiser. The Infiniti began backing up against the flow of traffic and I thought I would have to strike the Infiniti with my push bumper to disable it to keep it from going into traffic and endangering the other vehicles on the road. I was planning on hitting the Infiniti in the rear axle area prior to it backing up. As the Infiniti continued to reverse in a 180 degree arc, I followed its path with my cruiser. At this point, I thought that I would become the lead vehicle in the pursuit as the Infiniti was clearly attempting to flee the scene. At this time, I did not know who the Officer was in the other WPD cruiser and did not see any Officers outside of the vehicle.

Everything happened so fast after that. The Infiniti continued backing up away from the driveway in an attempt to flee the scene. As the Infiniti was completing the 180 degree maneuver, that's when I saw Officer Eulizier running in front of my cruiser with his gun drawn. My cruiser was still moving at this time. This was the first time I knew that Officer Eulizier was in the other WPD cruiser. I knew the Infiniti was trying to take off and based on

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the way the Infiniti was driving, I immediately switched from being concerned that the Infiniti was going to flee to thinking that it was going to run Officer Eulizier over. I thought that I would have to strike the Infiniti with my cruiser to keep it from running Officer Eulizier over. I intentionally struck the front, driver's side area of the Infiniti with my cruiser. I thought I could push the Infiniti sideway, off course, intending to disable it. At this point, I was only concerned about Officer Eulizier getting run over by the Infiniti. The ground was wet and I remember hearing the sound of spinning tires on wet pavement although I didn't know whose car it was coming from. I believed that Officer Eulizier could be hit by the Infiniti as the operator started to drive forward. As this was happening, Officer Eulizier, who was now in front of the driver's side of the Infiniti, fired two rounds into the windshield of the Infiniti.

I immediately exited my vehicle and I saw the Infiniti begin to roll forward. I still could not see any of the occupants of the Infiniti. I figured that based on the vehicle's slow roll that it was uncontrolled and the operator was not able to drive the vehicle. I ran after the Infiniti, behind the passenger side, until it crashed into a sign and came to a stop in front of 942 Silas Deane Hwy, Alpine Haus.

As I was running after the Infiniti I saw the passenger side door opening partially. After the Infiniti came to a stop a female passenger exited the vehicle. I ordered the female to the ground but she initially did not react to my orders. I heard the female say that the driver had been shot and that we needed to help him. I continued to order the female to the ground and to put her hands on her head. The female crouched, leaning against the car and appeared to be emotionally distressed.

I alternated between giving the female commands to get on the ground and giving dispatch instructions on staging EMS and responding officers. I attempted to maneuver to a position where I would be able to see the operator and one that would provide me with cover outside of any crossfire from Officer Eulizier who was standing on the driver side away from the Infiniti.

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Officers Martins, Hilchuk and Baich, Lieutenant Connolly and Chief Cetran arrived at the scene. At some point a WPD cruiser was brought forward near the driver side of the Infiniti so that officers could use it for cover.

Lt. Connolly and Officer Hilchuk came to the passenger side of the Infiniti with me where we ordered the female passenger to crawl to WPD officers who were using car 13 for cover. Lt. Connolly, Officer Hilchuk and I then attempted to clear the Infiniti. I was able to see the driver seated in the Infiniti, through the open passenger front door, with his head tilted back and one hand near the center console. I gave orders for the driver to show his hands to us but he was unresponsive to my commands. I was able to see the driver was breathing heavily but was not moving otherwise. Officer Hilchuk stayed on the passenger side of the Infiniti while Lt. Connolly and I maneuvered to the driver side to remove the operator from the car.

Officer Hilchuk and Lt. Connolly maintained coverage while I said that I would holster my weapon to pull the operator out. Someone unlocked the doors for me to open the driver door and Lt. Connolly opened the rear passenger door first to be able to see the driver. I then opened the driver door and pulled the operator out of the car straight onto the ground. The operator was bleeding heavily and I began to look for any wounds he might have.

Officer Martins and Officer Hilchuk then came to assist me. With the operator on his back I checked his torso for any gun shot wounds and did not immediately see anything. I could see he was bleeding heavily from his head. The operator continued to reach out and was grabbing at me so I rolled him over and with assistance from Officer Hilchuk we placed him in handcuffs behind his back.

Officer Martins and I then began to cut off his clothing to conduct a medical assessment. I yelled for a medical kit, which someone brought to me. I rolled the operator onto his side to check his back and chest for any gun shot wounds. As I rolled him I saw that he had a large head wound.

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Wethersfield Volunteer Ambulance arrived quickly on scene and with their assistance we placed the operator on a back board, which I helped buckle and secure, so that he could be transported. I then walked away from the immediate area back towards my cruiser which was left in the south bound lanes. Officer Hilchuk came with me. I took off my bloody leather gloves and left them on the passenger floorboard of my cruiser. My arms were covered in the operator's blood and after Inspector Sutton from G.A.-15 arrived on scene I asked if I could clean up. I told Inspector Sutton that the blood was from giving medical treatment to the operator and he allowed me to clean the blood off.

An Aetna Supervisor called for an Aetna Ambulance to have me evaluated and help me clean the blood off my arms. I was evaluated by an Aetna Medic at the scene and I signed a refusal declining to be transported to the hospital.

I remained on scene to assist with maintaining the crime scene and providing information as needed until I was instructed to return to police headquarters with Officer Hilchuk.

At police headquarters I waited a short time until I was turned over to State Police Major Crimes Troopers who took photographs of me and secured my bloodied uniform for evidence.

I later conducted a walk through of the scene with Troopers.

My cruiser, WPD car 25, had the in car Watchguard dash camera recording from when my emergency lights were activated and remained recording following the incident. I advised investigating troopers that "record after the fact" would get the approximate 15 minutes of my initial observations of the Infiniti prior to my traffic stop.

end

BR (S)

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