



Alex R. Gardner
Lane County District Attorney

LANE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
125 EAST 8th AVENUE, ROOM 400
EUGENE, OREGON 97401-2926
FAX ONLY (541) 682-3890
(541) 682-4261

NEWS RELEASE

Date/Time of Release: October 2, 2014, 11:00 a.m.

From: Alex Gardner, District Attorney

Details : The Lane County Interagency Deadly Force Investigation Team (IDFIT) has completed its investigation into the 9/20/14 officer-involved shooting in Cottage Grove.

The IDFIT response was staffed by detectives/investigators from multiple law enforcement agencies, including Springfield PD (lead in this case), Eugene PD, Lane County Sheriff's Office, Cottage Grove PD, Oregon State Police, and the Lane County District Attorney's Office. (Background on the IDFIT team can be found via the link at the bottom of this release.)

The following brief summary includes a composite of the investigation and the conclusion.

At approximately 8:19 p.m. on 9/20/2014, Cottage Grove Police Department (CGPD) responded to a call of an elderly man brandishing a knife near the railroad tracks downtown. The first police officer on scene, Tami Howell, arrived and contacted John Mickelson, the man holding knives, less than three minutes after the call came in. Howell asked nearby civilians to back away from Mr. Mickelson as she started to talk to him.

Two other CGPD officers, Carlos Jones and Matt Walker, arrived shortly after Howell. All were on scene within six minutes of the initial call.

Mickelson was standing in a dimly lit area behind a building. He appeared agitated. He was shifting back and forth while holding two knives, and he was unresponsive to Howell's efforts to communicate. When Howell spoke to him he grunted nonsensical gibberish and continued to handle the knives and pass them between his hands. Initially, Mickelson would not make eye contact with Howell. He did not comply with her repeated requests/demands to drop the knives he was holding. One civilian witness described Mickelson as "out of it... as though he was under the influence of Meth".

After several minutes of attempting to talk him into dropping his knives, Mickelson crouched down, faced Howell and made eye contact with her. Howell believed he might be about to put the knives on the ground. Instead, Mickelson stood and threw one of the knives at Howell.

Officer Jones deployed his Taser, striking Mickelson with at least one probe. Witnesses heard the Taser activation, but Mickelson remained standing as the Taser cycled through its activation. Shortly thereafter, in spite of repeated additional commands to drop the knife, Mickelson faced Officer Jones and raised his hand to throw the second knife. At that point both Jones and Howell perceived imminent threat and fired their .45 caliber Glock 21 duty weapons. Mickelson fell when a single bullet struck his lower left leg. Medics were called and on scene by approximately 2036 hrs.

Tami Howell has been employed with CGPD since 2008; she's been an officer since 2011. She fired twice.

Carlos Jones has been employed with CGPD as an officer since 2004. He fired five times.

Matt Walker has been with CGPD since February, 2014. He did not fire his weapon.

Based upon the evidence developed by the Lane County IDFIT team, it's clear that deadly use of force was authorized/lawful.

The Lane County grand jury will review this incident and evidence relating directly to Mickelson to determine whether he will be charged with a crime for attempting to assault the officers.

[http://lcpubw04.lanecounty.org/information/yourlanevideos/LaneCountyDistrictAttorney and LawEnforcementAgencies.wmv](http://lcpubw04.lanecounty.org/information/yourlanevideos/LaneCountyDistrictAttorney%20and%20LawEnforcementAgencies.wmv)