



Canton Police Department
Incident Report

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11/02/2022

Incident #: 21-79-OF
Call #: 21-731

Date/Time Reported: 02/04/2021 1055
Report Date/Time: 02/04/2021 1428
Occurred Between: 02/04/2021 1055-02/04/2021 1428
Status: No Crime Involved

Reporting Officer: Patrolman Charles Yeaton
Assisting Officer: Lieutenant Michael Lank

Signature: _____

#	INVOLVED	SEX	RACE	AGE	SSN	PHONE
1	SMITH, DARLENE M STOUGHTON MA 02072	F	W	56	NOT AVAIL	
Military Active Duty: N BODY: NOT AVAIL. COMPLEXION: NOT AVAIL. DOB: PLACE OF BIRTH: NOT AVAIL. LICENSE NUMBER: ETHNICITY: UNKNOWN						
[CONTACT INFORMATION]						

Home Phone (Primary)

#	EVENT(S)
	LOCATION TYPE: Residence/Home/Apt./Condo Zone: Northeast Sector 3307 WINDSOR WOODS WAY CANTON MA 02021
1	Sudden Death

#	VICTIM(S)	SEX	RACE	AGE	SSN	PHONE
1	BIRCHMORE, SANDRA M 3307 WINDSOR WOODS WAY CANTON MA 02021	F	W	23		
DOB: EMPLOYER: SHARON PUBLIC SCHOOLS ETHNICITY: Not of Hispanic Origin RESIDENT STATUS: Resident VICTIM CONNECTED TO OFFENSE NUMBER(S): 1 CONTACT INFORMATION: Home Phone (Primary)						

#	PERSON(S)	PERSON TYPE	SEX	RACE	AGE	SSN	PHONE
1	PORTER, ERIN E 1 WINDSOR WOODS WAY CANTON MA 02021 DOB:	WITNESS	F	A	41	NOT AVAIL	781-830-9100
CONTACT INFORMATION: Home Phone (Primary) 781-830-9100							

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#	PERSON(S)	PERSON TYPE	SEX	RACE	AGE	SSN	PHONE
2	FAHERTY, KATHLEEN 1 WINDSOR WOODS WAY CANTON MA 02021 DOB: EMPLOYER: WINDSOR WOODS · 781-830-9100	WITNESS	F	W	61	NOT AVAIL	

- 1) On February 4, 2021 at approximately 11:00 a.m. I was dispatched to Windsor Woods Way to assist members of the Canton Police Family Services Unit on a well-being check, requested by another Agency (Sharon MA Police).
- 2) I was greeted in the lobby entrance by Officer Mike Brady and Officer Ensley Cotard, as well as Property Manager Erin Porter, who provided the key for us to gain entrance to 3307 Windsor Woods Way, Canton.
- 3) The call originated for a well-being check from Sharon Public Schools, and they contacted Sharon Officer Mike Hocking, as a teacher, BIRCHMORE, SANDRA has not shown up for work or called in sick for several days.
- 4) Officer Cotard and I entered the dwelling, and observed two cats in the apartment and noticed the conditions were cluttered and unkept, and noticed the bedroom door was closed. Officer Cotard opened the door, and we observed a young female in a seated position on the floor, with a scarf around her neck and tightly affixed to the closet door handle. Due to the discoloration in skin (blue) and lividity, and appeared that the female had been there for a long period of time. Sgt. Mike Lank (Shift Supervisor) radioed to secure the scene immediately, while en route to the residence. Sgt. Lank directed us to secure the scene and Norfolk County District Attorney's Office (C.P.A.C.) was notified and advised that they would be responding to the residence.
- 5) Sgt. Lank and Det. Jonathan McCourt arrived a short time later and Officer Brady, Officer Cotard and I stayed outside the apartment and Sgt. Lank and Det. McCourt entered the apartment in an attempt to gather information and proper identification of the victim.
- 6) Sgt. Lank requested Canton Fire/EMS to respond to our location. FF/Paramedic Daniel Whitley arrived and pronounced Sandra Birchmore deceased at 11:46 a.m. No life-saving measures were taken at that time.
- 7) Trooper Mike Dunn from Norfolk County District Attorney's Office (C.P.A.C.) arrived on scene, as well as Trooper Zach Clark from Crime Scene Services to process and photograph the scene.
- 8) 12:44 p.m., I received a call from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts officer of the Medical Examiners, and spoke with Intake Specialist Mercedes Robinson, and after gathering pertinent information, the ME's office accepted jurisdiction and will be responding. Case #2021-2032 assigned.
- 9) Trooper Dunn requested next of kin to be contacted and respond to the residence, for

questioning. Stoughton Police Department notified and assisting with making contact. Darlene Smith, who is the aunt of the deceased, was not home when Stoughton attempted notification. She contacted the Canton police moments later by phone and was notified of the deceased by Officer Nix. Smith was currently in New Hampshire and unable to respond to the scene. Her contact information was provided to Trooper Dunn.

10) Sgt. Lank was able to access video footage with the assistance from Property Management. The victim was last seen on camera entering the building on Sunday, January 31, 2021 at 4:41 p.m.

SUPPLEMENTAL NARRATIVE FOR DETECTIVE JONATHAN MCCOURT

Ref: 21-79-OF

1. On February 4, 2021, at approximately 11:09 a.m., I responded to 3307 Canton Woods for a well-being check of a female party, later identified as BIRCHMORE, SANDRA.
2. Upon my arrival, I spoke to the first responding officer's on scene, Officer Yeaton, Officer Cotard, and Officer Brady. I was informed the party was deceased and had hanged herself. I had the officers wait outside the apartment as I made entry.
3. BIRCHMORE was located in the bedroom, in a seated position on the floor, with a dark colored strap around her neck. The strap was tied to the door handle of the bedroom closet. Obvious signs of lividity had set in BIRCHMORE's face, hands and abdominal area. There was no visible trauma to the head, or defensive abrasions on the hands.
4. The bedroom along with the apartment was unorganized and unkept. No signs of a struggle were observed in the bedroom or the apartment.
5. On the kitchen counter of the apartment, in plain view,
- 6.
7. Sgt. Lank arrived shortly after my arrival. Norfolk County District Attorney's Office (CPAC), the Medical Examiner's Office, and Canton Fire all were notified.
8. Canton Fire Fighter Whitley arrived on scene and pronounced BIRCHMORE deceased. FF Whitley informed me that he believes BIRCHMORE was deceased for a few days.
9. Trooper Matt Dunne and Trooper Kevin Tufts arrived from CPAC. Massachusetts State Police Crime Scene was present as well. Troopers processed and photographed the scene.
10. Troopers located additional once on scene.
11. Once the Troopers were finished processing the scene, Chris Adams and Caitlyn Bulger of the Medical Examiner's Office took custody of the body.
12. After the body was removed, and CPAC and the Medical Examiner's Office cleared, I located additional the bedroom closet in a cardboard box.
13. Prior to clearing the scene, Officer Brady and I had animal control take custody of the two cats in the apartment. Officer Brady locked the door once we cleared.

1. On February 6, 2021, I spoke to Sgt. Lank about additional information he had learned from Property Manager, Erin Porter (See Sgt. Lank supplemental report). This information was passed along to Trooper Tufts by telephone. In speaking to Trooper Tufts, he requested that he would like the video from Canton Woods.
2. At approximately 1:00p.m., Sgt. Lank, Detective Albert, and I went to Canton Woods to assist the State Police in obtaining video from BIRCHMORE's apartment building. We were met at the leasing office by Trooper Dunne and Trooper Tufts. Maintenance Supervisor, Carlos Verissimo assisted us in reviewing the video footage. The video of building #3 is motion activated and only captures the front lobby.
3. BIRCHMORE was last seen on video at 17:46 on Monday (February 1, 2021). Investigators Note: Trooper Tufts and Colleen Crawford(Norfolk District Attorney's Office) took custody of the video hard drive from building #3. The camera's video time and actual time was believed to be 13 minutes off.
4. While we were reviewing video, Carlos informed me that he recognized everyone on the video that enters the lobby on Monday except one individual. The individual that Carlos did not recognize enters the complex at 21:27. The individual is a, tall, burly, male. The individual is wearing work boots, jeans, a black jacket, and has a black hood on his head. The individual is also wearing a black mask (COVID). The party is not wearing gloves and appears to be white.
5. The individual exits the building at 21:56. When the individual exits the elevator, his jacket coat is open, and a white symbol is seen on his upper left portion of his black sweatshirt. The symbol resembled what I believed to be the Nine Line logo. Nine Line is a military apparel line.
6. Carlos reiterated that he did not know who that party was. Carlos also informed me that his worker, STURGEON, MICHAEL saw the party before with BIRCHMORE.
7. I spoke to STURGEON. Michael informed me that the individual on camera looked like a guy who helped BIRCHMORE move in to her apartment. STURGEON said that BIRCHMORE moved in sometime in December. STURGEON was not 100% positive. STURGEON was unsure of the exact date.
8. Investigators Note: It was later learned from STURGEON that he saw the individual the same day police responded to apartment 3214. I ran an in-house check of 3214 and located a disturbance call on December 1, 2021 at 20:39, see 20-304-AR.
9. It should also be noted that Carlos informed us that BIRCHMORE only had one key fob to enter the building. Carlos was going to email BIRCHMORE's key fob activity to the State Police.
10. After reviewing video, Detective Albert, Sgt, Lank and I accompanied Troopers Dunne and Trooper Sgt. Fanning (who arrived on scene) to apartment 3307 as a follow up of the scene. Assistant property manager, FAHERTY, Kathleen provided us with the keys to the apartment. Once inside, Trooper Sgt. Fanning and Trooper Dunne took custody of written material located in the apartment. Also, the key fob to her apartment was located on her keys resting on a box inside the apartment.
11. The apartment was locked once we cleared.

SUPPLEMENTAL NARRATIVE FOR PATROLMAN ENSLEY COTARD

Ref: 21-79-OF

- 1.) On Thursday, February 6, 2021, I Officer Cotard, was working in the capacity of the School Resource Officer (herein referred to as SRO) at Canton High School. At approx 9:45am, I was contacted directly via cell phone from Sharon Police Officer Michael Hocking (SRO of Sharon Public Schools) who requested my assistance on performing a well-being check on a female staff member of Sharon Public Schools who has not been arriving to work or seen/heard from in several days.
- 2.) Officer Hocking advised me that BIRCHMORE, Sandra Marie works as an Instructional Assistant at East Middle School in Sharon and the school Administration contacted him because Ms. BIRCHMORE has not come to work in days, is not responding when they tried to contact her, and they could not get in touch with the emergency contact that they had on file. The last known address that Officer Hocking had for Ms. BIRCHMORE was *3 Windsor Woods Lane in Canton* (Canton Woods Apartments). Knowing that this place was a large apartment/condo complex, I asked Officer Hocking if there was a specific known apartment number for Ms. BIRCHMORE and he responded in the negative. This was all the information Officer Hocking was able to provide me about Ms. BIRCHMORE.
- 3.) At this time, I advised Officer Hocking that I would go to the Canton Woods leasing office and attempt to verify if Ms. BIRCHMORE is in fact a resident. If confirmed, I would conduct a well-being check on the residence. With this information I contacted Sgt Lank and advised him of the information I received and that I would be responding to Canton Woods.
- 4.) At approx. 10:45am, assisting SRO Brady and I spoke with the Canton Woods Property Manager, PORTER, Erin and confirmed that Ms. BIRCHMORE is a resident in apartment number 3307. We asked Ms. PORTER if she had seen or spoke with Ms. BIRCHMORE recently and she advised us that she has not seen or heard from her in several days. Ms. PORTER did advise us that she was told by someone within the building that
asked Ms. PORTER if she could try to contact Ms. BIRCHMORE with the contact number that she had on file for her. Ms. PORTER attempted two times to contact Ms. BIRCHMORE's cell phone but she advised us that the call was going directly to her voicemail. I advised Ms. PORTER that we would attempt to make contact with Ms. BIRCHMORE at her apartment.
- 5.) At approx. 11:00am, SRO Brady and I knocked and announce our presence on the door of Ms. BIRCHMORE for several minutes but did not receive a response. At this time, I contacted Sgt. Lank and advised him of the current situation. Sgt. Lank stated that we should try to locate her vehicle in the parking lot and if located, then we will make entry into the apartment. Sgt. Lank advised us to look for vehicle: *MA Reg 1YGB66 - 2018, Chevy Cruz, Sedan, Color - Blue*. I located the vehicle outside of building 3 and radioed into dispatch that I located her vehicle. Officer Brady and I visually inspected the vehicle and noticed that there was snow still on and around the vehicle that appeared undisturbed. The reader should note that the last time it snowed was on Monday, February 1, 2021 into Tuesday, February 2, 2021. We also noticed her Sharon Public School identification card hanging from the rearview mirror with her name and picture on it.
- 3.) I requested for a uniform officer to the scene and was able to obtain keys for the apartment from Ms. PORTER. A short time later, Officer Yeaton arrived on scene and we all made are way back to Ms. BIRCHMORE's apartment 3307. Again, I knocked and announced our presence at the door several times with no response. With the key, all Officer's on scene made entry into the apartment and immediately noticed that the apartment was disheveled and unkept with two house cats running around the apartment when we made entry. I first entered the bathroom (open door, lights off) and rendered that area safe. I then entered the bedroom of the

SUPPLEMENTAL NARRATIVE FOR PATROLMAN ENSLEY COTARD

Ref: 21-79-OF

apartment (I opened the closed door, lights off) and noticed Ms. BIRCHMORE seated on the floor, with some sort of belt/lanyard string/rope secured tightly around her neck, that was secured to the door handle of the bedroom closet, deceased. It was immediately apparent to this officer that Ms. BIRCHMORE was deceased as I noticed lividity about the skin/face, and rigor about the body's extremities. I also noticed a large pooling of dried blood around the mouth. After locating the body, I exited the bedroom and (documentation) and

4.) At this time, Officer Yeaton contacted the Canton Police Station and advised them of our discovery. After discovering the body, we were advised by Sgt. Lank and Det. McCourt to exit the apartment and secure the scene for processing. He also requested for the Medical Examiner's Office, the MA State Police CPAC, and Crime Scene Investigation to respond to the scene. Sgt. Lank and Det. McCourt arrived on scene and made entrance into the apartment. A short time later Troopers Kevin Tufts, Trooper Matt Dunn, and Kevin Clark arrived in scene to begin processing. I cleared from the scene a short time after.

5.) I contacted Officer Hocking via cell phone and advised him of my discovery. He stated that he would pass the information along to school Administration once I confirm with him that next of kin has been notified. He advised me that Ms. BIRCHMORE was also at one point, a staff member/teacher with Stoughton Public Schools and that he contacted Officer Sheanna Isabele (SRO Stoughton Public Schools) about Ms. BIRCHMORE earlier for contact information before contacting me. I advised him that I would reach out to her for information.

6.) I contacted and spoke to Officer Isabelle via cell phone and advised her of the situation. She advised me that she was very familiar with Ms. BIRCHMORE and shared with me that she was a former graduate of and employee at Stoughton High School.

. She stated that the Stoughton Patrol Officers has responded to her previous address of (Ave Stoughton)

s. Officer Isabelle stated that Ms. BIRCHMORE

She also advised me that Ms. BIRCHMORE's mother and grandmother recently passed away and that her aunt SMITH, Darlene would be a good person to contact for next of kin. I thanked her for the information and advised her that I would contact her once Ms. BIRCHMORE's next of kin was notified so she could notify Stoughton Public schools Administration on the matter.

7.) At this time, this case/investigation remains open and this report will be kept on file at the Canton Police Department pending further departmental action.