Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department
After Action Report for the May 30, 2020 Incident

DRAFT September 09, 2020

On Wednesday, May 27, 2020, the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department (CCSD) was advised of a planned protest scheduled for May 30, 2020 in the downtown Cleveland area. The following day, Thursday, May 28, 2020, the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department received intelligence that indicated the "Black Lives Matter" group of Cleveland and the "Coalition to Stop the Inhumanity at the Cuyahoga County Jail" are coordinating a protest on Saturday, May 30, 2020. The event was planned to take place from 1330hrs to 1700hrs at the FREE Stamp in Willard Park.

Local law enforcement continued to monitor open source social media for any additional information about this event. Information gathered from social media indicated that 205 people responded that they were "going" to the protest and 763 people responded that they were "interested." Intelligence indicated that the social media discussion within the event page was limited.

Multiple times throughout the following days the command staff assessed situations throughout the nation as well as protest intelligence reports. Continual re-evaluation of this department's involvement for the protest revealed nothing that would indicate the need to use the CCSD SWAT Team for protest coverage. On Friday, May 29, 2020, the CCSD approved a request from the Cleveland Division of Police (CDP) for a response team to assist their officers at this event. The Cleveland Division of Police was advised that the CCSD would assign an eight (8) uniformed deputy team to supplement the Cleveland Division of Police at Willard Park.

On Saturday, May 30th, at 1100hrs, the Sheriff's detail assigned to assist with the protest, attended a roll call at the Cleveland Division of Police 3rd District. At approximately 1320hrs, Sheriff Schilling and Lt. Kozub contacted Sgt. O'Conner. Sheriff Schilling advised that due to several protests in other cities across the United States changing from a peaceful protest to a riot, it would be prudent to have the SWAT Team available. After discussing the matter further, it was determined that SWAT Team would be activated and on standby at the Justice Center.

At 1330hrs, the event started at the FREE Stamp in Willard Park located at E.9th and Lakeside Avenue. The attendance appeared to be larger than originally indicated from prior intelligence reports. After a short period of time, the crowd began to move west bound on Lakeside Ave toward the Justice Center. The Field Operation Unit (FOU) that is responsible for the security of the Justice Center was notified of the crowd's movement.

At approximately 1445hrs, a large crowd of protesters gathered directly in front of the Justice Center on and around Lakeside Avenue and continued to grow. The crowd started to move closer to the Lakeside Avenue entrance of the Justice Center. It was determined that, due to the volume of the crowd moving towards the Justice Center with the personnel assigned, the

exterior entrances doors needed to be secured to prevent the crowd from entering the Justice Center. At this time, Sheriff Schilling and command staff at the Justice Center discussed the resources and additional personnel needed to assist with the growing crowd.

The crowd advanced from Lakeside Avenue to the glass entrance of the Justice Center. The protesters started to bang upon the two story panes of glass. The strikes were physically shaking the glass. It became apparent that the crowd was no longer peacefully protesting and that the possibility of use of force beyond mere officer presence was likely.

A Cleveland Division of Police Bicycle Patrol Unit maneuvered through the crowd. The unit positioned themselves between the increasingly aggressive crowd and the glass entrance to the Justice Center. The CDP's Bike Patrol Unit attempted to keep the crowd away from the glass, but the advancing protesters continued to push forward which trapped the CDP Bike Unit against the glass.

During this time, multiple subjects in the crowd began throwing potentially dangerous projectiles at law enforcement, which were position in front of the glass. As a result Cleveland Police deployed a less lethal fog dispenser. At approximately 1518hrs, deputies were deployed from inside the Justice Center to assist the Cleveland officers that were overrun and trapped by the aggressive crowd. The Sheriff's Department deployed several oleoresin capsicum rounds on to the ground to disperse the crowd surrounding the CDP Officers. Sheriff's Deputies and CDP Officers were able to form a line to separate the crowd from the glass frontage of the Justice Center. At this time, an all department page was sent requesting all deputies to report to the Justice Center.

At approximately 1536hrs, Commander Todd from Cleveland Division of Police issued the dispersal order over a loud speaker in front of the crowd on Lakeside Avenue.

At approximately 1545hrs, the SWAT grenadiers were given direction with regard to the type and placement of munitions that may be necessary to be dropped or launched. As actions from rioters toward uniformed officers in front of the Justice Center escalated and the physical assaults upon officers increased, the Sheriff's Command Staff gave the order to deploy specific less lethal munitions to the grenadiers. As the crowd began to move back toward Lakeside Avenue, several subjects continued to hurl objects at uniformed officers.

It should be noted, that several subjects in the crowd were prepared to counter the deployment of less lethal dispersal munitions. As law enforcement deployed less lethal munitions, rioters emerged from the crowd with traffic cones. When a traffic cone was placed over the deployed canister, it would prevent the gas/smoke from circulating and make it less effective. It also allowed them to extinguish the less lethal munitions with fluids. Several rioters were also equipped with leaf blowers. They would advance on the deployed less lethal munitions to redirect the chemicals towards the uniformed officers without gas masks, attempting to disable them.

During this time, the rioters began to separate and reassemble around the Justice Center. Rioters began using rocks, cement and metal poles to break windows on the 1st and 2nd floor of the Justice Center. The Cuyahoga County Clerk of Courts, Sheriff's Department and Jail all had windows broken out by rioters. Less lethal munitions deployed by deputies through the broken windows, were picked up by rioters and thrown back into the Justice Center through the broken windows. Some of those still active munitions caused OC and CS to contaminate several areas on the first floor of the Justice Center. Less lethal munitions were deployed to prevent advancing rioters from gaining entry into the building through the broken windows.

The rioters continued to assault the Justice Center and several surrounding buildings. Guard booths, one located on Lakeside Avenue and one located on W.3rd St. had all the windows broken out, destroyed, and/or set on fire. A Cleveland Police van containing shields and batons was breached and the contents removed. Rioters were witnessed walking around the area with police shields and batons. Numerous subjects were spray painting anti-law enforcement phrases on the street, sidewalk, Justice Center and surrounding businesses.

Multiple fires were started by incendiary devices brought to the protest by individuals. Two marked Cleveland Police cars parked on the corner of W.3rd St. and Lakeside Avenue were set on fire. A Cuyahoga County Public Works van parked on Ontario Avenue was set on fire, as well as several county and city vehicles parked behind the Courthouse Square building. Several individuals gained entry into the Courthouse Square building, where they attempted to set the building on fire.

By approximately 1950hrs, the majority of the rioters had dispersed from the area surrounding the Justice Center. A prisoner transport bus was deployed to assist Cleveland Division of Police with transporting mass arrests that were made in other locations throughout the city.

At 2315hrs, portable security fencing was installed around the perimeter of the Justice Center. Mobile Field Force Units were assigned to the perimeter of the Justice Center to respond to any returning rioters.

At approximately 0400hrs on May 31st 2020, Mobile Field Force personnel were removed from the perimeter and Field Operations personnel were positioned around of the Justice Center. Deputies assigned to Mobile Field Force, the SWAT team as well as any additional deputies were dismissed at this time.

Approximately 80 Sheriff's Deputies and Command Staff were present at the Justice Center between 1600hrs and 0000hrs. Sheriff Deputies and Correction Medical Staff treated approximately 20 law enforcement officers for injuries received from rioter as well as exposure from less lethal munitions.

Multiple surrounding agencies responded to assist with riot. Solon Police Department, Newburg Heights Police Department, Highland Hills Police Department, Lake County Sheriff's

Office, Geauga County Sheriff's Office and Portage County Sheriff's Office all provided mutual aid throughout the day.

Throughout the riot, the Department of Public Work employees responded and secured all exterior breaches in the Justice Center and Courthouse Square. The Department of Public Work cleaning staff responded and removed debris caused by the rioters.

Review

An after action review was conduct by the command staff to outline actions by this department that were successful as well as analyze areas where equipment, munitions, and procedures can be improved.

Training

The Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department, in conjunction with FEMA has conducted additional mobile field force training. As of this report, approximately 45 deputies have completed the FEMA Mobile Field Force training. Monthly mobile field force training with partnering agencies has been implemented.

Equipment

During the course of the May 30th incident, it was discovered that there were difficulties locating and accessing equipment. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) was once stored in a room with minimal available keys. It was determined that all supervisors that are assigned the Mobile Field Force (MFF) Unit, have been issued a key to access the area where the equipment is stored. PPE equipment was categorized by size, but not assigned to a specific deputy. It has been implemented that deputies assigned to MFF has been issued their own set of gear. This will decrease response time, as well insure that each deputy is fitted with proper equipment.

Long Range Acoustic Devices (LRADs) were purchased, improving the abilities of the department to project dispersal messages clearly over long distances. Pre-recorded dispersal messages have already been stored within the devices.

Communication

Radio communication is always difficult when dealing with large emergencies. The day of the protest/riot, radio communication was conducted on multiple channels. The Cleveland Division of Police, the Sheriff's Department, the SWAT team and regional law enforcement all were using different dedicated channels. This procedure makes communication amongst law enforcement difficult due to the need to use multiple channels to communicate. Currently we carry multiple radios to remedy this issue. The ability to communicate over multiple channels simultaneously with one radio would be a valuable asset during large, multi-agency events.

The SWAT Team has added Comtac headsets to their equipment, increasing the ability to communicate amongst the team as well as for SWAT command elements to communicate with partner agencies while immersed in loud situations.

Responding Deputies/Mutual Aid

Activation of the Incident Command System will enable command staff better control and awareness of reporting personnel, equipment needs and issuing, assignment of personnel and communication amongst the varied units at work in a multiple discipline operation.

Less Lethal

The expansion of less lethal munitions and launchers available to the department increases the safety of all involved in riot situations. These force multipliers have increased in number and type, as well as the department adding instructors to increase the number of deputies trained in these devices, as well as the frequency of the training provided.

Bus Team

The bus was deployed with 4 deputies and a supervisor to assist CDP with mass arrests around the city. Communication and records of the arresting officers was difficult to figure out the following days. Following the riot, we have communicated with CDP to have an arrest team assigned to the JC to handle their arrests that are transported by our bus or vans. We also assign a camera and a white board to take pictures of the arrestee and officer prior to taking custody of the arrestees, Along with the camera and white board, deputies also will utilize their body cameras to capture a video of the arrestee and the officer involved as evidentiary purposes.