

State of Connecticut  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL



Report Concerning the  
Use of Deadly Force by the Bridgeport Police Department  
on March 31, 2025 Resulting in the Death of Dyshan Best

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## INTRODUCTION

On March 31, 2025, Bridgeport Police Officer Yoon Heo<sup>1</sup> shot and killed Dyshan Best,<sup>2</sup> during a foot pursuit on Kossuth Street in Bridgeport, Connecticut. As required by statute,<sup>3</sup> the Office of Inspector General (OIG) investigated this officer-involved shooting. The results of the investigation are contained in this report.

The investigation reveals that at approximately 5:50 p.m. several Bridgeport police officers responded to East Main Street on a report of a large fight. Specifically, a 911 caller reported a brawl involving approximately thirty people and that there were “guns out.” Officers Erin Perrotta and Yoon Heo were among the officers who responded to the call. When the officers arrived with lights and sirens, they saw a crowd of people swearing at each other in a verbal altercation. The officers tried to de-escalate the situation.

A man on the sidewalk approached officers and pointed at two black men and a black truck parked on the sidewalk and told an officer that the men have a gun. Perrotta and Officer Jorge Larregui approached the truck, with Officer Perrotta approaching the passenger side, where Best was seated. The truck was about to depart and Perrotta ordered the driver to stop. She then asked Best to step out of the vehicle so she could pat him down.

Best stepped out of the truck holding a large bottle of alcohol, a vape pen, and a cell phone. He immediately began to run from the officers, heading west on Boston Avenue. Officer Heo had just arrived and immediately ran after Best. Officers Lesley Billingslea and Perrotta also pursued Best on foot, with Officer Heo closest behind Best. Best ran through a Citgo gas station parking lot where his shoes came off. He also retrieved a handgun from somewhere on his body and held it in his right hand. Officer Heo deployed his Taser at Best, but it was not effective.

Next, Best turned left onto Kossuth Street where he continued to hold a firearm in his hand but he dropped the bottle he was carrying. Best then turned left into a lot filled with disabled cars. Best glanced back at Heo and extended his right arm behind him in the general direction of Officer Heo. Best was holding a semi-automatic pistol in his right hand. Officer Heo drew his service weapon and fired two shots at Best, striking him once. Best later died from his injuries.

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<sup>1</sup> Officer Heo is an Asian male who, on the date of the incident, was 28 years of age and had been a Bridgeport police officer for 2 years and 4 days. He had no prior disciplinary history in the Bridgeport Police Department.

<sup>2</sup> Best was a black male who, on the date of the incident, was 39 years of age. He previously had been convicted of conspiracy to commit Robbery in the First Degree and other weapon and narcotic charges. By virtue of these convictions, it was illegal for him to possess a firearm.

<sup>3</sup> As relevant here, General Statutes §51-277a(a)(1) provides: “Whenever a peace officer, in the performance of such officer’s duties, uses physical force upon another person and such person dies as a result thereof or uses deadly force, as defined in section 53a-3, upon another person, the Division of Criminal Justice shall cause an investigation to be made and the Inspector General shall have the responsibility of determining whether the use of force by the peace officer was justifiable under section 53a-22.”

Based on my office's investigation, I conclude that Officer Heo had a reasonable belief that he was in immediate danger of serious injury or death from Dyshan Best and that it was necessary to use deadly physical force to protect himself. Therefore, I conclude his use of deadly physical force was legally justified under Connecticut law.

## INVESTIGATION

### Scene

The scene included two primary areas of interest: the sidewalk area on the eastern side of Kossuth Street, adjacent to 540 Boston Avenue, and a gated fenced lot that had the appearance of a junkyard between 1420 and 1422 Kossuth Street. The entire scene extended along the path Best was pursued by police officers, beginning in a parking lot on East Main Street, extending down Boston Avenue and through a gas station parking lot on Boston Avenue, and ending in the junkyard lot on Kossuth Street.



[Overview of scene showing approximate path of foot pursuit]

The lot was determined to be part of the property with an address of 540 Boston Avenue. The lot, however, was leased to the owner of 562 and 602 Boston Avenue, at least according to residents with whom the detectives and inspectors spoke. The lot was contained by a gated, chain-link fence that was open at the time of the incident. The lot was paved and filled tightly with cars parked side by side and in rows. It was littered with car parts and furniture. Refrigerators and trash were also strewn about the lot. It had an uphill gradient from Kossuth Street in an easterly direction. The manner in which the vehicles were positioned in the lot formed two narrow aisles down each side of a center row of vehicles – a northern aisle and a southern aisle.



[Junkyard lot on Kossuth Street]

The northern aisle was framed, on the left, by a black Hyundai Elantra sedan and white Audi A4 sedan and, on the right, by a white Toyota Highlander SUV and a gray Nissan Altima sedan.



[Northern aisle between vehicles in junkyard lot]

The owners of the properties gave consent for the area to be searched and relevant items of evidence to be seized. Detectives from the Connecticut State Police Western District Major Crime Squad (WDMCS) were dispatched to the scene to photograph, collect, and process the evidence at the scene. Although it had not been raining during the incident itself, heavy rain started to fall before the detectives from WDMCS arrived and began their work. When detectives arrived, it had already been raining heavily. They placed a popup tent over the handgun and the area where the shooting occurred in an attempt to preserve any biological evidence that may have been present.



[View looking east from the north aisle, showing medical supplies]



[Firearm on ground between vehicle in northern aisle]

### Evidence at the Scene

Detectives located, photographed, and seized various items of evidence from the area of the junkyard and the eastern sidewalk of Kossuth Street. First, a .45 caliber semi-automatic pistol (Evidence marker #8) was found in a northern narrow aisle between two rows of vehicles located in the junkyard lot.



[Firearm located between vehicles in junkyard lot, just past Audi A4]

More specifically, the pistol was located adjacent to the rear passenger side tire of a gray Subaru Forester in the northern aisle, just past the white Audi A4 sedan. The firearm was a model C9 semi-automatic pistol with an obliterated serial number. It was loaded with nine rounds of various brands of 9mm ammunition, including one in the chamber.



[High-point C9 semi-automatic pistol]

The firearm and ammunition were seized and submitted to the state forensic laboratory for further testing. The results of that testing are set forth later in this report.

Two FC 45 Auto cartridge casings were located in the southern aisle between vehicles in the junkyard lot. These shell casings were submitted for forensic analysis to the state forensic laboratory.



[Two spent shell casings (Evidence marker ##6 and 7)]



[First shell casing]



[Second shell casing]



[Second shell casing]

Just inside the entrance to the junkyard lot, detectives located an expended Taser cartridge with attached wires. The Taser evidence is further discussed later in this report.



[Taser cartridge]



[Taser cartridge with attached wires]

A vape device was on the sidewalk just north of the entrance to the junkyard. (Evidence marker #4).



[Vape device]



A 1.75 liter Remy Martin Cognac bottle was located and seized on Kossuth Street, just next to the eastern sidewalk. (Evidence marker #10). It contained about two inches of liquid.



[Cognac bottle]



[Cognac bottle]



[Cognac bottle marked to show level of liquid when seized]

A cell phone was located on and seized from a grassy embankment on Kossuth Street, between a fence and the eastern sidewalk. (Evidence marker #11.)



[Kossuth Street eastern sidewalk facing north]



[Cell phone]



[Cell phone]

A portion of a jean jacket was located in the northern aisle of the junkyard lot in the area where Best had received medical treatment for his injuries. The jacket had been cut in half and

was stained with a blood-like substance. The other half of the jean jacket was among Best's belongings at Bridgeport Hospital where he had been transported for medical care.



[Half of a jean jacket]

Further examination of the scene revealed a bullet defect in the bumper cover of a white Audi A4 about 22.5 inches from the ground. A second bullet defect was discovered in the rear passenger side tire of the Audi about 18 inches off the ground. The bullet defects were consistent with one bullet traveling through the rear bumper cover of the Audi at a downward angle and into its rear passenger side tire. No other defects were observed and detectives concluded that the bullet was possibly inside the tire of the Audi. They did not make further attempts to retrieve it.



[Photo showing bullet defects in Audi bumper and tire]

## Statements

### Sergeant Erica Spika

On May 15, 2025, Sergeant Erica Spika wrote a police report regarding the incident. Her report states in relevant part: “At 1745 hours, CAD, via channel 1, dispatched several units to respond to a street fight at 1663 East Main Street. CAD advised that a complainant called in stating that there were approximately 30 people fighting in the street, near U-Haul, with firearms. CAD further advised that the caller confirmed that firearms were physically seen. . . .

“Units arrived on-scene and shortly after their arrival, G39C (Officer E. Perrotta) called out a foot pursuit. Another radio transmission came over channel 1 a few moments later advising shots were fired. The following radio transmission (via channel; 1) advised that a firearm was recovered (at 1749 hours) . . . .

“I arrived on-scene at approximately 1751 hours. Upon my arrival, G31C (Officer L. Billingslea) walked me over the main portion of the crime scene (which was in the driveway of 1420-1422 Kossuth Street). I was advised that the suspect was shot. I was further advised that Officer Y. Heo was the Officer involved in the shooting. In the driveway area, I observed several Officers actively providing medical aid to the suspect. I requested a second Ambulance (at 1755 hours) to respond to the scene to transport Officer Heo to the hospital but was advised that he was already transported to Bridgeport Hospital by Task Force Officers (Officer K. Bettini and Detective F. Neal). I then cancelled the request for the second Ambulance at 1756 hours.

"I observed numerous bystanders in the immediate area and advised Officers to move everyone to the corner of Beecher Street and Kossuth Street or to Kossuth Street and Silliman Street. This was done so the crime scene could be properly secured and preserved. I gave Officer C. Arroyo crime scene tape to block off the area.

"I observed a taser cartridge in the driveway, a few feet before where the suspect was being treated. I also observed a vaping device on the sidewalk (before the driveway entrance) and was advised by Officers on-scene that said device was a part of the crime scene.

"When I approached the driveway access area (where the suspect was), Lieutenant B. Seely was escorting Officer E. Perrotta down the driveway. Officer Perrotta was visibly hysterical (crying and breathing rapidly) and had blood all over her uniform, At this time, I was unsure if Officer Perrotta was struck by gunfire or injured. I escorted Officer Perrotta to the corner of Beecher Street and Kossuth Street, where Officer J. Larregui and Officer J. Scialdoni were. I advised them to get Officer Perrotta into a vehicle and have her transported to the hospital for an evaluation and to see if she was injured. I requested another Ambulance (at 1759 hours) respond to the corner of Beecher Street and Kossuth Street for Officer Perrotta. I then walked back over to the immediate crime scene.

"Several minutes had passed and the Ambulance for the suspect was still not on-scene. I requested CAD, via channel 1, several times for an update on when the Ambulance would arrive. My first request was at approximately 1804 hours. CAD advised they would conduct a call back. I then requested an update, via channel 1, at approximately 1806 hours and was advised that they were on hold with AMR. At this time, it was decided that we transport the suspect in a marked patrol vehicle. CAD then advised (at 1810 hours) that AMR was 3 minutes out. The Fire Department placed the suspect onto a MegaMover transport sheet and escorted him to the corner of Boston Avenue and Beecher Street (where the Ambulance was waiting). The suspect was then transported to Bridgeport Hospital at approximately 1815 hours. . . ."

#### Officer Russell Ouellette

Officer Ouellette was one of the officers who responded as a "cover unit" for Officers Heo and Perrotta for the call of a fight with guns displayed. He wrote a sworn report on May 17, 2025, which provides in relevant part: "I was traveling North on East Main Street in a marked patrol vehicle when OFC. Heo advised Bridgeport communication via channel #1 he was engaged in a foot pursuit with a suspect East on Boston Avenue from East Main Street. I made a right hand turn to travel East on Stillman Street in efforts to parallel OFC. Heo foot pursuit. Another Officer advised the correct direction of travel for OFC. Heo foot pursuit was West on Boston Avenue approaching Beecher Street. I repositioned my patrol vehicle and began traveling East on Stillman Street turning right to travel North on Kossuth Street. As I approached the intersection of Kossuth Street and Spring Street, I observed K9 Officer Tutts park his patrol

vehicle near a house close to the intersection of Kossuth Street and Beecher Street. OFC. Tuths exited his patrol vehicle rapidly and ran into the driveway of said house. I parked my patrol vehicle near the intersection of Kossuth Street and Spring Street and exited my patrol vehicle in preparation [because] the suspect may scale fencing and run towards my direction. As I was exiting my patrol vehicle OFC. Heo advised Bridgeport communication via channel #1 'shots fired' occurred. I ran North on Kossuth Street from Spring Street and made contact with OFC. Heb, OFC. Perrotta, and OFC. Tuths. A multitude of officers were arriving to the scene simultaneously.

"OFC. Heo advised [me that] he was the officer who was forced to discharge his firearm. I advised OFC. Heo he must remove himself from the scene. I advised Detective Neil to take custody of OFC. Heo and remove him from the scene. DET. Neil transported OFC. Heo to Bridgeport Hospital.

"I observed the suspect later identified as Dyshan Best lying on his right-side resisting OFC. Tuths['] and OFC. Perrotta['s] ability to place him into handcuffs. After a brief struggle Officers were able to place Dyshan's hands behind his back and secure him into handcuffs. Using medical sheers I cut away Dyshan's clothing to expose his wound in efforts to begin life saving measures and control bleeding. Bridgeport Fire Department personnel arrived to the scene and assumed control of medical treatment while awaiting AMR Medics to arrive.

"Crime Scene tape was applied to the exterior of this scene and all non-essential persons were removed. I observed two females and two males move the Crime Scene tape and enter the scene. One female was identified as city council member Aidee Nieves and one male was identified as Deputy Chief Baraja. I attempted to advise the female city council members they were unauthorized to enter an active crime scene. I was advised by DC Baraja the city council would be allowed on scene. Chief Porter and Captain Blackwell briefed the city council members of this incident in its entirety. . . ."

#### Officer Jameson Rowland

Officer Jameson Rowland wrote a sworn incident report on May 17, 2025. He was one of the many officers who initially responded to the call of a fight. He arrived after the foot pursuit began, but was one of the officers to account for the firearm discovered at the scene. His report states in relevant part: "While running behind K-9 Ofc. Tuths, I observed multiple Bridgeport units attempting to give medical aid to a party [lying] on the ground. While still running up the driveway, K-9 Ofc. Tuths yelled to me saying there is a firearm further up in the driveway. At that moment, I observed a black firearm a few feet from the Bridgeport [units]. My self and PPO Ofc. Newton then remained with the firearm on the ground in the driveway. Approximately two hours later, Ofc. Angon relieved us, letting us use his marked patrol vehicle to go to 300 Congress Street and use the bathroom. We then promptly returned to the scene

with his marked patrol vehicle and relieved Ofc. Angon. At this point we remained with the firearm in the driveway while [WDMCS] conducted their investigation.”

#### Officer Lesley Billingslea

Officer Lesley Billingslea wrote a sworn incident report on May 18, 2025. It provides in relevant part: “On 3/31/25 at approximately 17:45 hours. I, Ofc. Billingslea and Ofc. Larregui were dispatched to the area of 1663 East Main Street on the report of a street fight. It should be noted that earlier in my shift I was dispatched to a shots fired call in the same area. There is a bar/lounge located at 1663 East Main Street, according to a passerby in the area from my earlier call there was a repass happening at this location for a funeral that occurred earlier in the day. When officers arrived to the area there were several large crowds of people that began dispersing. In the parking lot of 1677 East Main Street several passersby pointed to black Chevrolet Tahoe bearing (CT-BP16258). As we walked to approach the vehicle, Ofc. Perotta called out the plate for the vehicle. An unidentified black male in the parking lot ‘nodded his head’ towards the Tahoe. Ofc. Larregui and Ofc. Perotta pulled two unidentified black males from the car[. At this time Ofc. Heo was also arriving to the scene.

“Within several seconds of our encounter with the vehicle, the black male pulled from the passenger side began running. Ofc. Heo, Ofc. Perotta and I began chasing the male down the sidewalk of Boston Avenue, into the parking lot of the CITGO gas station located at 540 Boston Avenue around the corner onto Kossuth Street, where I saw the male run into the rear lot of 540 Boston Avenue. During the foot pursuit I was running directly behind Ofc. Perotta, but I lost sight [of] Ofc. Heo as he chased the suspect into the rear lot next to 1420 Kossuth Street.

“Less than several seconds later I then heard two gunshots and as I turned the corner into the lot, I saw the suspect shot and officers rendering emergency aid. I asked Ofc. Heo where the gun was and he pointed several feet away from where the suspect was laying. I observed a black handgun, unknown make or model. . . .”

#### Officer Daniel Buckley

Officer Daniel Buckley wrote a sworn incident report on May 18, 2025. Similar to Officer Billingslea, he documented how he saw a black pistol on the ground a few feet from Dyshan Best as other officers were providing first aid to him. He and other officers remained with the firearm until it was collected by state police detectives.

Officer Jorge Larregui

Officer Jorge Larregui wrote a sworn incident report on May 21, 2025. His report states in relevant part: "As we approached the area with several officers, we heard someone state that the guy wearing all black and walking away from us was getting inside a black SUV with CT Reg BP16258 had the gun. The vehicle was across the street on East Main Street near the Urgent Care (old library) located at 1677 East Main Street. Officer Perrotta quickly notified Bridgeport Dispatch and ran CT Reg BP16258, a black Chevy Tahoe. I approached the driver's side, and Officer Perrotta and Officer Heo approached the passenger. I asked the driver to step out of the vehicle for a quick pat down for weapons, and I asked him if he had a gun, and he stated no.

"As I was patting down the driver, Officer Perrotta attempted to pat down the passenger. The passenger took off running westbound on the sidewalk of Boston Avenue. Officer Perrotta and my partner, Officer Billingslea and Officer Heo called out a foot pursuit. They were running behind the passenger, now near the gas station located on Boston Avenue and Beecher Street. Shortly after, I heard Officer Perrotta call out, 'Shots Fired.' Fearing for the safety of the officers running behind the passenger with a possible firearm, I released the driver and made my way toward the area of Kossuth Street and Beecher Street. My partner stated that he needed the area blocked off, and Officer C. Arroyo and I set up a crime scene area on Beecher Street and Kossuth Street. . . . Officer Perrotta was highly emotional and needed medical attention and [was]covered in blood. Officer Perrotta and I got in the back of the ambulance and were brought to Bridgeport Hospital."

Officer Patrick Tuths

Officer Patrick Tuths wrote a sworn incident report dated May 23, 2025.

"On 03/31/2025 I responded to the area of Boston Avenue and Kossuth Street to assist Officers with a street fight. Dispatch stated over channel one they received a call from this location reporting approximately 30 people fighting and firearms had been displayed. While enroute, I heard assisting Officers transmit over channel one they were in a foot pursuit. I was traveling East on Boston Avenue when I observed Officer Y. Heo and Officer E. Perrota pursuing a male on foot through the Citgo gas station parking lot located at 540 Boston Avenue. I pulled my marked Police Vehicle into the parking lot and observed the male exit the gas station parking lot and continue fleeing south on Kossuth Street. The male was running on the grassy area on the east side of Kossuth Street. With my overhead emergency lights activated, I continued to parallel the male in my marked Police Cruiser. I noticed taser wires hanging from the male's jacket, indicating a taser had been deployed. The male was still running south on Kossuth

Street, and it appeared the Taser deployment was ineffective. As the male was running, **I saw what I immediately recognized to be a firearm in the male's hand. The male was running and held the firearm in his right hand which he kept positioned in front of his body. The male turned into a driveway. I exited my marked patrol vehicle and shouted to assisting officers, 'he's got a gun.'**

"I attempted to retrieve my certified police K9. The rear door was locked. As I attempted to re-open the driver's side door to unlock the rear canine compartment of my vehicle, I heard the sound of two gunshots coming from the driveway of 1422 Kossuth Street. I immediately began running towards 1422 Kossuth Street. I observed a male, later identified as Best, Dyshan laying on the ground of 1422 Kossuth Street in between two parked cars. I observed a firearm laying in the driveway of 1422 Kossuth Street in between two parked cars. I observed blood on Best as well as the driveway, leading me to believe Best had been shot. Officer Heo was leaning over Best and was attempting to place Best in handcuffs. I instructed Officer Perotta to assist Officer Heo handcuff Best as I ran back to my police cruiser to retrieve an emergency first aid kit. When I returned to Best, Officer Perotta was struggling to place Best in handcuffs as he continued to tense his arms and roll around on the ground. Officer R. Oullette replaced Officer Perotta. Officer Oullette and I were able to successfully place Best in Handcuffs without further incident. I located a gunshot wound on Best's back. . . .

"As multiple officers continued to respond to the scene, I instructed Officer J. Rowland to stand over the firearm that was several feet from where Best was lying in the driveway of 1422 Kossuth Street. I continued to apply pressure and talk to Best, attempting to keep him calm until Bridgeport Fire Department paramedics arrived on scene. BFD arrived a short time later and took over medical treatment." (Emphasis added.)

#### Officer Gary Angon

Officer Gary Angon wrote a sworn incident report dated June 11, 2025. His relevant involvement pertains to watching the gun that was found until detectives removed it from the scene. It provides in relevant part: "At that time, I relieved Officer Rowland and his PPO.<sup>[4]</sup> My assignment was to safeguard a firearm located on the ground within the crime scene. I did so for approx. 20 minutes until Officer Rowland and his PPO returned and relieved me. I remained on scene safeguarding the crime scene until the CSP Crime Scene Unit arrived."

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<sup>[4]</sup> Probationary Patrol Officer.

## Officer Erin Perrotta

Officer Perrotta wrote a sworn report dated May 20, 2025, about her involvement in the incident. It provides: "On March 31, 2025, I, Officer Erin Perrotta, was dispatched to a report of a street fight at the location of 1663 East Main Street. CAD<sup>[5]</sup> stated that the caller is reporting a street fight and that they saw a firearm. At this time, I went over channel one asking to specify if the caller observed a firearm. CAD confirmed that the caller did physically see a firearm. Sgt. Spika then granted code to all officers via channel one.

"Upon arrival, I observed what appeared to be a gathering on the sidewalk of East Main Street with multiple people who were having a verbal altercation. Multiple individuals were swearing at each other as I attempted to approach said crowd to assess the situation and attempt to de-escalate the altercation. At this time, I observed a male standing on the sidewalk who approached me. The man pointed in the direction of two black males and a black truck that was illegally parked on the sidewalk at the intersection. The male told me, 'They have the gun.' I then observed the two males attempting to walk to the black truck. I reported the truck's plate over the radio. I then reported over channel one and read the plate.

"I approached the truck as the two males got into the truck. When the truck started to leave, I put my hand up ordering the driver to stop. I and Officer Larregui approached the driver's side. Officer Larregui opened the driver's door and ordered the driver out of the car. I then went around the front of the truck and asked the passenger, now known to me to be Dyshan Best, to please step out. I opened the door and told him we had to pat him down as someone reported a firearm. As he sat in the truck holding a large bottle, he pointed down the road and said there's a firearm down there. I told him it would be quick and if he didn't have anything we would let him go. He then stepped out of the truck holding a cell phone in his right hand and the bottle in his left hand. He immediately began to run.

"Best ran west on Boston Avenue. I immediately got on channel one to notify CAD of the foot pursuit and stated that the suspect was running towards the gas station. I pursued and ordered Best to stop or he would be tased as I pulled out my department issued Taser. Officer Heo ran in front of me as Officer Billingslea was behind me calling out directions of the foot pursuit.

"Officer Heo also warned Best that he would be tased. Best disregarded orders and continued to run. Officer Heo then attempted to tase Best. The probes hit his jean jacket but did not appear to connect. Best then ran around the corner of the Citgo gas station followed by Officer Heo, me and Officer Billingslea. Best ran down a small grass embankment and fell and dropped the bottle. About that time, I observed K93, Officer P. Tuths, pull his vehicle alongside of us. I radioed for him to release his canine.

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<sup>[5]</sup> Computer Aided Dispatch.

“After Best fell he quickly got back up and continued running towards a driveway with numerous vehicles parked in it. **I observed a black object in Best’s right hand, that I recognized as a firearm.** Officer Tuths who ran in front of me then yelled ‘Gun’ at about the same time I observed the firearm.

“Within a couple of seconds, I heard two pop noises which I knew to be gun shots. I then immediately got on the radio and stated shots fired and to send the medics now. I asked about the gun, and someone said something indicating it was there. I reported on the radio that the gun was recovered.” (Emphasis added).

#### Officer Yoon Heo

On May 15, 2025, Officer Yoon Heo wrote a sworn incident report dated March 31, 2025. His complete statement is as follows: “On the evening of 03/31/2025, I, Officer Yoon Heo, responded to a street fight in the area of 1663 East Main Street. While en route, dispatch advised responding officers that there were reports of a party with a firearm on scene. Also, while en route, I heard over the radio that officers had stopped a vehicle related to the incident.

“On arrival, I observed officers speaking with the occupants of a black Chevy SUV. As I walked towards the vehicle, I observed a male party, later identified as Dyshan Best, suddenly run into my view from behind the vehicle with Officer Perrotta following Best in a foot pursuit. I began pursuing Best as well, traveling westbound on Boston Ave.

“As I pursued Best on foot, I twice yelled warnings to him that he was going to be tased. Best continued to flee along the parking lot between parked cars and on the sidewalk of Boston Ave. He then proceeded to turn onto the property of [the] Citgo Gas Station at the corner of Boston Ave and Beecher St. It should be noted that I observed Best was holding what appeared to be a large bottle in his left hand, and his shoes had fallen off at that time.

“In the parking lot of Citgo Gas Station, I felt that I was close enough to deploy my taser after issuing multiple warnings as Best continued to refuse to stop. I deployed my taser and the prongs appeared to make a connection with Best. However, Best continued to run across the parking lot which indicated to me that the Taser deployment was ineffective. I observed that Best was still holding the large bottle in his left hand, but his right hand was not visible at this time.

“Best continued to flee southbound down a steep grassy hill that connected to the sidewalk of Kossuth St. As Best ran down the hill, I observed him trip and fall, causing him to drop the large bottle that was in his left hand. At this time, it was still unknown to me what Best was holding in his right hand. I had slowed down considerably to prevent myself from also tripping on the steep grassy hill while simultaneously attempting to reload another taser cartridge. I successfully took out the spent taser cartridge but ultimately re-holstered my taser after deciding to attempt to apprehend Best with my hands as I began to close my distance.

“As Best got up from the fall, he continued to run south on Kossuth St. before turning left into a driveway next to what was later identified as 1422 Kossuth St. I continued closing my distance from Best in order to attempt to apprehend him with my hands.

“It should be noted that I was now in extremely close proximity to Best, as my intentions were to apprehend him by tackling or grabbing him. As I turned into the driveway directly behind Best, I heard another person, later identified to be Officer Patrick Tuths, yell gun indic[a]ting to me that Best was in possession of a firearm. We were in a confined, very tight space between multiple parked vehicles, Best quickly glanced towards my direction over his right shoulder before extending his right arm behind him towards me.

“As Best extended his right arm behind him while continuing to run up the driveway, I observed what I immediately recognized as a firearm in his right hand. I drew my firearm. As the muzzle of the firearm was moving up towards me, I fired two shots. Only a few seconds elapsed from when Officer Tuths yelled gun to the time I fired my gun. Upon seeing Best’s gun I only had a split second to react and had no ability to find or take cover due to the confined space between the cars in the driveway and my extremely close proximity directly behind Best.

“In retrospect I cannot think of any reason Best would retrieve his gun and point it toward me other than to threaten or use deadly force to escape. I certainly had no opportunity to provide warning or take alternative action. At that given moment, I feared that Best was going to fire his weapon shooting me or others in the area. After I fired my weapon, I observed Best fall to the ground and stop moving. I briefly held him at gunpoint before approaching him to immediately render medical aid with the intent of preserving his life. I also called for EMS to the scene, and heard other officers on scene transmit over the radio that a firearm was recovered while I was rendering medical aid.

“I along with other officers attempted to handcuff Best in case he continued to resist or was still in possession of a weapon. Due to the confined space between the parked vehicles prohibiting officers to effectively handcuff and render medical aid, I and other officers moved Best to a nearby area with more physical space. I then turned Best over onto his side and located the bullet wound on Best’s lower back area. I began packing the wound with packing gauze to control the bleeding.

“At this time, enough officers were on scene to maintain control and safety of the situation and render medical aid to Best. Per proper procedure, I was removed from the scene and was transported to the hospital by Task Force officers to be evaluated for possible injuries.”

### Matthew Purdie

Inspectors from the Office of Inspector General interviewed Matthew Purdie on April 22, 2025 and again on January 12, 2026. Purdie said he had been “genuine” friends with Best since 1998. Purdie and Best attended a funeral service the morning of March 31, 2025. After the

service they were driving in a black Chevy Tahoe. They drove around a bit and then went to a “repass” at a social club East Main Street near Boston Avenue in Bridgeport. He described the commotion outside that drew the attention of police to the area. A group of people were arguing and shouting. He claimed that he attempted to de-escalate the situation but got into the Tahoe with Best when they heard police sirens. Within seconds, he said a cop opened his door and asked him to get out. He said he got out of the car and was searched by the officer. He said Best got out of the car after a “lady cop” asked him to get out. Best opened the door and proceeded to run. He said the cop said that Best had a gun. Purdie told inspectors that neither he, nor Best, possessed a gun that day and that Best probably ran because he was scared. He said Best drank a lot of liquor and that the bottle of Remy Martin was the second bottle they had consumed that day. He said earlier at the repast someone was shooting but it wasn’t near he and Best. He said it was “messed up” that someone would say there was a gun in his vehicle. Purdie said he drove away from the scene when police began chasing Best.

## **Digital Evidence**

The shooting was captured on the body-worn cameras (BWC) of Officers Heo, Perrotta, and Tuths. The videos are summarized below.

### Officer Heo’s BWC video

The video from Officer Heo’s BWC is substantially consistent with his statement. The video shows him stopping his patrol car on Boston Road in front of the Urgent Care. As he approached the black Tahoe, Matthew Purdie was already outside the vehicle speaking with Officer Tuths. “A man died just now,” Purdie can be heard saying. As Officer Heo walked toward the Tahoe, Best fled from Officer Perrotta and she began to pursue pursuit. “Yo, yo!” Heo said. “I’m going to tase you!” Perrotta yelled. “32 foot pursuit eastbound on Boston Ave.,” Heo said. Both officers ran after Best, although Heo overtook Perrotta. Heo’s Taser is visible in his left hand. “Yo you’re gonna get tased! You’re gonna get fuckin’ tased!” he shouted at Best.

The chase weaved through parked cars as they approached the Citgo gas station where Best’s shoes came off. Again, Heo warned Best that he would be tased. Heo fired his Taser at Best. The probes attached to Best’s jacket but Best continued to flee. Heo then shouted an expletive and then radioed “Taser deployed.”

Next, Best ran though the Citgo lot turning south on Kossuth Street. He ran onto a grassy embankment bordered by a fence and then the sidewalk. Heo was still holding his Taser in his left hand. Best was holding a bottle in his left hand. He slipped on the sidewalk and dropped the bottle and a small dark object. Best appeared to be clutching something in his right hand.

Officer Heo then began to close the distance on Best, who turned left into the junkyard. Best ran into an aisle between the parked cars. A voice can be faintly heard yelling “he’s got a gun”. Best briefly turned his head to the right. At first Best’s right hand was not visible, but he then moved his hand to the rear and a handgun is visible in his hand. The gun was pointed to Best’s rear, toward Officer Heo. Then Heo held his gun in his right hand and fired two shots as he yelled, “yo, yo!” Best fell onto the ground. A sound can be heard of a metal object clattering over pavement. Heo then announced on his radio, “32 shots fired.” Finally, a black object on the pavement is visible on the ground near the right rear tire of a car that has a blue tarp on its roof. No other officers appear to be in or near the area where the black object was lying on the ground. Officer Heo immediately reported to Officer Perotta that “he had a gun.”

[To watch the relevant portion of the video from Officer Heo’s BWC, click [here](#).]

[To watch the video that zooms in when Best has fled along the path of pursuit, click [here](#).]<sup>6</sup>

#### Officer Perrotta’s BWC video

The video taken from Officer Perrotta’s BWC is consistent with her sworn statement. The video depicts Perotta arriving at the scene and speaking to two other officers already present. There was a crowd of people visible on the opposite sidewalk. One of the officers told her about the Tahoe and that someone had reported that the gun was probably in that vehicle. She called the registration plate over the radio. She encountered two people as she walked towards the Tahoe, telling them that she was going to check it out.

Perrotta and Officer Larregui went to the driver’s door. Larregui opened the door. The driver, Matthew Purdie, exited. Perrotta walked around the front of the vehicle to the passenger door. She said to the passenger in the front seat, “can you just step out?” She opened the door. Dyshan Best was sitting in the passenger seat. He was not wearing a seat belt. He was wearing Nike sneakers and a black jean jacket. In his right hand he held a cell phone. In his left hand, he was holding a vape device and a green bottle.

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<sup>6</sup> The original video from the officer’s camera has been preserved exactly as it was recorded, and its digital fingerprint (file hash value) confirms it was never changed. To make the video easier to interpret, a shorter clip was created that only includes the relevant portion of the video, and added a spotlight effect to draw attention to specific moments during the foot chase. This spotlight is just a visual overlay—akin to circling something in a photo—and does not change the actual footage. The forensic video software used to create the spotlight effect produced a report showing exactly which frames on which the spotlight overlay appears, so there is a clear record of what was added and where. At no point was AI used to create or alter the video.

Officer Perrotta told Best, “We just got to pat you both down because somebody said something about a firearm.” Best said, “there’s a firearm down there,” and pointed straight ahead. Perrotta responded, “well now we’re here so if you got nothing, it’s quick and we let you go.” Best then stepped out of the vehicle and said, “all right.” He was still gripping a phone, the vape device, and the bottle. Best turned and quickly ran towards the rear of the vehicle and through the parking lot. Perrotta radioed, “32 foot pursuit” and then yelled “Stop!” as she gave chase to Best. She announced, “I’m gonna tase you!” She then pulled out her Taser and held it in her left hand, and then her right hand.

Officer Heo is visible to Perrotta’s right and he quickly overtook her and was now between Perrotta and Best. Perrotta yelled out the path of the pursuit though the Citgo gas station. Heo remained in front of her and can be seen getting closer to Best. When she rounded the corner onto Kossuth Street, Best stumbled on the sidewalk and dropped the bottle, which rolled onto the curb next to a parked car.

Best and Heo turned into the junkyard and out of view. Officer Larregui ran past Officer Perrotta. Two gunshots are heard. Officer Larregui entered the junkyard. Officer Tuths approached from the opposite direction. Perrotta turned the corner into the junkyard and announced, “shots fired, shots fired.” She holstered her Taser and a dispatcher announced, “all units in route, keep the air clear.” Perrotta said, “do you got the gun?” Someone said, “yeah,” and Perrotta said, “firearm recovered.” Best was lying on the ground between two cars in the north alley of the junkyard. Officer Heo was tending to him. Officer Perrotta moved around vehicle and walked up the south aisle between the cars. As she crossed in front of the vehicle Best was next to, a black handgun is visible on the ground next to a Subaru Forester in an area directly in front of Best. She then approached Best and assisted other officers in handcuffing Best and assessing his injury.

[To watch the relevant portion of the video from Officer Perrotta’s BWC, click [here](#).]

#### Officer Tuths’ BWC

Officer Tuths’ BWC is consistent with his statement. He parked his police cruiser opposite the entrance to the junkyard. He exited his vehicle and attempted to open the rear door but it was locked. He tried opening the front door but that appeared to be locked too. He turned towards the junkyard and sprinted towards Officer Heo and Best, who was on the ground. The sound to his BWC turns on during this sprint. Tuths drew his firearm and said, “show me your hands!” Best raised his hands while lying on his back.

Next, Heo attempted to handcuff Best. Officer Perrotta said, “you got the gun?” Officer Tuths replied, “yeah the gun’s on the ground,” and pointed ahead towards an area where a black handgun was lying on the ground about a car length ahead of Best and next to the rear

right tire of a Subaru Forester. Perrotta said, “firearm recovered” into the radio. Best said, “I got shot.” Heo immediately said, “you pulled a gun on me.” Best said, “no I didn’t.” Heo responded, “yeah you did.”

Officer Perrotta then walked around a vehicle past the gun and moved to the other side of Best and assisted in placing him in handcuffs. Civilians are seen gathering in the closed (east) end of the junkyard. Tuths went back to his cruiser and retrieved medical supplies. As he returned to Best, the gun is visible again on the ground next to the Subaru. Another officer is heard asking, “you got the gun?” Tuths replies, “it’s right here.” Tuths directed another officer to stay with the gun. Several additional officers arrived on scene as Tuths prepared medical supplies. Some officers can be seen standing at the location of the handgun on the ground. Best repeated several times, “I can’t breathe.” Blood was visible on the ground next to Best. Best was handcuffed and provided medical care by officers. Best was verbally responsive for several minutes as he was treated first by police and then members of the Bridgeport Fire Department who arrived.

[To watch the relevant portion of Officer Tuths’ BWC, click [here](#).]

#### Officer Billingslea’s BWC

Officer Billingslea’s BWC is consistent with his statement. Billingslea arrived on scene with Officer Larregui. He then moved his police cruiser to be positioned face to face with the Chevy Tahoe. Over the dispatch radio, Officer Perrotta can be heard calling in the Chevy Tahoe’s make, model, and plate number. When Billingslea stepped out of the cruiser, a female in a white Toyota Camry said, “Excuse me officer, that’s my boyfriend” (referring to one of the people in the Chevy Tahoe). Billingslea responded to the female, “Let us handle this.” Best then started running away from Perrotta and Heo can be seen also running to pursue Best. Billingslea joined in the pursuit after Best and pulled out his Taser. While running, Billingslea can be heard saying, “Catch him Heo . . . hit him Heo . . .let the Taser go!”

Billingslea ran through the Citgo gas station and Best’s shoes can be seen in the camera frame. Billingslea caught up with Perrotta and was directly behind her. As he rounded the corner onto Kossuth Street, Best and Heo can be seen up ahead turning left into the junkyard and out of view. Two gunshots are heard. Billingslea said, “Oh Shit!” Officer Tuths entered the junkyard in front of Billingslea. Perrotta can be heard saying, “do you got the gun?” Larregui said, “yeah,” while pointing in the direction of the gun up ahead and Perrotta said, “firearm recovered.” Best was lying on the ground between two cars in the north alley of the junkyard. Officer Heo was tending to him. Billingslea walked towards Kossuth Street and radios, “31, I need medics on scene, two shots fired, I need a unit to block off Beecher and Kossuth, we got a firearm, I need this whole street blocked off.”

[To watch the relevant portion of Officer Billingslea’s BWC, click [here](#).]

### Additional Photographic and Video Evidence

A surveillance camera located on the convenience store at the Citgo gas station captured a brief portion of the foot pursuit. Best can be seen running through the frame and then Heo and Perotta appear as well.

[Click [here](#) to view the Citgo surveillance footage.]

Best appears to be holding a handgun in his right hand as he runs through the parking lot.



He can also be seen holding the handgun as he ran down the grassy embankment and onto the sidewalk on Kossuth Street as viewed from Officer Heo’s BWC.



Best's firearm can again be seen as he stumbled near a parked car on Kossuth Street.



Finally, the firearm can be seen in Best's right hand as he ran in between the narrow aisle of cars in the junkyard lot. Note that the area of the obliterated serial number can be seen on the firearm in Best's hand and in the firearm processing photograph to the right.



## Firearms Forensics

### Officer's weapon

WDMCS detectives seized Officer Heo's Taser and duty pistol from him at Bridgeport Hospital where he was taken after the incident. He was armed with a .45 caliber Smith & Wesson M&P semi-automatic pistol (serial number NBX7220). Although a firearm survey was not performed by detectives, photographs taken of the weapon at the hospital show it had seven rounds in the magazine and one in the chamber. Heo's two additional magazines each contained ten rounds. If the magazine in the gun was also loaded with ten rounds that day, this would suggest Heo fired two rounds, which is consistent with the physical evidence at the scene and the video from the body worn cameras of the officers.

This gun was sent to the state Division of Scientific Services (lab) for testing, along with the two shell casings seized at the scene. The gun was operable when test fired. The lab's firearms unit performed a microscopic comparison examination of the shell casings recovered from the scene with a shell casing obtained by test-firing the weapon and concluded that both shell casings recovered from the scene were fired from Heo's Smith & Wesson M&P. The lab was also provided the bullet fragment recovered from Best's body at the autopsy and, after comparing it to a test-fired projectile, concluded that the bullet had been fired from Heo's firearm as well.



[Officer Heo's firearm]

### Weapon found with Best

Again, WDMCS detectives did not do a survey report on the High Point 9mm luger pistol recovered at the scene, although photographs and a seized property form reflect that the gun contained nine unfired cartridges, including one in the chamber, from three different manufacturers. This gun was also brought to the state lab for examination and testing. As stated previously in this report, the serial number was obliterated when initially recovered. A lab examiner, however, was able to restore it: P1326642. An ATF Firearms Trace indicated it was last purchased in January 2007 from a gun dealer in Holden, Maine. It had never been reported

lost or stolen and the man listed as the purchaser appears to have died in 2019. The gun was test-fired and was determined to be operational.

The lab also examined the High Point pistol for trace DNA and compared the samples with a known sample from Dyshan Best. Because the weapon had been exposed to heavy rain before it was removed from the scene, the lab was requested to test a variety of locations on the gun and its components. Forensic examiners concluded the following:

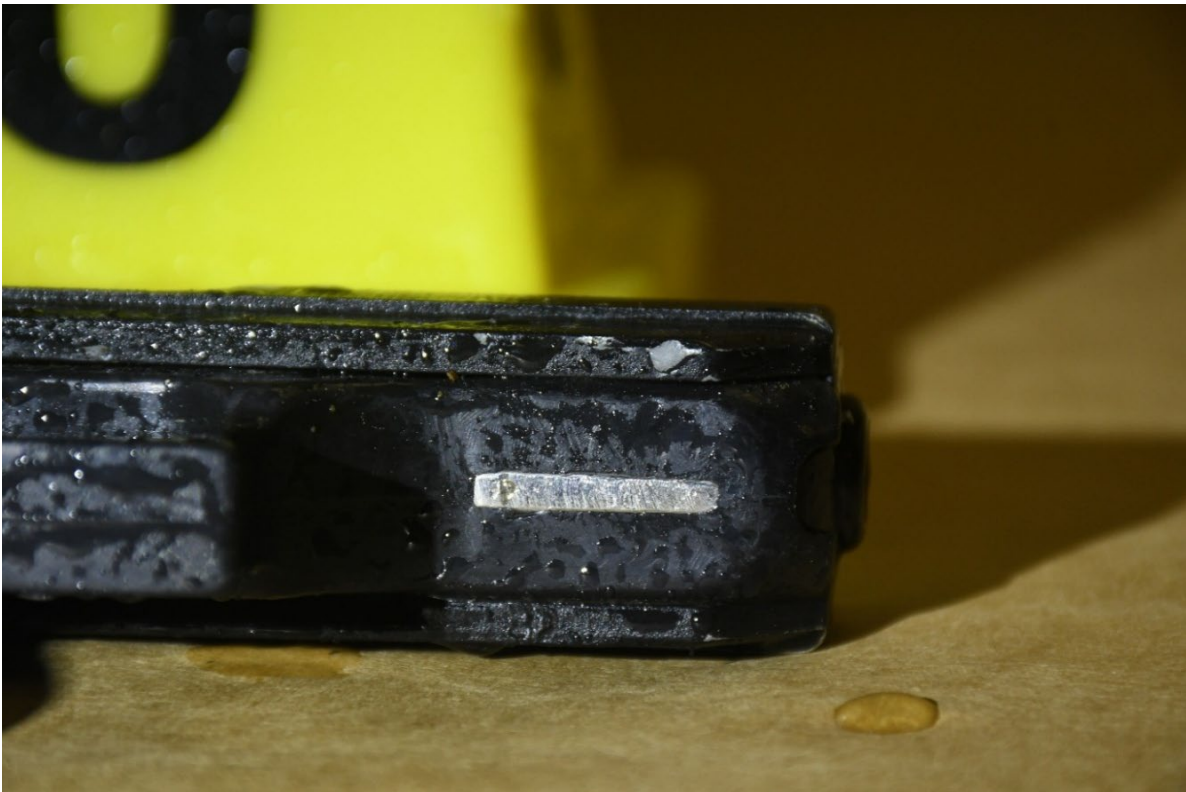
- 1) Handgun: mixture of at least five contributors, with at least one being male. Due to the complexity of the DNA profile, no comparisons were made.
- 2) Cartridges: mixture of three contributors, with at least one being male. Dyshan Best is eliminated as being a contributor to the profile.
- 3) Trigger: DNA profiles are mixtures that are too complex for interpretation and no comparisons were made.
- 4) Magazine: DNA profiles are mixtures that are too complex for interpretation and no comparisons were made.
- 5) Chambered round: The DNA profile detected belonged to a staff member of the laboratory. No comparisons were made.



[Best's gun]



[Best's gun broken down showing ammunition]



[Showing obliterated serial number]

## Taser Report

As part of this investigation, inspectors from the OIG obtained the use history of the Taser carried by Officer Heo. The 73-page report shows all events associated with the Taser from May 21, 2018 until March 31, 2025. With respect to March 31, 2025, the report indicates the Taser was armed<sup>7</sup> at 17:53:06 hours<sup>8</sup> and then the trigger was used at 17:53:07 hours. The log also indicates that the trigger lasted 5 seconds. The next log in the Taser report shows the Taser being safe<sup>9</sup> at 17:53:21. This report is consistent with other evidence previously noted that Officer Heo deployed his Taser one time at Dyshan Best during the foot pursuit.

## **Medical Records**

Search warrants were obtained for Dyshan Best's medical records from Bridgeport Hospital as well as the patient care reports from the ambulances that responded to Kossuth Avenue. Records show that the first ambulance called to treat Best was instead used to transport Officer Perrotta to the hospital for an anxiety attack. A second ambulance arrived and treated and transported Best. The details of the ambulance runs are contained in their EMS Patient Care Reports.

The American Medical Response (AMR) report regarding patient Erin Jaide Perrotta noted the nature of the call to be, "Stab/Gunshot/Penetrating Trauma." AMR was notified at approximately 5:50 p.m. and a unit was in route to 1420 Kossuth Street at approximately 5:54 p.m. arriving on scene at approximately 6:02 p.m. This ambulance arrived at Bridgeport Hospital at approximately 6:08 p.m. The ambulance appears to have been called to transport Dyshan Best to the hospital for treatment of a gunshot wound. Instead, the ambulance transported Officer Perrotta to Bridgeport Hospital. The AMR report indicates that Officer Perrotta was suffering a "Mild Anxiety Attack." The narrative portion of the report reads: "BR201 dispatched to 911 call for GSW. U/A found 24 Y/O female police officer in distress after an altercation with a suspect. PD on scene told crew to 'hurry up and take their partner.' PD rushed crew off scene, no info was given to crew. Pt wants to be transported to closest facility for further eval. Pt jumped into the ambulance and was secured with straps. Pt did not want EMS to touch her, did not allow crew to obtain vitals. [Medical history omitted.]

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<sup>7</sup> When the Taser log is noted as, "armed," this indicates the switch being flipped on the device to make it activated.

<sup>8</sup> For precision, this report will use military hours when referring to the Taser download log.

<sup>9</sup> When the Taser log is noted as, "safe," this indicates the switch being flipped on the device to make it deactivated.

“En route crew obtained pt’s demos<sup>10</sup> and asked again to obtain vitals but pt refused. Pt states, I am fine, I just needed to get out of here.”

The AMR report pertaining to Dyshan Best notes the nature of the call to be “Stab/Gunshot Wound/Penetrating Trauma.” The report lists the notification time as approximately 5:50 p.m. and the ambulance was dispatched at approximately 6:08 p.m. arriving on scene at approximately 6:12 p.m. The ambulance arrived at Bridgeport Hospital at approximately 6:20 p.m. The report notes that Best had suffered a gunshot wound to the back and was unresponsive. The report details the efforts made by the AMR crew to treat Mr. Best as he was being transported to the hospital.

Best arrived at Bridgeport Hospital at 6:22 p.m. according to Bridgeport Hospital records. He was treated in the Emergency Department for a gunshot wound to his lower right back. Records show emergency doctors were able to obtain a pulse and he was then transferred to the operating room for exploratory surgery. Best was declared dead at 7:41 p.m.

## **Autopsy**

Dyshan Best’s body was brought to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, and an autopsy was performed by Associate Medical Examiner Jaqueline Nunez, M.D. The autopsy report states the following:

### “FINAL DIAGNOSES

#### I. Penetrating Gunshot Wound of Torso:

- A. Perforations of Liver and Right Kidney
- B. Status-Post Exploratory Laparotomy (March 31, 2025):
  - 1. Marked Hemoperitoneum (Clinical History)
- C. Hemoperitoneum, Approximately 200 ml, at Autopsy
- D. Marked Retroperitoneal Soft Tissue Hemorrhage
- E. Status-Post Bilateral Anterior Thoracotomy
- F. Status-Post Right Thoracostomy
- G. Projectile Recovered

#### II. Blunt Impact Injuries of Torso:

- A. Cutaneous Abrasions and Contusions

#### III. Blunt Impact Injuries of Extremities:

- A. Cutaneous Abrasions

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<sup>10</sup> Biodemographic information.

#### IV. Cardiac Hypertrophy, 700 Grams

Cause Of Death: Gunshot Wound of Torso

Manner Of Death: Homicide (Shot By Police)”

The report also states that a single bullet entered Best’s lower back and damaged his liver and a kidney. The bullet was recovered and was retained as evidence. Samples of Best’s blood were sent to NMS Labs in Horsham, Pennsylvania for toxicological analysis. There was a positive finding for ethanol alcohol. His blood-alcohol concentration (BAC) at the time of death was reported as 0.104 g/100 ml.

### FINDINGS

The investigation supports the following findings of material fact:

1. On March 31, 2025 a citizen called 911 about a fight involving about thirty people on East Main Street in Bridgeport. The caller reported that a gun had been displayed. Earlier that day, a funeral had taken place and attendees of the funeral or a related social event had gotten into an altercation. Several officers were dispatched to East Main Street, including Officers Erin Perrotta, Yoon Heo, Jorge Larregui, and Lesley Billingslea.

2. When officers arrived, several groups of individuals had gathered at the parking lot at 1677 East Main Street. Some were arguing. A man approached Officer Perrotta and pointed in the direction of two black men and a black Chevy Tahoe, registration CT-BP16258, and told her, “they have the gun.” Officer Perrotta called in the plate over the radio as she and Officer Larregui approached the two males, who climbed into the Tahoe. The truck started to move forward and Perrotta signaled them to stop. Perrotta and Larregui went to the driver’s door and Larregui opened the door. The driver, Matthew Purdie, stepped out of the vehicle.

3. Perrotta then went to the passenger’s door, and asked the passenger, Dyshan Best, to step out of the vehicle, telling him he needed to be patted down because someone reported seeing a firearm. Best was a convicted felon and, as such, could not lawfully possess a firearm. If found in possession of firearm he risked being convicted of one or more felony charges. If convicted of criminal possession of a firearm, he faced a prison sentence of five years.

4. Best was wearing Nike sneakers and a black jean jacket. He held a cell phone in his right hand and he held a vape device and a Remy Martin liquor bottle in his left hand. Best said, "there's a firearm down there," and pointed straight ahead. Perrotta said, "well now we're here, so if you got nothing, it's quick and we let you go." Best stepped out of the vehicle and said, "all right." He continued to grip the phone, vape, and bottle. He then turned quickly and ran from the vehicle towards Boston Avenue. Officer Heo had just arrived on the scene and saw Best flee. He ran after Best, as did Officer Perrotta and Officer Billingslea.

5. Best ran down the sidewalk of Boston Avenue and turned into the Citgo gas station. Officer Heo was the closest officer to Best, whose sneakers came off his feet as he entered the lot. Heo warned Best two times that he would be tased if he didn't stop. Heo fired his Taser at Best in the gas station parking lot but the Taser did not have an effect.

6. Best removed a semi-automatic pistol from his clothing while running through the gas station.

7. Best turned down Kossuth Street. As he ran down Kossuth Street, he fell and dropped the cell phone, bottle, and vape device in that order. He continued to hold a gun in his right hand as he approached the entrance to a junkyard at 1420 Kossuth Street. The lot was filled with junked cars, equipment, and garbage.

8. Officer Heo re-holstered his Taser, intending to apprehend Best by grabbing or tackling him. Heo had not yet seen the firearm in Best's right hand as he ran down Kossuth Street. When Best turned into the junkyard, with Officer Heo steps behind him, Officer Tutts yelled "gun!" As Best ran into a narrow aisle between parked cars, Best turned his head over his right shoulder and glanced at Heo. Best then extended his right arm behind him. He was holding a loaded High Point 9mm luger pistol in his right hand. Heo drew his firearm, a .45 caliber Smith & Wesson M&P, and fired it twice at Best. One shot struck Best in the back and one shot lodged in the tire of a vehicle near Best.

9. Best fell forward onto the ground. Best dropped the gun, which clattered several feet across the ground and came to rest near the right rear tire of a Subaru Forester. The semi-automatic pistol was later secured by other officers who arrived at the scene. Best was treated by Bridgeport Police officers and then members of the Bridgeport Fire Department before an ambulance arrived to take him to Bridgeport Hospital. The first ambulance arrived at 6:02 p.m. and was used to transport Officer Perrotta to Bridgeport Hospital at the direction of other Bridgeport officers. She had complained of an anxiety attack. Another ambulance arrived at 6:12 p.m. and transported Best to Bridgeport Hospital, where he died in surgery at 7:41 p.m.

10. An autopsy was performed at the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. Associate Medical Examiner Dr. Jaqueline Nunez determined the cause of death to be a gunshot wound of the torso. One bullet was recovered from his body. Forensic testing determined that the bullet was fired from Officer Heo's firearm.

### LEGAL STANDARD

The use of force by a police officer is governed by General Statutes §53a-22. The version of that statute in effect on March 31, 2025, in relevant part, provides:

(b) [A] peace officer . . . is justified in using physical force upon another person when and to the extent that he or she reasonably believes such use to be necessary to: (1) Effect an arrest or prevent the escape from custody of a person whom he or she reasonably believes to have committed an offense, unless he or she knows that the arrest or custody is unauthorized; or (2) defend himself or herself or a third person from the use or imminent use of physical force while effecting or attempting to effect an arrest or while preventing or attempting to prevent an escape.

(c) (1) . . . a peace officer . . . is justified in using *deadly physical force* upon another person for the purposes specified in subsection (b) of this section only when his or her actions are objectively reasonable under the circumstances, and:

(A) He or she reasonably believes such to be necessary to defend himself or herself or a third person from the use or imminent use of deadly physical force; or

(B) He or she (i) has reasonably determined that there are no available reasonable alternatives to the use of deadly physical force, (ii) reasonably believes that the force employed creates no unreasonable risk of injury to a third party, and (iii) reasonably believes such force is necessary to (I) effect an arrest of a person whom he or she reasonably believes has committed or attempted to commit a felony that involved the infliction of serious physical injury, and if, where feasible, he or she has given warning of his or her intent to use deadly force . . ." (Emphasis added).

The statute further provides:

"For the purpose of evaluating whether the actions of a peace officer . . . are reasonable under subdivision (1) of this subsection, factors to be considered include, but are not limited to,

whether (A) the person upon whom deadly force was used possessed or appeared to possess a deadly weapon, (B) the peace officer . . . engaged in reasonable de-escalation measures prior to using deadly physical force, and (C) any unreasonable conduct of the peace officer . . . led to an increased risk of an occurrence of the situation that precipitated the use of force.” §53a-22(c)(2).

Accordingly, a police officer is justified in using deadly physical force upon another person when the officer reasonably believes such force to be necessary to defend the officer or a third person from the use or imminent use of deadly physical force. “Deadly physical force” means “physical force that can be reasonably expected to cause death or serious physical injury.” General Statutes § 53a-3(5). “Serious physical injury” means “physical injury which creates a substantial risk of death, or which causes serious disfigurement, serious impairment of health or serious loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ.” General Statutes §53a-3(4).

The reasonableness of a police officer’s belief under § 53a-22 is evaluated pursuant to a subjective-objective formulation. *State v. Smith*, 73 Conn. App. 173, 185, 807 A.2d 500, cert. denied 262 Conn. 923, 812 A.2d 865 (2002). Under this test, the first question is whether, on the basis of all of the evidence, the police officer in fact honestly believed that deadly force was necessary to defend himself/herself or a third person. *Id.* If it is determined that the police officer honestly believed that deadly force was necessary, the second part of the test asks whether the police officer’s honest belief was reasonable from the perspective of a reasonable police officer in the officer’s circumstances. *Id.* at 198.

The United States Supreme Court has explained this test as follows: “The reasonableness’ of a particular use of force must be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on scene rather than with the 20/20 vision of hindsight. ... [T]he calculus of reasonableness must embody allowance of the fact that police officers are often forced to make split-second decisions—in circumstances that are tense, uncertain, and rapidly evolving—about the amount of force that is necessary in a particular situation.” *Graham v. Connor*, 490 U.S. 386, 396-97, 109 S. Ct. 1865, 104 L. Ed. 2d 443 (1989).

## **ANALYSIS**

Under Connecticut law as applicable here, a determination as to whether a police officer’s use of deadly force was objectively reasonable requires, in part, consideration of four questions:

1. Did the officer, as a matter of fact, actually – that is honestly and sincerely – believe that he/she or a third person was facing either the actual or imminent use of deadly force when the officer used deadly force?

2. Was that actual belief reasonable in the sense that a reasonable police officer in the officer's circumstances at the time of the officer's actions, viewing those circumstances from the officer's point of view, would have shared that belief?

3. Did the officer, as a matter of fact, actually—that is honestly and sincerely—believe that the use of deadly force was necessary to defend himself/herself or a third person from such threat?

4. Was that actual belief reasonable, in the sense that a reasonable police officer in the officer's circumstances at the time of the officer's actions, viewing those circumstances from the officer's point of view, would share the belief that deadly force was necessary?

Additionally, the reasonableness of the officer's conduct also turns on whether (1) the other person possessed a deadly weapon (or appeared to), (2) the officer attempted reasonable de-escalation measures, and (3) the situation was not precipitated by the officer's own conduct.

I begin my analysis with an important, but not dispositive, fact: Best was armed with a semi-automatic pistol—a deadly weapon—during the incident. Numerous facts and the reasonable inferences to be drawn therefrom support this factual conclusion. First, it was reported by an individual on East Main Street that someone associated with the black Chevy Tahoe had brandished a firearm. Best was sitting in that vehicle when officers approached.

More importantly, the relevant video footage shows a handgun in Best's hand as he ran through the Citgo gas station parking lot. The handgun is again visible in his right hand both as Best ran along the grassy embankment and when he stumbled alongside a vehicle parked on Kossuth Street. There, he dropped the bottle of alcohol and a vape device, but not the firearm. The firearm is obviously present in his right hand in the junkyard lot when he extended his right arm backwards in the direction of Officer Heo.

Moreover, Officer Heo's BWC records the sound of firearm striking and clattering across the pavement just after Best fell to the ground in the junkyard lot. The firearm can be seen in BWC video lying on the ground near the rear right tire of a Subaru Forester immediately after Best fell and before any responding officer would have had an opportunity to reach the area of the junkyard lot where the firearm was located.<sup>11</sup> Finally, Best's decision to flee the police

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<sup>11</sup> The videos recorded by the BWCs of Officers Perrotta, Tuths, and Billingslea, confirm that officers did not enter that area before the gun is first visible in that location.

before he could be patted down by Officer Perrotta suggests that he did so to avoid being found in possession of a firearm and the legal trouble that would flow from being caught with a gun.<sup>12</sup>

Some in the community have argued that, at the moment he was shot, Best was unarmed and holding only a vape device in his right hand. Indeed, an attorney representing the estate of Best recklessly suggested at a press conference on April 9, 2025, that Best was unarmed and raised the specter that officers from the Bridgeport Police Department planted a weapon at the scene.<sup>13</sup> The evidence shows otherwise. First, a handgun can be seen in Best's right hand at the time he was shot, including the area underneath the barrel of the gun where the serial number had been obliterated. These characteristics are consistent with the firearm recovered by State Police detectives at the scene.

Second, the vape pen that Best held in his hand before he began to flee the police can be viewed in the video falling to the ground just before he entered the junkyard lot. It was located, photographed and seized in the place where it fell, on the sidewalk of Kossuth Street, just outside the junkyard lot.

Of course, Best's mere possession of a firearm alone did not justify the use of deadly physical force against him. Indeed, if Best had never removed it from wherever on his person he had been carrying it, it would be difficult to conclude that Officer Heo would have had a reasonable belief that Best was about to use deadly physical force against him. Even if Best had just held the firearm in his hand without threatening Heo, through his words and/or action, that he was going to fire it, the totality of the circumstances might still not lead ineluctably to a conclusion that Heo was justified in shooting Best.

I turn then to the evidence that bears upon the questions of whether Heo honestly and subjectively believed that Best was about to use deadly physical force against him and that it was necessary to respond with deadly physical force, and whether those beliefs were objectively reasonable. First, I credit Heo's statement that he honestly and sincerely believed that Best had a firearm and was about to use deadly physical force against him. It is likely that Heo would have known that Best possessed a firearm because he states that he heard someone yell "gun" just as he was turning into the junkyard lot. The relevant video and audio from Heo's BWC support Heo's statement in this regard because Officer Tuths can be heard yelling "gun" at that time.

Second, Heo stated under oath that "[a]s Best extended his right arm behind him while continuing to run up the driveway, I observed what I immediately recognized as a firearm in his right hand." The credibility of this statement is buttressed by the fact that the firearm in Best's

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<sup>12</sup> No other contraband was found on Best.

<sup>13</sup> During this investigation, former Inspector General Robert Devin sent the attorney an e-mail inviting him to share with the OIG any evidence that would suggest that Best was not armed when he was shot. The attorney never responded or shared any such evidence with the OIG. I can only infer that it does not exist.

right hand at that moment is captured on the video from Heo's BWC. Law enforcement officers are trained to focus on a suspect's hand in order to assess properly whether the individual poses an imminent threat or, conversely, is attempting to comply with an officer's command to "show me your hands" or "freeze, don't move." It is also important to note that Heo was extremely close to Best, less than the full length of the minivan to their right, when Best extended his right arm and hand towards Heo. Heo, therefore, would have had a clear and close view of the firearm.

Moreover, a close analysis of Officer Heo's BWC video depicts Best looking back at Heo over his right shoulder and almost immediately thereafter Best's extends his right arm and right hand towards Heo. His arm and hand are sufficiently extended such that the muzzle of Best's firearm is pointed in the direction of Heo.



The extension of his right arm appears to be greater than what would occur if it were only as part of the natural swinging of arms while running. Under these circumstances, I credit as sincere Officer Heo's statement that "[a]t that given moment, I feared that Best was going to fire his weapon shooting me or others in the area."

In light of Heo's honest and sincere belief that Best was about to use deadly physical force against him, I credit Heo's sworn statement that he believed that it was necessary to counter Best's actions with the use of deadly physical force. Given that Best was armed with a semi-automatic pistol, Heo honestly believed that the only way to protect himself in that instant was to discharge his firearm at Best.

Finally, I turn to the question of whether, under the totality of the circumstances, Officer Heo's beliefs were objectively reasonable. Although the facts presented by this case are difficult and may be interpreted in different ways, I conclude that a reasonable police officer, viewing the

circumstances from Officer Heo's point of view, would have shared the belief that Best was about to use deadly physical force and that it was necessary to respond with such in order to protect his or her own life.

It is troubling that Best was shot in the back while running from Officer Heo. But that reality is only part of the story. He was also pointing a pistol at Heo and could have easily fired one or more rounds at him while running away. He had not kept his firearm concealed in his clothing. He had not tossed his gun over a fence or under a vehicle during the foot pursuit. During the pursuit, he discarded or dropped three other items he was carrying, but not the gun.

Instead, in very close proximity to Officer Heo, he extended his right hand in which he held the firearm back towards Heo. Although this movement may appear more ambiguous with the benefit of 20/20 hindsight and with the ability to watch the video at various speeds, I am required to consider how this movement appeared to Officer Heo in the totality of the circumstances as they appeared to Heo at that precise moment. I do not have a reason to disbelieve his statement that he perceived that Best pointed the weapon towards him and that, "[a]t that given moment, I feared that Best was going to fire his weapon shooting me or others in the area."

Officer Heo had been in an adrenaline-inducing, high-stress foot chase with an individual he knew might be in possession of a firearm. He had attempted to use less-lethal methods, specifically, his Taser, to end the incident peacefully. He did not even unholster his firearm until he had been warned by another officer that Best was, in fact, armed with a gun.

Heo had only a second or two to react when Officer Tutts yelled "gun" and only an instant to react when he saw the muzzle of the weapon extended towards him. He was in a narrow aisle of vehicles with no time or opportunity to seek immediate cover. He needed to make a split-second, life or death determination about whether to protect himself. Under these emergent circumstances, we should not require an officer who honestly believes that he is about to be shot to wait to protect him or herself until the suspect has turned fully towards him or her and carefully raised their weapon to fire. A firearm was pointed at Heo, and a reasonable police officer in the same circumstances, that is from Officer Heo's point of view, would have shared the belief that deadly physical force was necessary to defend themselves under these circumstances.

This is a tragic situation. But the tragedy should not be compounded by attempting to impose criminal liability on a police officer who was forced to make an almost instantaneous determination whether Best's movement of his right arm and hand with a firearm in it posed a serious risk to the officer.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the totality of circumstances, Officer Heo reasonably believed that deadly physical force was necessary to protect himself from serious physical injury or death. Accordingly, he was justified in using deadly physical force against Dyshan Best. This office will take no further action.

Dated this 9<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2026



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ELIOT D. PRESCOTT  
INSPECTOR GENERAL



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ANDREW J. SLITT  
SUPERVISORY ASSISTANT STATE'S ATTORNEY