


RPD Event Report, Officer: jcompton, Supervisor: jbmitchell, Mer

	Rochester Police Department EVENT REPORT 101 4th Street SE Rochester, MN 55904	CASE# 2017-00023603 REVIEWED BY 2358 Mitchell
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EVENT	REPORTED DATE/TIME	13:12	OCCURRED INCIDENT TYPE		
	OCCURRED FROM DATE/TIME	OCCURRED TO DATE/TIME	EVENT LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE		
	5/14/2017	07:28	05/14/2017	13:17	1211 2 ST SW 316 ROCHESTER, MN 55902


OFFENSES						
COUNTS	STATUTE / DESCRIPTION			COUNTS	STATUTE / DESCRIPTION	
	1				6	
	2				7	
	3				6	
	4				9	
	5				10	

SUBJECTS								
SUBJECT	SUBJECT TYPE	NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE SUFFIX) Adult					<input type="checkbox"/> NON-DISCLOSURE	
	Deceased	Smith, Peter, William						
	DOB	AGE or AGE RANGE	ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP)					
		81	[REDACTED]					
	SEX	RACE	HAR	EYE	HEIGHT or RANGE	WEIGHT or RANGE		
	Male	White	Gray	Blue	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		
DL NUMBER/STATE	IL	PRIMARY PHONE	SECONDARY PHONE		OTHER PHONE			
	[REDACTED]							
ETIAL								

SUBJECT	SUBJECT TYPE	NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE SUFFIX) Adult					<input type="checkbox"/> NON-DISCLOSURE	
	Witness	Brandt, Deatra, Annette						
	DOB	AGE or AGE RANGE	ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP)					
		56	1211 2 ST SW, ROCHESTER, MN 55902-					
	SEX	RACE	HAR	EYE	HEIGHT or RANGE	WEIGHT or RANGE		
	Female	White		Hazel	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		
DL NUMBER/STATE	MN	PRIMARY PHONE	SECONDARY PHONE		OTHER PHONE			
	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]						
ETIAL								

SUBJECT	SUBJECT TYPE	NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE SUFFIX) Adult					<input type="checkbox"/> NON-DISCLOSURE	
	Witness	Wright, James, Allan						
	DOB	AGE or AGE RANGE	ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP)					
		59	1211 2 ST SW, 329, Rochester, MN 55902-					
	SEX	RACE	HAR	EYE	HEIGHT or RANGE	WEIGHT or RANGE		
	Male	White						
DL NUMBER/STATE	IL	PRIMARY PHONE	SECONDARY PHONE		OTHER PHONE			
	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]						
ETIAL								

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2399: Compton	05/14/2017	2358 Mitchell

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SUBJECTS


SUBJECT	SUBJECT TYPE	NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE SUFFIX) Adult		<input type="checkbox"/> NON-DISCLOSURE		
	Witness	Aschim, Brenda, Lee				
	DOB	AGE or AGE RANGE	ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP)			
	[REDACTED]	46	1211 2 ST SW, Rochester, MN 55902-			
	SEX	RACE	HAIR	EYE	HEIGHT or RANGE	WEIGHT or RANGE
	Female	White	Blonde	Blue	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
DL NUMBER/STATE	PRIMARY PHONE	SECONDARY PHONE		OTHER PHONE		
[REDACTED]	Cell - Personal	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]		
EMAIL						

SUBJECT	SUBJECT TYPE	NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE SUFFIX) Adult		<input type="checkbox"/> NON-DISCLOSURE		
	Witness	Haakenstad, Joyce, Marie				
	DOB	AGE or AGE RANGE	ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP)			
	[REDACTED]	50	1211 2 ST SW, ROCHESTER, MN 55902-			
	SEX	RACE	HAIR	EYE	HEIGHT or RANGE	WEIGHT or RANGE
	Female	White	Brown	Blue	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
DL NUMBER/STATE	PRIMARY PHONE	SECONDARY PHONE		OTHER PHONE		
[REDACTED]	Home	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]		
EMAIL						

SUBJECT	SUBJECT TYPE	NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE SUFFIX) Adult		<input type="checkbox"/> NON-DISCLOSURE		
	Mentioned in Report	Page, Melissa, Ann				
	DOB	AGE or AGE RANGE	ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP)			
	[REDACTED]	50	1211 2 ST SW, Rochester, MN 55902-			
	SEX	RACE	HAIR	EYE	HEIGHT or RANGE	WEIGHT or RANGE
	Female	White		Blue	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
DL NUMBER/STATE	PRIMARY PHONE	SECONDARY PHONE		OTHER PHONE		
[REDACTED]	Cell - Personal	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]		
EMAIL						

SUBJECT	SUBJECT TYPE	NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE SUFFIX) Adult		<input type="checkbox"/> NON-DISCLOSURE		
	Witness	Jin, Chen,				
	DOB	AGE or AGE RANGE	ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP)			
	[REDACTED]	27	1211 2 ST SW, Rochester, MN 55902-			
	SEX	RACE	HAIR	EYE	HEIGHT or RANGE	WEIGHT or RANGE
	Female	Asian_Pacific Islander		Brown	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
DL NUMBER/STATE	PRIMARY PHONE	SECONDARY PHONE		OTHER PHONE		
[REDACTED]	Cell - Personal	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]		
EMAIL						

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SUBJECTS


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	DOB	ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP)				
	AGE or AGE RANGE	1211 2 ST SW, ROCHESTER, MN 55902-				
	SEX	RACE	HAIR	EYE	HEIGHT or RANGE	WEIGHT or RANGE
	DL NUMBER/STATE	PRIMARY PHONE	SECONDARY PHONE	OTHER PHONE		
	EMAIL					

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	AGE or AGE RANGE					
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	DL NUMBER/STATE	PRIMARY PHONE	SECONDARY PHONE	OTHER PHONE		
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	DOB	ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP)				
	AGE or AGE RANGE					
	SEX	RACE	HAIR	EYE	HEIGHT or RANGE	WEIGHT or RANGE
	DL NUMBER/STATE	PRIMARY PHONE	SECONDARY PHONE	OTHER PHONE		
	EMAIL					

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NARRATIVE

Preliminary Information

At about 1312 on 5/14/2017, staff at the Aspen Suites, 1211 2 St SW, reported finding the guest in #316 likely deceased of an apparent suicide with a plastic bag and a helium tank. I, Officer Compton, responded and found **PETER SMITH** passed away in his room. His family in Illinois were notified by local law enforcement and the Medical Examiner responded to the scene. Mr. Smith's personal effects were placed into Evidence for safekeeping until arrangements could be made with his family.

Officer Actions/Observations

I did or observed the following:

- Was dispatched to the Aspen Suites after the initial call staff
- Activated my Axon camera upon arrival
- Went upstairs to #316
- The room door was propped open upon my arrival
- Part of the security latch for the door was visible on the floor, broken
- I could see a male figure dressed in black workout-type clothing motionless on the floor in the kitchenette area, right inside the door
- There were two red propane-type cylinders with orange tubing in and around a laundry basket on the floor next to him
- I could see the end of one of the orange hoses sticking up above his head, tucked into a rubber band around his head/forehead, above his ears
- There was a white plastic bag on the floor next to his head
- There was a black rubber or plastic tie of some type on the floor next to the laundry basket
- A female hotel staff member (later identified as witness **DIEATRA BRANDT**) was kneeling on the ground next to the motionless male talking on the phone
- A male (later identified as witness **JAMES WRIGHT**) was standing there with her
- The male on the ground was not breathing
- I could not feel a pulse and his hand was obviously cold to the touch
- I advised 10-72 over the radio at 1317 hours
- Gold Cross arrived a short time later and confirmed that the victim was deceased
- RFD also arrived and checked the room with a gas sniffer to ensure the air was OK, which it was
- I spoke to the female staff member, who verbally identified herself as Dieatra Brandt, one of the supervisors
- The male I had seen earlier in the room, returned and I spoke to him also
- He verbally identified himself to me as James Wright

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NARRATIVE (continuation)

Witness Statement

Dieatra Brandt told me the following (synopsis):

- I took the plastic bag off his head, I'm sorry
- I just couldn't leave him like that
- I thought maybe we could start CPR
- The bag was wrapped around his head nice and tight
- I was going to try to roll him over to do CPR, but there was no pulse and he was cold
- I did not disturb anything else
- The tubes and rubber band that you see are how we found him
- We had come to see if he had checked out
- I had radioed housekeeper Brenda (witness **BRENDA ASCHIM**) to check on the room
- She said there was a guy on the floor so I ran down here
- I tried to yell at him but we couldn't get in the door because the security bar at the top was engaged
- The guy who was just in here is a guest and he helped me break the door open

Witness Statement

James Wright told me the following (synopsis):

- She (Dieatra) had already found him when I got here
- She could not get in the room though because he had the security latch on the door engaged
- I helped her break the door in to check on him
- I ripped the bag off his head when we got inside, but I noticed the tank had already drained
- Other than that, I did not touch anything
- I've seen this kind of thing with the helium on the internet

Officer Actions/Observations

I did or observed the following:

- Officer Erickson was with me and stayed with the room while Dieatra took me to talk to witness Brenda, who was working in another room
- Brenda was clearly shaken up when I spoke her
- She verbally identified herself to me as Brenda Aschim

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NARRATIVE (continuation)

Witness Statement

Brenda Aschim told me the following (synopsis):

- Dieatra radioed up for me to check and see if #316 had left yet
- I knocked and then tried to open the door
- The security latch was engaged and I could only open the door a crack
- I saw legs on the ground inside
- I called out "Hey, are you OK" and nobody said anything
- I did not hear anything at all from inside
- I immediately radioed Dieatra that somebody was down on the ground in the room
- Dieatra came up to the room immediately
- I feel like fainting
- I just need to sit here for a few minutes to collect myself

Officer Actions/Observations

I did or observed the following:

- SGT Mitchell responded to #316 to request death notification to the victim's family, notify Investigations and request the Medical Examiner
- I noted that there were several folders with papers and a laminated photo ID page from a passport sitting neatly on the desk just inside the front door to the room
- The ID was in the name of Peter William Smith, 2-23-1936
- The documents included a note to the SE MN Regional Medical Examiner's Office advising that there was no foul play, no one assisted him, he had a recent bad turn of health and that his life insurance policy would soon expire
- There were also medical documents including a DNR/POLST/Living Will, info on financial arrangements, a self-written obituary, and a list of whom to contact with names/numbers/addresses
- With other officers on scene, I went down to the front desk to speak with Dieatra some more
- She introduced me to Assistant General Manager mentioned person **MELISSA PAGE** who had arrived after being notified of the incident
- Dieatra provided me with a copy of Mr. Smith's guest information sheet, which indicated he had been there since 5/05/17 and was due to check out today (5/14/17)
- No one at the front desk was aware of any companions or guests staying with Mr. Smith
- From the housekeeping records, it appeared that room #316 had a "light touch" (enter room, straighten beds, take out garbage) by housekeeping some time before 1600 on Friday, 5/12/17

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NARRATIVE (continuation)

- The reservation computer indicated that Mr. Smith requested a one-night stayover at 0728 on 5/13/17
- The computer indicated that Melissa had entered the stay-over, but she advised she had been gone by 0715 and it was likely witness **JOYCE HAAKENSTAD** who processed it without logging Melissa off the computer
- Melissa called Joyce on the phone and then let me speak to her
- Joyce verbally identified herself to me

Witness Statement

Joyce Haakenstad told me the following (synopsis):

- I saw the gentleman from #316 in person at the front desk yesterday morning around 0730
- He came to ask for a one day extension, which I entered for him
- He was printing things in the business center at the same time
- At one point he came back to ask for more paper
- I don't remember him saying anything out of the ordinary
- I believe that was the last time I saw him yesterday

Mentioned Person's Statement

Melissa (Missy) Page told me the following (synopsis):


- Joyce must have used her login to extend Mr. Smith on Saturday morning after I left
- Our maintenance guy Dan is out of town
- His phone is just going to voicemail
- He should be back tomorrow and would be able to read the lock logs
- The locks will maintain their data until then
- Guests are frequently issued two key cards, but not always

Officer Actions/Observations

I did or observed the following:

- I provided Melissa with the case number on my business card
- I requested that she contact me once the logs from the door lock on #316 were available
- I returned to #316
- Monica Kendall from the Medical Examiner's Office arrived
- I briefed her on the incident and looked around the room some more while she began her

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NARRATIVE (continuation)

investigation


- I noted a black mesh bag in the closet area that had some tools, uninflated balloons and a plastic Walmart bag with a receipt in it
- The receipt was from Walmart South (25 25 St SE) stamped 5/13/17 @ 12:53:48, which included "Helium Jumbo" and 2 "8 In SJ Pliers"
- I photographed the receipt
- There was a heavy black exercise weight vest on the floor in the closet next to the mesh bag
- With Monica's permission, I attempted to close the valves on each of the red tanks, which were labeled as "Balloon Time" helium
- I noted that each tank was weighted on the top with a leather or vinyl exercise weight such as one might wear on wrists or ankles
- When I turned the valves on the helium tanks, it took several full clockwise rotations to close each and I could hear a little bit of gas hiss out of one when I turned it upright
- Monica located some cash and several club/bank cards, as well as what appeared to be the hotel room key card in the right pants pocket of Mr. Smith's pants
- I photographed these items and Monica retained them for her investigation
- At her direction, I requested Rochester Cremation
- Rochester Cremation responded to transport Mr. Smith
- I then gathered up his personal property from the room
- I took the helium tanks, tubing, tools, laundry basket, mesh bag, weights/vest, a black handbag with cellphone and document folder, and suitcase with clothes and toiletries for safekeeping
- The room door was pulled shut upon departure and I advised Melissa that the room was secure and no longer needed
- Shortly before I left, I was approached separately by two other hotel employees who remembered seeing Mr. Smith more recently
- **CHEN JIN** verbally identified herself to me and advised she had spoken to him last night
- **SHEILA BENNETT** verbally identified herself to me and advised she had seen him this morning

Witness Statement

Chen Jin told me the following (synopsis):

- I was working the front desk last night
- The gentleman from #316 was in the business center for about 2 hours
- He was working on the computer and printing things off
- This was probably 2000-2100 hours or so
- When he left he said to me "Tomorrow is my last day"

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NARRATIVE (continuation)

- I assumed he was referring to checking out tomorrow since he has been extending multiple times

Witness Statement

Sheila Bennett told me the following (synopsis):

- I saw the gentleman from #316 this morning
- I came to work around 0700 and it was very busy, but I think it was sometime before 0830 when I saw him in the hallway
- I greeted him, but he seemed like he was trying to ignore me as he walked by and he didn't really respond
- He was wearing black pants, a black shirt and a black cap similar to a baseball cap

Officer Actions/Observations

I did or observed the following:


- Transported Mr. Smith's belongings to the LEC and checked them in to Evidence
- SGT Mitchell gave me the folders of documents that had been on the desk in #316 and which he scanned for the report
- I placed these items into the black handbag so that they could be retrieved by his family
- I took photos of all the property as I checked it into Evidence
- I noted that there was a black baseball-style hat in the black handbag, which seemed to match Sheila's description
- I also spoke to witness James Wright again by phone as someone mentioned that he had seen Mr. Smith earlier in the morning

Witness Statement

James Wright told me the following (synopsis):

- I saw the deceased gentleman in the lounge breakfast area this morning, probably between 0630-0730
- I noticed that he was sort of pacing
- He would get up from his chair, walk over to the newspapers, then go back to his chair and sit down for about 30 seconds and then get up and walk over to the newspapers again
- It seemed like he had a lot on his mind
- I'm sure it was the same gentleman

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NARRATIVE (continuation)

- He was wearing the tighter dark pants and dark shirt and seemed pretty thin
- I noticed that he had gray hair, so I don't believe he was wearing a hat at that time

Officer Actions/Observations

I did or observed the following:

- On 5/15/17, Melissa Page emailed me the records of the lock audit for room #316
- I noted that the last entry for 5/14 was "Dee" at 1054 hours, which did not match the time of the 911 call
- I returned to Aspen Suites to inquire
- I spoke to Melissa in the office and maintenance man Dan also stopped by
- Dan explained that the locks are battery operated and thus the time stamps can be inaccurate, but that the cards and order recorded are reliable
- He advised that the device he used to audit the lock would have reset the clock to the proper time, so there was no way to see how far off the lock clock was yesterday

Mentioned Person's Statement


Melissa Page told me the following (synopsis):

- The cards with names on the lock audit are access cards issued to employees
- The cards numbered 0-4 are guest cards
- They do not necessarily correspond to 5 different cards, but rather the numbers increment up from 0 (new card) as the cards are updated or copied
- The card labeled "Dee" used at 1053 and 1054 is Dieatra's card
- The card labeled "Gabby" used at 1052 was likely Brenda when she went to check the room
- Brenda does not have her own access card and would have had to use someone else's
- There were no other cards used after Dee's card at 1054
- We did not access the room after the incident yesterday and are just now opening it up to clean it
- The clock does appear to be about 2 hours behind because it shows housekeepers in the room around 0600 on at least one day
- They would not have been in the room until 0800 or later

Officer Actions/Observations

I did or observed the following:

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- Forwarded the lock audit information to Monica Kendall at the Medical Examiner's Office and included an explanation of the apparent issue with the time stamps
- Attached a copy of the audit to this report

Evidence

- Axon video of my contact with all parties uploaded to the server
- Photographs of Walmart receipt, items located in victim's pockets, and items placed into Evidence uploaded to the server
- Copy of door lock audit for room #316 attached to field report

Disposition

- Inactive

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