

DATE: March 31, 2022

TO: WSHNA Awards Committee

FROM: Lieutenant Amelia Galicia

RE: Awards Submission for consideration for WSHNA Distinguished Service Award

On March 22, 2020 Sparks Police Department was called to a disturbance on Glendora Lane at approximately 1900 hours. Initial reports stated that a man had barricaded himself in his home with multiple family members after discharging a firearm in his front yard. Sparks officers arrived and began to communicate with the individual discovering he had two children with him, 5 and 8 who were not free to leave. The suspect told officers he had body armor and multiple firearms and he was not going to surrender to police. The girlfriend of the suspect, and mother of the two children, was able to escape from the home. The suspect was irrational and refused to release the children, or surrender.

Sparks HNT and SWAT continued communicating with the suspect until approximately 0530 hours on the 23rd when Washoe negotiators were briefed and took over negotiations. Deputy Gaston began communicating with the suspect and initially had a difficult time getting him to stop shouting at him for several hours. The suspect made it very clear that he was not going to exit his home and that if anyone touched his doors or windows he would retaliate with deadly force. SWAT began preparing for a hostage rescue due to the continual threats. The suspect was delusional, paranoid, and in a state of hyper vigilance and anxiety.

The initial contact that Sparks HNT made with the suspect was via his girlfriend's cell phone. The suspect remained on the phone call for the entire duration of the incident; never hanging up or allowing a "break" in communication. This proved to be challenging as the phone being used for the negotiation belonged to the girlfriend and was not police property. Additionally, team communication with Deputy Gaston was challenging as he did not have any breaks in speaking with the suspect. A third-party intermediary message was recorded of the girlfriend and played for the suspect, however, due to his paranoia he believed she was "under duress" and the message was scripted, and he did not consider it authentic. The suspect continued to demand to speak with his girlfriend multiple times throughout the negotiation. This tactic was not considered initially, due to the high likelihood of violence to follow if such a phone call was allowed. The suspect continued to be extremely difficult to negotiate with and was so paranoid he did not trust the negotiators or even believe they were really deputies.

Through proven negotiation tactics, solid intelligence and a third-party intermediary plea/phone conversation with his wife, the suspect agreed to surrender and exit the home without harming the children or himself if he was allowed a brief call with his wife.

The tactic of allowing a suspect to speak on the phone with a loved one is not common and quite often is a way for a suspect to have his "last words" with a loved one prior to committing suicide on the phone. After careful consideration a plan was devised, and a concise and coached conversation occurred between him and his wife. The suspect was satisfied with the request and acknowledged that we had upheld our end of the deal. Because the team had not rushed the negotiation and had time to



gain rapport, the suspect didn't want to break his promise and exited the home at 1115 hours, over 6 hours after Washoe HNT began negotiations.

I am submitting the team for consideration of the WSHNA Distinguished Service Award for the incredible actions the team took to end a true hostage negotiation standoff peacefully. The negotiations that occurred on March 22nd were outstanding and remarkable, the incident ended peacefully because of the efforts of the 8 negotiators working together that morning.

Involved and assignment

Bryan Gaston-Primary Negotiator

Lisa Hallberg-Secondary Negotiator

Danielle Williams-Tactical Liaison

Jackie Burfield-Intelligence

Sean Smith-Equipment/Intelligence

Sita Singh-Scribe

Darrin Rice-Commander

Amelia Galicia-Chief Negotiator Team Leader