



SPOKANE POLICE DEPARTMENT

CHIEF OF POLICE

CRAIG N. MEIDL

Closed Use of Force Summary

Tracking Number: F20-042

Incident Number: 2020-20168413

Date of Incident: 9/24/2020

Chain of Command Finding: In Compliance with Policy

INCIDENT SYNOPSIS

Officers responded to a Crisis call. The complainant reported that her mother-in-law, who was suffering from severe dementia, was threatening her, as she believed the complainant had killed her husband. As officers were on their way, dispatch advised that the woman was threatening the complainant with a knife. The complainant and her children exited the house and went to the neighbor's house for safety. Officers attempted to de-escalate the female to no avail. The female refused to drop the knife and made statements such as "Shoot me!" "It's your job!" and "I have nothing to live for." The government interest in this type of incident is low, but the community caretaking function is high. The woman was having a moment in time when she believed her daughter-in-law was responsible for her husband's death and did not want to live. She had armed herself with a knife, began threatening family, and then wanted officers to shoot her. Allowing her to remain in the residence posed a continued threat to the family. Allowing her to leave the house posed a threat to the community, as her delusions could transfer to others. Medical personnel would not intervene due to the imminent threat. Officers felt intervention by police to keep everyone safe was the best option to protect the female, her family, and the community. Several supervisors came to the scene, along with Hostage Negotiators and SWAT Operators. A tactical plan was implemented, allowing officers to safely take the female into custody. Once the female stood and stepped toward officers with the knife, officers deployed a TASER. The TASER application caused the woman to drop the knife and fall back into the chair in which she had been sitting. Officers took her into protective custody and placed her on a gurney. Medics transported the female to hospital for a mental health evaluation. No criminal charges were filed, due to her mental state.

