

Flossmoor PD answer call, shoot knife-wielding resident

BY CHRONICLE STAFF

Flossmoor police shot and killed a 64-year-old woman while investigating a report of a domestic disturbance on Sunday, July 10.

The woman, later identified as Madeline Miller, was shot three times as she approached officers with a knife in her hand.

On Thursday, July 14, police released a 1-minute, 14-second video showing the moments leading up to the fatal encounter. Police advised the video shows graphic images that some viewers might find difficult to watch. The video is available at bit.ly/flossmoorshooting.

In a news release accompanying the video link, police said officers responded to a call at the home, 1437 Joyce Drive, as a re-

sult of a third-party report of a domestic disturbance.

"The report alleged Miller was threatening and attacking a female family member with a knife," police said.

In the video, indistinct shouting can be heard coming from within the home as officers knock on the door and announce their presence. An elderly woman using a walker answers the door but immediately moves into an adjacent room.

Another woman runs toward officers, yelling "she's trying to kill me" then moves into the adjacent room.

At that point, Miller runs toward officers.

According to police: "Miller emerged from around a corner – armed with a large kitchen knife – and quickly ran at the officers with the knife pointed in their direc-

tion. The officers retreated back into the driveway, commanding Miller to drop the knife, but she ignored the directions and continued to advance toward the officers at a quick pace."

After Miller emerged from the front door, an officer fired one shot and continued to order her to drop the knife. When she continued to advance, two more shots were fired, and she collapsed in the driveway.

One officer immediately reported the shooting and called for emergency medical services to respond to the scene. Police said officers rendered emergency medical aid, but the video ends before they do.

From the moment the door was open until Miller collapsed 17 seconds elapsed.

A female family member also was transported to an area hospital to be treated for

injuries resulting from the domestic disturbance. Police report that the residence also has an interior security camera that recorded the earlier domestic disturbance, but that recording was not released.

"Our thoughts and condolences are with the family of the deceased and all who were involved in this tragic event," police said.

The responding officers have been placed on administrative leave as required by departmental policy. The Illinois State Police Public Integrity Task Force is conducting an independent investigation at the request of the Flossmoor Police Department.

The police department web page at <http://bit.ly/FPDpolicies> includes links to policies, including those governing use of force.

Protesters decry police response, demand village action

BY BILL JONES

bjones@hfchronicle.com

Residents, activists and a family member addressed the Flossmoor Village Board July 18 to give their reactions to the Flossmoor Police shooting of 64-year-old resident Madeline Miller.

The village, anticipating a community response, issued a note from Mayor Michelle Nelson that day reiterating the Illinois State Police Public Integrity Task Force's ongoing investigation and noting that police officers "go beyond crimefighting, working to improve the quality of life in our village" building relationships between the community and the police.

She recounted much of that message at the meeting and added that there would not be additional comments from the board.

Most public comments were critical of the police response.

Camiella Williams, of Flossmoor, said someone should have de-escalated the situation. She suggested things would have ended differently had Miller been a white woman.

"The residents: We deserve answers," Williams said. "The victim deserved a chance." Williams said she felt any trust with the police department had been broken.

"How can we have faith in this system?" Williams asked, calling on Flossmoor to launch its own investigation into what happened instead of leaving it to ISP. "I



Andrew Burke-Stevenson/H-F Chronicle

H-F community member Leslie Bolser, who trained people in crisis intervention, shares her thoughts during a protest at Flossmoor Village Hall on how better crisis intervention training could have prevented the death of Madeline Miller.

will never call the police as a Black woman. Why? Because I don't want to die."

Iown Fields of California said Miller "was my baby sister. I changed my sister's diapers, taught her how to walk. ... I just want you guys to know she was a human being and my mama's baby."

La'Shawn Littrice, of Flossmoor, said she came to the meeting to stand with families who have been "gunned down by police officers." She said police in the community "get away with a lot" and many Black residents "have had interactions with police that are not beautiful at all." She called for

an administrative investigation, intense crisis intervention training and more.

"My interaction with the police is one of disgust," Littrice said, noting racial slurs have been used in the past when she has been pulled over. "I'm not going to sugarcoat anything. I'm pissed off. I'm very upset, because I believe things that happen in this community have a tendency to be hushed and shushed under the rug. We have to fight to get some sort of notification about it."

Jenny Curtis, of Flossmoor, questioned the village's "on paper" community and

leadership values versus reality. Homewood's Leslie Bolser, who said her family attends church and school in Flossmoor, also called for more ongoing training.

Mark Clements appeared on behalf of the Chicago Torture Justice Center, which he told the board is "a center that addresses the type of behavior that you and your staff do not want addressed."

He decried a "political football game investigation," and asked for the issue to be addressed by the board. "Assassinating a 64-year-old woman is not right when you have Tasers," he said.

Flossmoor resident Rachel Harden-Maddox said she came to let the board know she is a licensed professional counselor and a certified mental health first aid trainer. She left materials with the village, saying she came not to judge but to ask the board to take this seriously.

"I want to be solution-focused," Harden-Maddox said. "I want to offer my services to the community. I want to offer my services to the police department in any way that I can. ... This can't continue to happen."

Gigi Gummerson, who said she has lived in the community for years and has only seen "exemplary" work from the police and fire departments, noted other occupants of the residence were apparently in need of help when officers arrived.

"I want to applaud the police for saving the two women that were saved in the home," Gummerson said.

@ Governors State University
YOU BELONG HERE



 **Governors State**
UNIVERSITY
govst.edu