



POLICE DEPARTMENT
CITY OF BURLINGTON

MEDIA RELEASE

On Friday night, April 8, 2022, at about 2309 hours, Burlington Police Department dispatch received a noise complaint about an apartment on N. Winooski Ave. near Riverside Ave. A police officer and two Community Service Officers (CSOs), including one who is still in training, responded. The resident was identified as Thomas O'Halloran, 45. He became belligerent and aggressive and attempted to sic his dog on the officer and CSOs. He also struck the officer with his fists and used racial slurs against the officer, who is Asian. The officer used OC spray and Mr. O'Halloran retreated into the apartment, where he barricaded himself with the dog and another person.

The BPD deployed its Emergency Response Vehicle (ERV) and began an ICAT-based negotiation operation. (ICAT stands for Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics. It is a training program that provides police with the tools, skills, and options they need to successfully and safely defuse a range of critical incidents. It was developed by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) along with many agencies and stakeholders, including the BPD.)

It was discovered that, in addition to having assaulted the officer, Mr. O'Halloran also had two active warrants for his arrest. The negotiator was able to establish phone contact and, for more than two hours, officers attempted to obtain a voluntary surrender. Ultimately, Mr. O'Halloran stopped participating in the negotiations. Officers could hear the other occupant encouraging Mr. O'Halloran to prepare to fight the police. At that point, officers breached the door at approximately 0316 and took both men into custody.

“This was a terrific example of how ICAT works,” said Chief of Police Jon Murad. “Although we didn’t get a voluntary surrender, which is always the first-choice goal, we did get both subjects safely into custody by controlling the tempo of the incident and bringing appropriate resources to bear. That’s because Burlington has a lot of rigorous training and progressive policy around critical incidents like this.”

Thomas O'Halloran was arrested for assault on a police officer with a hate-crime enhancement, and was taken to the Northwest State Correctional Facility to answer those charges as well as his open warrants. He was also issued a ticket for the original noise complaint.

Information is preliminary and subject to change.

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The other subject, Eric Robbins, 36, was arrested for Impeding Public Officers. He was processed at One North Avenue and released with a citation. The dog was taken to a kennel to be recovered by the subject(s).

Anyone with information about this incident is asked to contact the Burlington Police Department at (802) 658-2704.

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