



**POLICE DEPARTMENT
CITY OF BURLINGTON**

MEDIA RELEASE

INCIDENT TYPE:	DATE/TIME REPORTED:	
Aggravated Assault on Police Officer	07/27/2024 0125 Hours	
INCIDENT NUMBER:	LOCATION:	
24BU016825	Church St and Main St	
INVESTIGATOR:	INVESTIGATOR CONTACT:	
Officer Goldmann	658-2122	
AUTHOR:	APPROVED BY:	
Lt. Henry	Chief Murad	
SUSPECT:	AGE:	SUSPECT ADDRESS:
Michael Gbenusola	41	Swanton
SUSPECT DISPOSITION:		
Suspect lodged at Northwest Correctional Facility on a hold without bail.		

NARRATIVE:

On 27 July 2024, at approximately 0125 hours, a Burlington Police Department Community Service Officer (CSO) radioed the BPD's Emergency Communications Center with a high priority request that she needed additional officers at the intersection of Church Street and Main Street to assist a police officer who was being assaulted.

Upon arrival, responding police officers observed Michael Gbenusola, 41, standing against a wall on the north side of Main Street. A uniformed BPD officer was pointing his conducted electrical weapon, or CEW (commonly known by the brand name TASER), at Mr. Gbenusola. The CEW had been deployed. Responding officers took Mr. Gbenusola into custody without further incident.

The preliminary investigation revealed and surveillance footage corroborated that the CSO and officer had been on a foot-patrol post at the northeast corner of Church Street and Main Street. They were both in their respective uniforms, standing beside a fully marked BPD police cruiser and a marked City of Burlington CSO vehicle. Performing foot patrol and standing post at this site is a key lawful duty for police officers, given the fact that violence and disorder have been recurring concerns at the location and at this time of day (i.e., weekend bar closing).

The CSO and police officer observed Mr. Gbenusola walking south on Church Street, yelling at nobody in particular, stating in sum and substance "these [racial epithet]s have nothing on me;

Information is preliminary and subject to change.

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they ain't [expletive]." Mr. Gbenusola approached the police officer aggressively, pounding his own chest with both fists. The officer asked, in sum and substance, "Are you okay? Do you need anything?" Mr. Gbenusola responded with profanity and then, unprovoked and without hesitation, violently punched the officer in the head/face with such force that it physically injured the officer and knocked him backwards.

According to witnesses, including the female CSO and a second male CSO who was nearby, and as seen on camera, Mr. Gbenusola aggressively pursued the officer as the officer moved away from the assault. Mr. Gbenusola postured as if to strike again. The officer drew his CEW and gave hard verbal commands that Mr. Gbenusola ignored. Mr. Gbenusola continued to advance on the officer causing the officer to deploy his CEW. The deployment stopped Mr. Gbenusola from continuing his assaultive behavior, but it did not create the neuromuscular incapacitation, or bodily lockup, that a fully effective CEW deployment can create. Fortunately additional officers quickly arrived on scene, preventing Mr. Gbenusola from continuing his assault on the police officer who had suffered a significant head injury with signs of concussion.

The police officer was transported to the University of Vermont's Emergency Department for medical evaluation for a possible traumatic brain injury. Mr. Gbenusola was also transported as a precaution associated with the CEW deployment.

A review of Michael Gbenusola's criminal history revealed he has three failures to appear for court proceedings, six violations of court orders or conditions with one conviction, six felony charges with one conviction, nine misdemeanor charges with five convictions, and two charges for [assaultive crimes](#) charges with one conviction. Mr. Gbenusola has an extensive history of violence in Vermont and a criminal history out of New York.

Mr. Gbenusola was lodged at Northwest Correctional Facility and held without bail.

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