

JOSEPH D. CORONATO
Ocean County Prosecutor



GLENN MILLER
Chief of Detectives

OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTOR

Courthouse Annex Building
119 Hooper Avenue
P.O. Box 2191
Toms River, New Jersey 08754-2191
(732) 929-2027 Fax (732) 240-3338

August 31, 2018

Chris Crepeau
VIA OPRA Machine

Re: Open Public Records Act (OPRA) Request
Reports regarding, relating or containing the name Joseph Engrassia

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am in receipt of your request made under the New Jersey Open Public Records Act (OPRA) pertaining to the above-mentioned case.

The requested documents are criminal investigatory records, and as such, they are exempt from disclosure under OPRA, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1.1, et seq.

If I can be of further assistance, please contact me at 732-929-2027, x3623.

Yours very truly,

Shiraz I. Deen
Assistant Prosecutor

SID/dp

-----Original Message-----

From: Chris Crepeau [mailto:opra+request-2386-6b5917b3@requests.opramachine.com]

Sent: Saturday, August 25, 2018 1:09 AM

To: Deen, Shiraz <SDeen@co.ocean.nj.us>

Subject: OPRA request - police reports regarding, relating to or containing the name Joseph Engrassia

Dear Ocean County Prosecutors Office,

This is a request for public records made under OPRA and the common law right of access.
Please acknowledge receipt of this message.

Records requested:

Any police reports regarding, relating to or containing the name Joseph Engrassia from April 15, 2018 - May 31, 2018.

Sincerely,

Chris Crepeau

Please use this UNIQUE email address for all replies to this request and no other:
opra+request-2386-6b5917b3@requests.opramachine.com

Is sdeen@co.ocean.nj.us the wrong address for OPRA requests to Ocean County Prosecutor's Office? If so, please contact us using this form:

https://opramachine.com/change_request/new?body=ocean_county_prosecutors_office

Disclaimer: This message and any reply that you make will be published on the internet. Our privacy and copyright policies:
<https://opramachine.com/help/officers>

View this OPRA request & responses online:
https://opramachine.com/request/police_reports_regarding_relatin

Please note that in some cases publication of requests and responses will be delayed.

If you find this service useful as an OPRA custodian, please ask your web manager to link to us from your organisation's website.



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INVESTIGATION REPORT

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1. Unit MAJOR CRIME	2. Unit File # 180500392	3. Promis Gavel #	
4. Case Agency(s)			
5. Crime DEATH	6. N.J.S.	7. Date 05/06/2018	8. Time 12:00 AM
9. Location of Crime			
10. Person Reporting Incident / Crime: 1). TAYLO WHALEN Address: 299 HAMILTON AVE, 2 SEASIDE HEIGHTS, NJ 08753 ;			
11. Suspect(s)	12. Person Info(s):	13. Address(s):	
14. Victim(s): 1). ENGRASSIA, JOSEPH	15. Person Info(s): 1). DOB: 06/10/1994; SEX: MALE; RACE: CAUCASIAN;	16. Address(s): 1). 299 HAMILTON AVE, 2 SEASIDE HEIGHTS, NJ 08751 OCEAN, SEASIDE HEIGHTS BOROUGH	
17. Stolen / Missing Property:		18. Weapon Used:	
19. Accused Employer	20. Employer Address	21. Employer Town	22. Employer State

NARRATIVE

Decedent:

Joseph Engrassia Jr.
229 Hamilton Ave, Apt 2
Seaside Heights, N.J.
DOB:06/10/1994

NOK:

Joseph Engrassia Sr.
1103 King George Lane
Toms River, N.J.
Phone: 82-267-7848

Synopsis:

On May 6, 2018, at 0300 hours, the Seaside Heights Police Department received a 911 call from a Taylor Whalen in regards to her boyfriend, Joseph Engrassia Jr., wanting to commit suicide by means of a handgun. Seaside Heights Police Department was dispatched to 229 Hamilton Ave Apt # 2. Once on scene Seaside Heights Police Department encountered Whalen walking out of the residence followed by a gunshot. Subsequently, Engrassia was pronounced dead at 0538 hours, by Dr. Clark of Newark Beth Israel Hospital.

Notification:

I was contacted via telephone by DSG Brian Haggerty of the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office, Major Crime Unit directing me to respond to 229 Hamilton Ave to assist in the death investigation. At that time, DSG Haggerty had advised me that the decedent was a police officer for the Plumsted Township Police Department.

Observation of Scene:

The residence is described as a multi-unit two-story apartment building, tan in color. On the second floor, I observed the number "2" in black affixed to the center of a white door. Once inside the apartment I observed the decedent lying face up in the doorway of the master bedroom with an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound to the left side of his



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head. An exit wound was observed to the right side of his head. The door to the bedroom had been cut in half by members of the Ocean County Regional SWAT team. I observed the decedent to be wearing a black tee shirt and plaid pajama pants. In between the decedent's legs, I observed a Glock 9mm semi-automatic handgun. At this time, I was advised the gun is the decedent's service weapon that had been issued to him by the Plumsted Police Department.

Investigation:

Once on scene, I was met by Seaside Heights Detective Brian McCurdy, Chief Earl Maroney and Lt. Jason Reilly of the Plumsted Police Department. Det. McCurdy advised that once the responding Seaside Heights police officers heard the gunshot, they set up a perimeter and called the Ocean County Regional SWAT Team for a possible barricade situation. The Ocean County Regional SWAT team responded to eventually make entry into the apartment and observed the decedent with a self-inflicted gunshot wound to his head, in the doorway of the master bedroom. I was advised that Whalen had been transported by ambulance to Community Medical Center.

Interview of Taylor Whalen:

On May 6, 2018, at 0630 hours, a digitally recorded statement was obtained from Whalen at the Community Medical Center. In brief, Whalen advised she and the decedent were together all day. Whalen stated they went to the food store then to the liquor store earlier in the day and then returned back home. Once they arrived home, they both started to consume adult beverages. Whalen advised they were drinking margaritas and Spiked Hard Seltzers. They began to have a verbal argument about their relationship. Whalen advised they continued to argue throughout the day. They then left the residence and met a couple out at Spikes bar. While at the bar, they continue to consume adult beverages. They eventually left Spikes to go to Jack's Bar to meet up with some of the decedents friends. There they consume more adult beverages and became extremely intoxicated.

Whalen advised another verbal argument ensued over the decedent and his ex-girlfriend and she left the bar. Soon after leaving the bar, the decedent picked her up and drove her home where they continue to argue over his ex-girlfriend. Once back at the residence, the argument turned physical and the decedent started to choke her. Whalen advised she was able to get away from the decedent, when the decedent grabbed the gun. Whalen advised they continue to have a verbal argument while the decedent would put the gun in his mouth and tell her he did not want to live anymore. Whalen attempted to talk with the decedent, while he kept telling her he did not want to live.

Whalen then barricaded herself in the bedroom, while the decedent was in the kitchen with the gun in his hand and a bottle of Tequila in the other hand. Whalen called 911 to advise them that the decedent was attempting suicide and he is a police officer. Whalen was advised by the 911 operator to attempt to walk out of the apartment. Whalen stated she opened the bedroom door and walked straight to the front door, while the decedent walked into the bedroom and stated "My career is over". Whalen advised she heard the decedent close the bedroom door. Whalen advised as she was exiting the residence, she heard a loud pop and noticed the Seaside Heights Police Department police officers on the stairs. The interview was concluded at this time.

Crime Scene Investigation Unit:

Detective Jill Marion of the Ocean County Sheriff's Department, Crime Scene Investigation Unit responded to photograph and process the scene to include collection of evidence pertaining to said incident. The decedent was placed into a body containment bag at 0734 hours, and transported by Colonial Funeral Home to Community Medical Center for a pending a post-mortem exam.

Death notification to the family was done by this Detective.



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Post Mortem Examination:

On May 7, 2018, at 1230 hours, Dr. Charles Siebert Jr of the Ocean County Medical Examiner's Office performed a post mortem examination on the decedent. Dr. Siebert's findings are as follows: **Cause of Death: Gunshot Wound of Head, Manner of Death: Suicide.**

END OF REPORT

SUB MODULES

Reporting Detective

JOHN J. CARROLL

Reporting Detective Signature

Date of Report

8/7/2018

Supervisor Signature