Media Release

Date: March 25, 2021

Aggravated Assault/Burglary of a Habitation

On Monday, March 22, 2021, at approximately 9:11 am, our dispatch center received a call from the victim's housekeeper stating that she found her employer unresponsive in her residence at 1047 Willow Oaks Circle. Our officers immediately responded to the home where they found the victim, later identified as 70-year-old Patrice Ward, deceased. Ward had sustained severe blunt force trauma to her head.

As a result of the initial investigation, it was determined that the home was ransacked and numerous items were missing, including two handguns. This investigation is ongoing.

On Thursday, March 25, 2021, at approximately 2:52 am, our dispatch center received a call from a female stating that an unknown male forced entry into her home by kicking in the front door then assaulted her and her husband with a tire iron. The husband was able to fight off the suspect, who then stole the victim's vehicle and fled in an unknown direction. Our officers immediately responded to the home, located in the 1600 block of Harris St., and began to search the area. While conducting the preliminary search of the residence, officers located a handgun that the suspect left behind.

During the initial investigation, we were able to obtain corroborating information and subsequent evidence, which led officers to the townhomes located in the 1000 block of Willow Oaks Circle. The victim's vehicle was located a short time later behind a residence in the 1000 block of Willow Oaks Circle. Officers then located a blood trail at the back door of the residence at 1051 Willow Oaks Circle, where they made contact with the suspect and took him into custody without further incident.

The suspect has been identified as Gilbert Viera H/M 06/12/85. Viera has been charged with Aggravated Assault and Burglary of a Habitation with the Intent to Commit a Felony.

Attached is the booking photo of the suspect.

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