

INTERVIEW WITH MEGAN HIRSCH

Okay. Today's date is Friday, May 14, 2021. The time now is 4:07pm. I'm DIRECTOR FRED MAYS in the GBI OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS. Present in the room is GBI HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR SHONDRENA HUDSON-HULEY, and we're talking with SPECIAL AGENT MEGAN HIRSCH. She is currently in the GBI Basic Mandate Agent School in Forsyth, and she's assigned to the WEST METRO DRUG TASK FORCE.

FM: MEGAN, how long have you worked for GBI?

MH: Since September of 2020.

FM: Okay. So, you came on September 2020. You went through mandate school?

MH: Yes sir.

FM: Where'd you go through mandate school?

MH: At GPSTC, Forsyth.

FM: Okay. And you graduated there, and you went to WEST METRO.

MH: In December, that's correct.

FM: Who's your supervisor out there?

MH: DAN SIMS.

FM: Okay. And then you went to GBI. You are currently in a GBI Basic School now.

MH: That's correct.

FM: Okay. Alright, MEGAN, I have a copy of a statement memorandum that you sent to the TRAINING UNIT on May 13, yesterday, 2021. It's an incident that happened on the evening of May 12, 2021. So, I'm just going to let you, tell me what happened. In your statement here, you know, it's not clear who was driving and that type of stuff. So, I want you to tell me. I know all ya'll went to a Mexican

restaurant and ya'll went to another bar later on. But I want you to tell me who was driving, what vehicle, you know, I think everybody has a government vehicle.

MH: Yes.

FM: Who was driving, and who was riding with each other. Okay? Alright, and we're going to go all the way up 'til you wrote this statement.

MH: Mm hmm.

FM: Okay?

MH: So, that was Wednesday night after class. A few of us decided to get Mexican. I sent a text. We have a – It's called Group Me, which is a whole group in BAC has the text message. We talk to each other. I said Mexican, or Mexican at the usual spot after class. So, everyone was invited. Um, we left campus. There was four of us in one vehicle. I'm not sure how, who rode with who and the other people. In my vehicle it was JUSTIN JONES driving, Q ROOKS in the front passenger, I was in the driver's back, and STEPHEN PENDERGRASS was in the passenger back. We went to the Mexican restaurant. We met ERIC WHITE there. He's from REGION 1, and then BRANDON CROCKER. He showed up a little bit late because he had to go to the doctor to get a shot in his back, and then, one more person. I was sitting here – oh, JASON COLE to my left. He was sitting to my left, and I believe he drove by himself to the restaurant. So, I think JASON drove by himself, ERIC drove by himself, and then CROCKER rode by himself., Because the other four of us were in one vehicle. At the restaurant, and then after, do I need to, like, say what we were doing at the restaurant?

FM: Yeah. Yeah. I need to know –

MH: Okay

FM: – who was drinking and –

MH: – and, uh, –

FM: – I think you even talked about what you drank, –

MH: Yeah.

FM: – or whatever.

MH: Everyone was drinking besides JUSTIN JONES. He doesn't drink at all. At dinner I ordered a jalapeno margarita, and I don't know what, uh, I know JASON COLE was drinking Jack and diet, and ROOKS was drinking, I think, a margarita, and then everyone else was drinking beer. Um, –

FM: Okay. Let me, I, this, this is going to be important here. Okay. So, you said ERIC WHITE drove by himself?

MH: I believe so.

FM: Okay. And –

MH: JASON COLE.

FM: – JASON COLE drove by himself. Okay.

MH: BRANDON CROCKER drove by himself.

FM: And then –

MH: He arrived a little bit later. And the remaining four of us were in the truck, the truck that JUSTIN JONES drove.

FM: Okay. So, everybody was driving government vehicles?

MH: Yes sir.

FM: Okay. And, four was riding with JUSTIN COLE, I mean, –

MH: JONES.

FM: – JONES. Okay. Okay, and so ERIC, JASON and BRANDON were all drinking, but JUSTIN didn't drink.

MH: Correct.

FM: Okay. Alright. Go ahead.

MH: I forgot where I was talking. We ordered dinner. The boy, JASON and Q ROOKS were taking shots of Jack. They had quite a few, either three or four. JASON made a comment. I know he was just joking. He was like don't be a pussy. Take a shot. And I'm like, I'm not good at, I suck at taking shots. I didn't have any shots. I ordered a different drink because my margarita wasn't good, and it was very strong. And, and even our waitress, she's like, oh, I made them strong. I'm like, I know you did. It doesn't taste good, and then I ordered a Jack and diet. And then, we got our checks. I'm thinking around 6:15, 6:30 is when we left the restaurant, and then I rode, we all went to the Brewery in Forsyth. Foxes, I believe, Fox Brother, Brother, but Foxes, the brewery in Downtown Forsyth. I rode with JASON COLE to the brewery. Then BRANDON CROCKER did not go. ERIC and, ERIC drove his own vehicle. I'm not sure if someone else rode with ERIC. I don't know what the whole seating arrangement in the cars. I know that I rode with JASON COLE.

FM: Okay.

MH: We get to the brewery. We're meeting, we were going to meet some classmates because they were going there. But when we were walking into the brewery, they were walking out. So, we just chatted for like two minutes. Then the people who

were at Mexican, we all went inside the brewery. And, we went to the back table, where is where we always sit, which is the back of the restaurant like where at the bar area is, like where they store the beer, because they brew beer there.

FM: Hmm. Go ahead.

MH: At that point, my fr, my coworker, ADAM BLANE who works at WEST METRO, he works for LAGRANGE PD, he's detached to WEST METRO. He's been at GPSTC the past two weeks. He's going through Firearms Instructor Training. I didn't know he was going there. I was just like, hey, how's it going, and we talked for a few minutes. Him and his, he had two other men with him at his table who work for LAGRANGE. We all sat down at a larger table, just chatting. Um, I do need to amend something. I had three Jack and diets, because I found a receipt in my wallet. I think in the memo I said I had two.

FM: Okay. Where was that? At the brewery or at the Mexican restaurant?

MH: At the brewery.

FM: Okay.

MH: Yeah, we were just chatting. I don't know what time, I ha, I had ended up calling my boyfriend, HUNTER, and Q was sitting next to me. JASON was sitting on my right side and then JUSTIN was sitting – so, if I'm here, Q was sitting on my left side, JASON's sitting on my right side, JUSTIN JONES is sitting across from ROOKS. Across from me is STEPHEN and across from JASON COLE is ERIC WHITE, I believe. I left –

FM: That's STEPHEN PENDERGRASS?

MH: Yes.

FM: Okay. So, he was at the Mexican restaurant too, right?

MH: Yes.

FM: Who does he work for?

MH: WEST METRO.

FM: Okay. So, he's in the Academy too now?

MH: Mm hmm.

FM: Okay. And he's a GBI Agent?

MH: Yes sir.

FM: Okay. Alright. Now, he was one riding with ya'll, right?

MH: Yes.

FM: Okay.

MH: He was in the back.

FM: In the back.

MH: Next to me.

FM: Alright.

MH: On the passenger side back.

FM: Okay, just trying to get all this down. It's so, I have so many statements. I'm trying to, you know, see who was riding with who, and who was driving, and that type of stuff. Okay, so at the brewery, you had laid out where everybody was sitting and go from there.

MH: Okay, from there I know that – when I say Q, I'm referring to ROOKS. We all call him Q.

FM: Okay.

MH: I know that JASON had bought Q, or I don't know who paid for it. But, those two had drinks or shots. And, I think Q thought it was Jack that they were drinking, but it was some other kind of bourbon because he like swallowed it, but then spit it back on, out in his cup, and everyone's like oh, what are you doing, blah, blah, blah. I know that, I believe that was before we had called my boyfriend. Q and I have always been cool. I met him when we all got hired. We've had, you know, conversations about our significant others. I started dating my boyfriend right as soon as we started working for GBI. And, we had called HUNTER and we were talking about all getting together one weekend to meet each other because we only live maybe a little over an hour from each other now. And then at that point, my friend – we were paying our tabs. I don't know what time this is. And then, my coworker, ADAM BLANE, from WEST METRO, LAGRANGE, TFA, bought me a shot of Jack, which I took. And then, I don't know what time we left the brewery. I remember riding home with JASON COLE, and I remember when we got to the brewery I said, hey, my keys are in your truck. I'm leaving my keys in your truck. So, when we rode back, and I remember singing to the radio. But that's where it's kind of began to get fuzzy because I don't really remember like saying bye to everyone, and I don't remember arriving back at campus. I don't know why I would have gotten into another vehicle. We were already at campus, and then I –

FM: Let me stop you there –

MH: Okay.

FM: -- a second. Okay, when you said fuzzy, I know, you know, you don't want to talk about this, MEGAN, but I've got, I've got you to be clear.

MH: Yes.

FM: You know, somebody that's a GBI Agent that is so drunk that they can't remember getting back into a parking lot, and this and that, or whatever, you know, it raises a red flag for my mind. I've been doing this for 39 years.

MH: I understand that, sir.

FM: Okay, so be as clear as you can with this. Okay, the fuzziness, forgetting, don't remember this, please be as clear as you can with this because I don't want it to get any worse than what it is. And like I said, you know, I've been doing this for a while.

MH: I understand.

FM: Okay?

MH: I'm not, I'm not trying to be ugly, but all my –

FM: Mm hmm.

MH: – statements I said I don't remember, because I do not.

FM: Okay, go ahead.

MH: Um, forgot what I was talking about. Back to campus –

FM: Mm hmm.

MH: -- and then, I don't know what time, how long. I do remember like someone knocking on the door, or not door, the window and I don't know – the only reason I know who it was is that I recognized CHARLIE's voice. CHARLIE's in our class. He has a very distinct voice, and CHARLIE and I talk all the time. I don't recall getting back to my room, when I get back to my room. And this is, this is where I'm getting confused because I don't remember details, but now my roommate

has been telling me stuff. I remember getting back to my room and being upset and crying. And then KAREN had told me -- she, in the next morning I, I asked. She, we went over it, and she said that I was crying, like sobbing, very upset and emotional. And, she said what happened is that I made the comment I'm tired of men taking advantage of me. And then she said it took a while for me to get more detail. I kept shaking my head, and she's, like, tell me what happened. Who was it? What happened? And, all I said was Q. At that point, her, she's just holding me, and then I don't remember how ERIC WHITE came into our room. I know ERIC WHITE was there because he was sitting like this close. At some point JAMES came into my room, the President, and I think that is when CARLA was called. I remember JAMES asking if I was okay, and I nodded my head, or said yes, or something. At that point -- so before the two guys had come into the room, I asked KAREN to call HUNTER because I was upset and embarrassed. I figured he'd be, he might be mad at me. I don't know. She called HUNTER and told him that Q got handsy with me. Then at that point, I called HUNTER back and talked to him, and then that's when everyone kind of started showing up. I laid down at some point. I was awakened around 2:00 to KAREN walking in, followed by CARLA.

FM: Okay, let's go back for a second. You said you told that you were embarrassed. What were you embarrassed about?

MH: Well, I knew something had, had happened. I wouldn't have been that upset if something didn't happen.

FM: That doesn't make sense, MEGAN. I mean what can you – if you don't know what happened, how can you be embarrassed? That statement doesn't make sense what you're saying. That you were upset and that you were embarrassed, but that doesn't make sense. I mean what can you, what were you embarrassed about?

MH: No woman, no woman wants to admit that she was taken advantage of, or used, or whatever.

FM: Okay, but what happened?

MH: I don't, I don't recall what happened. And even when I, I asked Q yesterday what happened because I didn't remember. And when I gave my statement to BILL and CARLA, whenever CARLA came and got me, I said something had to have happened because I was so upset.

FM: Okay.

MH: And that – and this is, and this is where I feel weird because -- and I, and I told, and I talked to CARLA about this yesterday. I don't want to say; I don't know. And, I don't want to say he did this because I, I'm not sure. And, I don't want him to get in trouble because I'm not 100 percent sure. He told, later yesterday when I asked him, he told me what happened. So, I know something happened because Q con, confirmed it.

FM: Okay, so you're saying that that night you were embarrassed because you thought that something had happened, and something had to have happened for you to be crying.

MH: I don't know if I used the word embarrassed. I was upset.