



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

NEWS RELEASE

Date: Friday, February 7, 2020
Prepared by: Shannon Martin
Phone and Email: (386) 586-4380; martin@flaglersheriff.com
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Multiple Charges for Felon who Attempted to Flee a Traffic Stop by Battering and Dragging FCSO Deputy with Car

On Thursday, February 6, 2020, Flagler County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) Deputy Conway was conducting a proactive foot patrol in the parking lot of the Shell Gas Station located on Palm Coast Parkway. This area has been identified as a focus problem area.

While on patrol, Deputy Conway observed Payne-Clark enter the shopping plaza driving a black Kia, exit the vehicle and then enter the Smoke Shop. Upon exiting the Smoke Shop, Payne-Clark recognized Deputy Conway and quickly entered the Shell Gas Station. Payne-Clark then exited the gas station without purchasing anything and walked to his car.

Deputy Conway approached the vehicle and made contact with Payne-Clark through his driver side window. While speaking to Payne-Clark Deputy Conway observed a baggie inside the center console cup-holder that contained a green, leafy substance. It was at this time that Deputy Conway instructed Payne-Clark to step out of the vehicle. Instead of complying, Payne-Clark made a move for the baggie inside the cup-holder and Deputy Conway attempted stop him from doing so by grabbing his sweater. Payne-Clark then put the vehicle in reverse, dragged the Deputy Conway backwards and crashed into a vehicle directly behind him.

Payne-Clark then put the vehicle in drive, still dragging the deputy, and took off towards another vehicle. This action could have pinned Deputy Conway between both cars. Deputy Conway was able to maneuver away from Payne-Clarkes and avoid serious injury. Payne-Clark continued to flee westbound on Palm Coast Parkway in the Eastbound Lanes.

Multiple units responded to assist, including Fire Flight for air surveillance. A concerned citizen contacted the Flagler County Dispatch Center and advised a vehicle was recklessly driving on Bridge Haven Drive, ultimately losing sight of the vehicle. Another witness called advising that a black male in his 20's ran into a portable restroom and was yelling on the phone that he was involved in a crash and needed to be picked up. The caller advised that a dark grey Dodge Dart had just picked the male up and began driving towards Belle Terre.

FCSO deputies located a gray Dodge Dart exiting 3345 Old Kings Road South, a location Payne-Clark is known to

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frequent. Three subjects were detained for investigation, but were unwilling to cooperate. When asked where they were coming from, they advised they wished to speak with a lawyer.

The black Kia was located on Briarvue Lane, the bag of marijuana still sitting in the center console. The owner of the vehicle, Autumn Gaither, called law enforcement and advised she wished to report her vehicle stolen. However, Gaither later recanted her statement and advised that she is in a relationship with Payne-Clark and he has permission to drive her vehicle and he operates it on a normal basis.

A short time later, Payne-Clark was located on Snowbird Drive at Gaither's residence. At the command of deputies, Payne-Clark exited the home. However, once outside, Payne-Clark refused to listen to commands and was taken to the ground for officer safety. Payne-Clark was then secured in handcuffs and taken into custody.

Elisha Payne-Clarke has an extensive criminal history in Flagler County that dates back to 2016. He has been arrested for numerous charges including Burglary, Grand Theft, Grand Theft Auto, Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon, Possession of MDMA, Possession of Hydracodone, Possession of Marijuana and Possession of Drug Paraphernalia.

"I am very thankful that Deputy Conway was not seriously injured or killed as a result of this dirtbag's reckless behavior. This is a case that could have had a tragic outcome," Sheriff Staly said. "This guy clearly has no respect for anyone. Not for the public's safety, not for his girlfriend's property, and especially not for the deputy's that he could have seriously injured or killed with his reckless behavior. He is a career criminal who is back behind bars where he belongs. He needs to go to prison for a very long time."

Payne-Clark was arrested and transported to the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility. He is charged with Aggravated Battery on a Law Enforcement Officer, Resisting with Violence, Reckless Driving, Leaving the Scene of an Accident, and Driving with no Driver's License. He is being held on no bond.

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1769 East Moody Blvd., Bunnell, FL 32110

386-437-4116 – Fax 386-586-4820

Mailing: P.O. Box 879, Bunnell, FL 32110

www.flaglersheriff.com