

Task force was sent to serve warrant - Patriot-News, The (Harrisburg, PA) - January 21, 2018 - page A10

January 21, 2018 | Patriot-News, The (Harrisburg, PA) | Christine Vendel | Page A10

A team of officers swarmed a home the 1800 block of Mulberry Street in Harrisburg on Thursday with the stated goal to arrest Shayla Lynette Towles Pierce on an outstanding warrant.

The early morning raid kicked off a firefight that killed a deputy U.S. marshal, wounded another officer and left the suspected gunman dead.

According to court records, Pierce, 30, had been accused of pulling a gun from her purse, without a concealed-carry permit, last year and threatening to shoot another woman.

The victim told police she encountered a driver on Nov. 25 parked in the middle of the street in the 1800 block of Mulberry. She did not know the woman driving the car, but asked the driver to move, since she was blocking traffic.

The driver then got out of the car and allegedly pointed the gun at the victim's head.

"I'll shoot you," the driver said, according to court records, before lowering the gun and then raising it a second time. "I'll shoot her dumb (expletive.)"

As the driver left, the victim snapped a photo of the license plate.

The driver was gone when police arrived, but officers checked the tag number from the photo and noted it returned to Shayla Pierce, who lives in the 1800 block of Mulberry Street.

It's unclear what efforts, if any, were taken to arrest Pierce over the last month and a half since the crime.

Police knew her name, what her car looked like and her address in late November. But no known action was taken to arrest Pierce until Thursday's raid by the U.S. Marshal's Service, just after 6 a.m.

While the crime allegedly involving Pierce was disturbing, it wasn't the kind of case typically handled by the marshals service, which specializes in high-value, high-risk fugitives.

Pierce was facing a third-degree felony and some misdemeanor charges.

That could indicate that police had their eye on someone else.

Kevin Sturgis, 31, was inside Pierce's home Thursday. The Philadelphia man was wanted for two outstanding warrants.

Newly-seated U.S. Attorney David Freed said more information would come out later about the reasons for the tactical raid.

“Although we don’t know at this point,” he said, “we will know what the larger purpose was for them being there.”

Copyright, 2018, The Patriot-News Co. All Rights Reserved. Used with permission.