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**FINDINGS OF PROSECUTOR REVIEW OF
THE INVESTIGATION INTO THE DEATH OF TA'NEASHA CHAPPELL**

This written report serves as the Jackson County Prosecuting Attorney's findings regarding the death of Ta'Neasha Chappell, an inmate at the Jackson County Indiana Jail.

PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

1. On May 26, 2021, Ta'Neasha Chappell (hereinafter "Miss Chappell") was arrested after the conclusion of a vehicle pursuit by the Indiana State Police and other officers which began in Jackson County, Indiana and concluded in Clark County, Indiana
2. The police vehicle pursuit of Miss Chappell went through three (3) Indiana counties (Jackson, Scott, and Clark), and the investigation determined that the incident that precipitated the initiation of the police pursuit was a Theft allegation in a fourth county (Bartholomew).
3. Miss Chappell was charged related to this incident in Bartholomew County with the Offense of Theft, Class A Misdemeanor. This report will not detail the specific factual allegations relating to the Bartholomew County charge for that is a matter of public record and not pertinent to the ultimate issue in this report, which is Miss Chappell's death.
4. Miss Chappell was charged related to that incident in Jackson County with the Offenses of Escape, a Level 4 Felony; three (3) counts of Resisting Law Enforcement, Level 6 Felony; Theft, Level 6 Felony; Leaving the Scene of an Accident, Level 6 Felony; Reckless Driving, Class A Misdemeanor; and Possession of Marijuana, Class B Misdemeanor. This report will not detail the specific factual allegations relating to the Jackson County charges for that is a matter of

public record and not pertinent to the ultimate issue in this report, which is Miss Chappell's death, though the charged offenses will be listed under the *Formal Charges Filed Against Ta'Neasha Chappell* section of this report.

5. When a person allegedly commits crimes in multiple counties as part of a continuous or closely related set of events, then one county may file all criminal charges, including the charges that occurred in other counties. Other counties may also file the same charges, but a person may only be convicted once for any specific crime (ultimately, only one of the theft charges - Bartholomew County or Jackson County – could have resulted in a conviction for that crime).

6. Miss Chappell, not having bonded out of jail while her Jackson County case was pending, was still in custody in the Jackson County Jail as of July 16, 2021.

7. On July 16, 2021, Miss Chappell was transported from the Jackson County Jail, located in Brownstown, Indiana, to the Schneck Medical Center, located in Seymour, Indiana which is the closest hospital to the Jackson County Jail.

8. Miss Chappell passed away at the Schneck Medical Center on July 16, 2021.

9. On July 17, 2021, Jackson County Sheriff Rick Meyer requested that the Indiana State Police conduct the investigation into Miss Chappell's death. The Jackson County Sheriff's Department had initiated the death investigation on July 16, 2021, prior to turning over the investigation to the Indiana State Police.

10. The Jackson County Jail has an extensive video system. The Indiana State Police and the Office of the Jackson County Prosecuting Attorney viewed all videos in which Miss Chappell appeared when she was initially booked into the Jackson County Jail on May 26, 2021, and all videos in which Miss Chappell appeared during the relevant time frame until she left the jail on July 16, 2021. The Indiana State Police and the Office of the Jackson County Prosecuting

Attorney reviewed medical records, spoke with medical and laboratory personnel, reviewed communications with Miss Chappell, including phone calls, emails, video phone calls, written correspondence, listened to all jail intercom communications between Miss Chappell and jail staff, and interviewed inmates, law enforcement officers, and jail staff who had contact with Miss Chappell at her initial book in and during the days of July 15-16, 2021.

11. The Indiana State Police had multiple meetings with Miss Chappell's family and attorney, received information from them, and investigated that information.

12. Throughout the investigation by the Indiana State Police the Office of the Jackson County Prosecuting Attorney has communicated regularly with Indiana State Police investigators. After the Indiana State Police tendered the results of their completed investigation into the death of Miss Chappell to the Office of the Jackson County Prosecuting Attorney, this office thoroughly reviewed the investigation.

FORMAL CHARGES FILED AGAINST TA'NEASHA CHAPPELL

On June 3, 2021, the Office of the Jackson County Prosecuting Attorney filed an Information (term used for the charging document) against Miss Chappell charging her with the following offenses (omitting the caption and footing):

Count 1 – Escape, Level 4 Felony: *The undersigned says that on or about May 26, 2021 in Jackson County, State of Indiana, Ta'Neasha L. Chappell did intentionally flee from lawful detention and in committing said act the defendant inflicted bodily injury on Korry Clark contrary to the form of the statutes in such cases made and provided by I.C. 35-44.1-3-4(a) and against the peace and dignity of the State of Indiana.*

Count 2 – Resisting Law Enforcement, Level 6 Felony: *The undersigned says that on or about May 26, 2021 in Jackson County, State of Indiana, Ta'Neasha L. Chappell did knowingly flee*

from Korry Clark, a law enforcement officer, after said officer identified himself by visible or audible means and visibly or audibly ordered Ta'Neasha L. Chappell to stop and in committing said act Ta'Neasha L. Chappell inflicted bodily injury on or otherwise caused bodily injury to Korry Clark contrary to the form of the statutes in such cases made and provided by I.C. 35-44.1-3-1(a)(3) and I.C. 35-44.1-3-1(c)(1)(B)(ii) and against the peace and dignity of the State of Indiana.

Count 3 - Resisting Law Enforcement, Level 6 Felony: *The undersigned says that on or about May 26, 2021 in Jackson County, State of Indiana, Ta'Neasha L. Chappell did knowingly flee from Korry Clark, a law enforcement officer, after said officer identified himself by visible or audible means and visibly or audibly ordered Ta'Neasha L. Chappell to stop and in committing said act Ta'Neasha L. Chappell used a vehicle contrary to the form of the statutes in such cases made and provided by I.C. 35-44.1-3-1(a)(3) and I.C. 35-44.1-3-1(c)(1)(A) and against the peace and dignity of the State of Indiana.*

Count 4 - Resisting Law Enforcement, Level 6 Felony: *The undersigned says that on or about May 26, 2021 in Jackson County, State of Indiana, Ta'Neasha Chappell did knowingly flee from Jim Haehl, a law enforcement officer, after said officer identified himself by visible or audible means and visibly or audibly ordered Ta'Neasha L. Chappell to stop and in committing said act Ta'Neasha L. Chappell inflicted bodily injury on or otherwise caused bodily injury to Jim Haehl contrary to the form of the statutes in such cases made and provided by I.C. 35-44.1-3-1(a)(3) and I.C. 35-44.1-3-1(c)(1)(B)(ii) and against the peace and dignity of the State of Indiana.*

Count 5 – Theft, Level 6 Felony: *The undersigned says that on or about May 26, 2021 in Bartholomew County, State of Indiana, Ta'Neasha L. Chappell, did knowingly or intentionally exert unauthorized control over the property of Polo Ralph Lauren, to-wit: merchandise for sale*

with the intent to deprive Polo Ralph Lauren of any part of the use or value of the property, said property having a value of at least seven hundred fifty dollars and less than the value of fifty thousand dollars contrary to the form of the statutes in such cases made and provided by I.C. 35-43-4-2(a) and I.C. 35-43-4-2(a)(1)(A) and against the peace and dignity of the State of Indiana.

Count 6 – Leaving the Scene of an Accident, Level 6 Felony: *The undersigned says that on or about May 26, 2021 in Jackson County, State of Indiana, Ta'Neasha L. Chappell, being the driver of a vehicle that was involved in an accident with Jonathan Cain did fail to stop and remain at the scene of the accident, did fail to give her name, address, registration number of the vehicle she was driving, and driver's license, and/or did fail to give notice of the accident, with the accident resulting in moderate bodily injury to Jonathan Cain contrary to the form of the statutes in such cases made and provided by I.C. 9-26-1-1.1(a)(3) and I.C. 9-26-1-1.1(b)(2)(A) and against the peace and dignity of the State of Indiana.*

Count 7 – Reckless Driving, Class A Misdemeanor I.C. 9-21-8-52(a)(1): *The undersigned says that on or about May 26, 2021 in Jackson County, State of Indiana, Ta'Neasha L. Chappell did operate a vehicle and recklessly drove at an unreasonable high rate of speed under the circumstances as to endanger the safety or property of others and/or block the proper flow of traffic and so as to cause bodily injury to Korry Clark and/or Jonathan Cain contrary to the form of the statutes in such cases made and provided by I.C. 9-21-8-52(a)(1) and against the peace and dignity of the State of Indiana.*

Count 8 – Possession of Marijuana, Class A Misdemeanor I.C. 35-48-4-11(a)(1): *The undersigned says that on or about May 26, 2021 in Jackson County, State of Indiana, Ta'Neasha Chappell did knowingly or intentionally possess marijuana (pure or adulterated) contrary to the*

form of the statutes in such cases made and provided by I.C. 35-48-4-11(a)(1) and against the peace and dignity of the State of Indiana.

INITIAL COURT APPEARANCE AND BAIL HEARING

On June 3, 2021, an Initial Hearing was conducted in Miss Chappell's case, wherein she was advised by the Circuit Court Judge of the charges filed against her, advised of her legal and constitutional rights, and an inquiry was made regarding her representation by an attorney. After taking into consideration Miss Chappell's prior criminal history, the Judge set her a cash bond of four thousand dollars (\$4,000). The Judge also set for her a pretrial conference/omnibus date of July 20, 2021, at 9:45 a.m. and a jury trial date of November 23, 2021, at 8:30 a.m.

Upon a motion filed by Miss Chappell's attorney for a bond [bail] review, a hearing was held on July 8, 2021. At that hearing evidence and argument was presented to the judge regarding Miss Chappell's criminal history as well as the defendant testifying that she had Sickle Cell and other medical issues. After hearing the evidence and argument of the prosecutor and the defense counsel, the judge denied the defendant's request for a bond [bail] reduction.

MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT TA'NEASHA CHAPPELL

KNOWN TO THE JACKSON COUNTY JAIL STAFF

On Wednesday May 26, 2021, Miss Chappell was booked into the Jackson County Jail located in Brownstown, Indiana, following her arrest. A standard procedure upon someone being booked into the Jackson County Jail would be a medical assessment of the inmate. The medical assessment consists of asking the new inmate a series of questions concerning health and medical needs. The Jackson County Jail Nurse told the Indiana State Police that no one completed the medical assessment on Miss Chappell on May 26, 2021, but the Jail Nurse did state that Miss Chappell told him that she was not taking any medications and that she had no ongoing illnesses.

Jackson County Jail records and staff interviews state that Miss Chappell never complained of any medical issues and never requested medical assistance of any kind until July 15, 2021.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS OF JULY 15, 2021 AND JULY 16, 2021

WITHIN THE JACKSON COUNTY JAIL

On July 15, 2021, at 4:47 p.m. Miss Chappell contacts jail staff and says, “I’m throwing up blood.” She also said, “I left it in the toilet so you can see.”

A jail employee went to Miss Chappell’s cell and looked in her toilet. The jail employee observed no blood in the toilet but did see a clear to light green substance that appeared to be mucus. Miss Chappell also complained of having a sore throat.

Shortly after 10:00 p.m. Miss Chappell called her fiancé by phone and told her fiancé that she had felt sick all day, that her stomach and head hurt, and that her body felt hot.

At 11:28 p.m. Miss Chappell’s cell mate asked to be moved because Miss Chappell was vomiting.

Sometime after lockdown, which occurs at 11:00 p.m., a jail employee called the Jail Nurse and told the Jail Nurse that Miss Chappell complained of feeling sick and vomiting. the Jail Nurse informed the jail employee that he would see Miss Chappell in the morning.

On more than one occasion overnight Miss Chappell used the jail intercom system to contact jail staff, informed jail staff she felt sick, and asked to go to the hospital.

On five occasions overnight jail employees went to Miss Chappell’s cell to check on her.

At 8:33 a.m. July 16, 2021, a jail employee requested assistance for Miss Chappell, stating that Miss Chappell reported to him that she had been spitting up blood.

At 8:45 a.m. the Jail Nurse visited Miss Chappell in her cell, took her blood pressure and temperature, and determined that she was alert and oriented with normal vitals.

At 9:57 a.m. a jail employee took Miss Chappell's temperature and measured it at 99.7 degrees.

At 10:48 a.m. Miss Chappell exited her cell wearing only soiled underwear.

Thereafter Miss Chappell again told jail staff and other inmates that she needed help.

At 12:26 p.m. Miss Chappell walked to the front of the jail where jail employees could more closely monitor her, escorted by jail staff, and was placed in a holding cell with other female inmates.

During this time frame, Miss Chappell told jail staff that she had sickle cell disease.

At 12:58 p.m. jail staff escorted Miss Chappell to a private holding cell, and jail staff helped Miss Chappell walk.

While in the private holding cell Miss Chappell removes all her clothing, stumbles around the cell, falls, gets up, and at one point hits her on head on the side of a metal bed frame.

Jail staff repeatedly checks on Miss Chappell during this time frame.

At 3:15 p.m. jail staff call for an ambulance.

At 3:29 p.m. ambulance personnel arrive and transport Miss Chappell to Schneck Medical Center.

MEDICAL TREATMENT OF TA'NEASHA CHAPPELL

After initial EMT assessment of Miss Chappell at the Jackson County Jail, Miss Chappell was transported to the Schneck Medical Center Emergency Room in Seymour, Indiana arriving at approximately 4:00 p.m. Ambulance personnel who transported Miss Chappell to Schneck Medical Center recorded Miss Chappell with blood pressure of 155/31, a strong and regular

pulse of 90-100, and rapid, regular breathing. Ambulance personnel noted that Miss Chappell had warm and dry skin, yellow discoloration (noted possibly jaundice or dried regurgitated bile), and that Miss Chappell was alert and responsive to questioning (head shakes or nods) but non-verbal.

Schneck Emergency Room staff was provided information from transporting EMTs that Miss Chappell had reportedly been vomiting the night before. An initial evaluation of Miss Chappell showed her vital signs to be stable and no indication of a fever. An IV was started to get fluids into Miss Chappell as well as starting the process of obtaining blood and urine samples for diagnostic testing purposes. A nurse noted that Miss Chappell had yellowing around her lips and eyes and thought that Miss Chappell could be experiencing liver failure. A urine sample revealed that Miss Chappell's urine was dark red, which possibly indicated a bad urinary tract infection, sepsis, or cancer.

A Schneck doctor remembered treating Miss Chappell at the time of her arrest on May 26, 2021, learned that Miss Chappell had informed Schneck staff that day that she had sickle cell disease, and wondered if the jaundice Miss Chappell had on July 16, 2021, could be indicative of a sickle cell attack. The doctor also thought that they should consider the possibility that Miss Chappell had ingested a toxic substance such as antifreeze or methanol or that she had liver disease.

Schneck staff ordered a variety of tests on Miss Chappell. Before any tests could be completed, Miss Chappell stopped breathing. Medical personnel continued treatment of Miss Chappell until she ultimately passed away at approximately 5:45 p.m.

In attempting to determine what was wrong with Miss Chappell, Schneck medical personnel used a process called differential diagnosis. Differential diagnosis is a process wherein

a doctor differentiates between two or more conditions that could be behind a person's symptoms. When making a diagnosis, a doctor may have a single theory as to the cause of a person's symptoms. They may then order tests to confirm their suspected diagnosis. In using this approach, Schneck medical staff considered the possibility that Miss Chappell was experiencing liver failure, sepsis, cancer, possible ingestion of anti-freeze, or sickle cell disease.

AUTOPSY FINDINGS AND TOXICOLOGY TESTING FOLLOW-UP

On July 18, 2021, a forensic pathologist performed an autopsy on Miss Chappell to determine her cause and manner of death. The forensic pathologist was provided information by personnel from the Jackson County Sheriff's Department and Coroner's Office that Miss Chappell had been transported from the Jackson County Jail to the Schneck Medical Center following abnormal behavior and green liquid vomitus with a suspected antifreeze ingestion. The autopsy findings of the forensic pathologist were a cause of death listed as a probable toxicity of unknown substance with manner of death being undetermined.

The Indiana State Police investigation tracked down the source of the hearsay information provided to the forensic pathologist as to the suspected antifreeze ingestion. It was determined that a Jackson County Sheriff's Department detective had responded to the Schneck Medical Center and had spoken to medical staff there after Miss Chappell's passing. The detective heard Schneck staff make the comment that the symptoms Miss Chappell was having were similar to antifreeze poisoning patients they had treated in the past. That information in turn was eventually conveyed to the forensic pathologist.

Blood, urine, and vitreous fluid from Miss Chappell were tested as part of the pathologist's forensic autopsy, including testing for propylene glycol, a chemical component of

anti-freeze. The initial forensic lab test results indicated the following: “Examination of the specimen(s) submitted did not reveal any positive findings of toxicological significance...”

The Indiana State Police had additional toxicological testing done by another crime laboratory wherein the lab was specifically requested to look for ethylene glycol, diethylene glycol and propylene glycol. The results of the laboratory testing for those substances were also negative. The forensic pathologist’s cause of death finding of a probable toxicity of unknown substance, is as stated, a “probable” designation and not a determination of a reasonable medical certainty. The possibility of a toxic substance ingestion by Miss Chappell was investigated by the Indiana State Police in light of anti-freeze poisoning being one of several possibilities that hospital emergency room personnel had considered as a possible cause of Miss Chappell’s medical condition. Laboratory toxicology testing conducted revealed no anti-freeze in Ms. Chappell’s body or bodily fluids

Though not referenced in the autopsy report, photographs of Miss Chappell show what appears to be a bruise on her forehead. A review of jail video shows that when Miss Chappell was in a private holding cell when she was the only occupant in that cell, she lost her balance and hit her head on a metal bunk bed prior to laying down. This video evidence substantiates how this injury came to be on Miss Chappell’s forehead.

What is clear from the results of the autopsy is that Miss Chappell did not die of an inflicted injury. To rephrase, Miss Chappell did not die of any puncture wounds, asphyxiation, or blunt force trauma (note that the investigation determined that Miss Chappell had old gunshot wounds, but those wounds predated all contacts with Miss Chappell relevant to this investigation). The autopsy also determined that the manner of death is “undetermined” (manners of death can be categorized as natural, homicide, suicide, accidental or undetermined).

ALLEGATIONS MADE BY INMATES

The Indiana State Police interviewed every inmate who had contact with Miss Chappell, and also interviewed everyone who said they had information about Miss Chappell's death.

One inmate said that two jail employees threw Miss Chappell to the ground when they brought her to a jail holding cell on July 16, 2021. Both the Indiana State Police and the Office of the Jackson County Prosecuting Attorney viewed video of Miss Chappell's arrival in that holding cell on July 16, 2021. This was at 12:28 p.m. Miss Chappell walks into the holding cell, and a jail employee is holding onto Miss Chappell's shirt from behind. Miss Chappell slumps to the floor of the cell, and the jail employee releases his grip on the back of Miss Chappell's shirt. This video evidence refutes the inmate's allegation that Miss Chappell was thrown to the floor.

More than one inmate speculated that other inmates had put a cleaning agent into Miss Chappell's food and/or drink to poison her. Despite extensive investigation, the Indiana State Police has not been able to substantiate any truth to these allegations. The Jackson County Jail provides inmates with a cleaning product for cleaning their cells and common areas. The Jackson County Sheriff's Department collected a sample of the cleaning product and collected bodily fluid samples from Miss Chappell's body for analysis. The Indiana State Police spoke with doctors and chemists and attempted to find a laboratory to test the cleaning agent. The doctors and chemists said that the cleaning agent would not cause death. Despite contacting laboratories all over the United States, the Indiana State Police could not find a laboratory that could test bodily fluid samples or food containers for the presence of the cleaning agent. Attorneys hired by Miss Chappell's family informed the Indiana State Police that they had also had testing performed on some food containers that had belonged to Miss Chappell, and they advised that they also could not find the presence of the cleaning agent or any poison.

There is no competent non-speculative evidence to show any ingestion of a cleaning agent by Miss Chappell.

INAPPLICABILITY OF CRIMINAL HOMICIDE

A duty of a Prosecuting Attorney in reviewing a death investigation is to determine if the death is the result of a criminal homicide. If, and only if the death is determined to be the result of a criminal homicide, then to determine if sufficient evidence exists to charge a specific person(s) with an applicable criminal homicide. Setting aside vehicular homicides (which are inapplicable to this investigation), there are four (4) criminal homicides that are reviewed: murder, voluntary manslaughter, involuntary manslaughter and reckless homicide.

As referenced earlier in this report, the Indiana State Police investigation did not uncover any evidence indicating that Miss Chappell was knowingly or intentionally killed by another person, whether a jail employee or fellow inmate, nor any evidence that her death was caused by a knowing or intentional act with the purpose to harm her. Therefore, there is no evidence that Miss Chappell was the victim of murder, voluntary manslaughter, or involuntary manslaughter.

The offense of reckless homicide has a different *mens rea* (intent element) than the aforementioned homicides, that being “reckless.” The definition of reckless is a “plain, conscious, and unjustifiable disregard of harm that might result and the disregard involves a substantial deviation from acceptable standards of conduct.” An example of a “reckless” conduct would be a person intentionally firing gunshots into the air in an area of heavy population concentration. Bullets that go up in the air must come down, and if a bullet were to strike someone and injure or kill them, that can be reckless conduct if the person is intentionally firing a deadly weapon in a manner that is in “plain, conscious, and unjustifiable disregard of harm that might result.”

“Reckless” culpability is not the same thing and is very different than the civil law concept of “negligence.” “Negligence” is essentially a breach of a reasonable duty of care owed by a person or entity to another person.

The afternoon of July 15, 2021, Miss Chappell told the jail staff that she had been throwing up blood. Jail staff investigated and saw no blood. Over a period of several hours, her conditions gradually worsened. Beginning around noon on December 16, 2021, Miss Chappell’s condition began deteriorating more rapidly. Miss Chappell received some medical care by Jackson County Jail personnel. Miss Chappell was relocated within the confines of the Jackson County Jail by jail officers to be able to more closely observe her medical condition, and Miss Chappell was eventually transported by ambulance to the nearest hospital for medical care. The care administered to Miss Chappell both at the jail and at the hospital was unsuccessful in saving her life. Miss Chappell was not denied medical care. Whether a person or entity had a duty of reasonable care towards a person, and if that care was sufficient or a breach of that duty of reasonable care are matters of civil law and not criminal law. What is clear is that efforts were made by Jackson County Jail personal to address the claimed medical needs of Miss Chappell and the timing of the application of medical care or mis-appreciation of the seriousness of the medical circumstances of Miss Chappell, if applicable, is not “reckless” conduct toward Miss Chappell and there her death was not the result of a reckless homicide.

PROSECUTOR FINDINGS

The Office of the Jackson County Prosecuting Attorney finds that no crimes were committed by inmates or employees of the Jackson County Jail related to the death of Ta’Neasha Chappell. As stated previously, the focus of this review is whether any crimes were committed by inmates or employees of the Jackson County Jail during the time leading up to the death of

Ta'Neasha Chappell. This report makes no findings and no conclusions about the standard of care provided by employees of the Jackson County Jail.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey A. Chalfant", written over a horizontal line.

Jeffrey A. Chalfant
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Jackson County