

NEWS

St. Paul gunman killed after firing on cops; officer wounded (w/ video)

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Chue Xiong's older brother feared the 22-year-old would hurt himself after he stole a gun from the family home.

About 40 minutes after his brother reported the theft to St. Paul police, Chue Xiong reportedly opened fire on two officers, wounding one. Police shot back, killing the St. Paul man Tuesday, Oct. 24.

St. Paul officer Daniel King was in a moving, marked squad car when he was shot in a parking lot in the Payne-Phalen neighborhood, police said Wednesday. Police said he was in stable condition. King's partner was also in the squad car.

"We were within the slightest angle of having two dead officers," said Dave Titus, St. Paul Police Federation president. "That's how obviously serious this incident was."

The shootings came less than eight hours after another officer-involved shooting in St. Paul, also in the Payne-Phalen area. In that unrelated case, police fatally shot a 41-year-old man during a narcotics investigation.

Police say they can't recall another day in St. Paul with two fatal officer-involved shootings. Pioneer Press archives found nothing similar going back to 1948.



“We had two incidents yesterday that are well beyond what we (the police department) would call ordinary. But they’re incidents that our department will fight through, and we’ll recover from,” St. Paul police Assistant Chief Robert Thomasser said Wednesday.

Police received the report about Chue Xiong taking a gun from his family’s home in the 1100 block of Flandrau Street, near Maryland and White Bear avenues, at 10:50 p.m. Tuesday.

The report said officers responded to the address, where someone “reported two weapons stolen, a 12-gauge shotgun with ammunition and a compound bow with arrows.” The suspect was gone.

Two other officers, King and Brian Wanschura, noticed a man about 11:30 p.m. in the area of Payne and Minnehaha avenues carrying what appeared to be a long gun, police said. The man was in a parking lot behind Hope Community Academy at 720 Payne Ave., next to the police department’s Eastern District building.

“As they drove their squad into the parking lot, the suspect opened fire, striking the squad and one of our St. Paul police officers,” said Police Chief Thomas Smith said at a news briefing early Wednesday. “The officers returned fire, striking the suspect,” who died at the scene.

King, with St. Paul police for nearly 11 years, was conscious and talking afterward, said Smith, who went to Regions Hospital to visit with the officer and his wife. Soon after the shooting, the police chief said King was expected to undergo surgery.

King was recovering at the hospital Wednesday, police said. Police declined to say where he was shot.

“He’s been through a traumatic thing,” Thomasser said. “He’s a tough guy, he’s a strong guy, and he’s surrounded by family.”

A check of court records shows no convictions for Chue Xiong in Minnesota. His mother, Mai Vang, described her son as a good boy who went to college for a year.

Chue Xiong had taken the gun from an older brother, who was concerned he might do something bad with it, so he called police, Mai Vang said. Another relative believed someone picked up Chue Xiong after that, but didn’t know what happened next. Police said Chue Xiong was on foot when they encountered him.

The family was upset Wednesday afternoon, saying they didn’t know what was happening — Chue Xiong hadn’t been home, and police hadn’t yet confirmed his death to them.



Though Chue Xiong's brother was worried he might kill himself with the gun, he said he didn't know a reason.

Police spokesman Howie Padilla said part of the investigation will be looking into Chue Xiong's motives.

Titus, the police union president, said in a statement Wednesday, "The past 24 hours have been a perilous time, with two separate officer-involved shootings. It is a stark reminder of the dangers St. Paul police officers, and officers throughout Minnesota, face each and every day."

The statement continued, "The two incidents prompted quick and decisive actions by these officers during extremely dangerous situations. The use of deadly force is never an easy decision, nor a decision officers take lightly. Our officers acted professionally and in accordance with their training to best protect our community."

Smith called Tuesday a tough day in St. Paul.

"A very dangerous day, and I think ... these are a lot of the serious challenges that police officers face every day in their job," he said. "They can go from responding to a theft call to someone who is trying to take your life. It's a very dangerous job, and we're just very, very lucky that our officer was not injured more severely than he was."

Thomasser said, "I will say this: We are very much working hard to determine what's leading to this, what has led to these incidents, and we'll get to the bottom of how to prevent these things in the future."

Wanschura, King's partner, is a four-year veteran of the department. He's been placed on administrative leave, which is standard after officer-involved shootings.

Wanschura was involved in another shooting in January. During a high-volume drug bust, as King and Wanschura chased a man, the suspect allegedly pointed a gun at Wanschura, according to a criminal complaint. Wanschura shot the man in the buttocks.

The man was charged with first-degree assault of a police officer in the case, but his attorney insisted he never pointed a gun and he was found not guilty.

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