

Man reportedly bites two officers during fight

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A man from Pinedale, N.M., has a long list of charges after a violent fight with police officers in which he bit two of them.

On June 27, around 11:26 am, Gallup Police Officer Matthew Strandy was dispatched to the Ranchito Motel, 1009 W. Coal Ave., when Officer Christopher Dawes called over the radio and requested that he help out with a violent situation.

When Strandy got to the motel, he noticed Dawes and Officer John Gonzales on the ground physically struggling with a man who was later identified as Elliot George. Lt. Mark Spencer was also at the scene, standing outside of a doorway with his taser in hand.

According to Strandy's report, Spencer initiated his taser while Dawes and Gonzales were telling George, 26, to stop resisting. George was laying on the ground, with his hands clenched, still trying to fight the officers despite having been tased.

The officers were able to roll George onto his stomach, but he was still resisting while they tried to handcuff him.

Once George was finally detained, Dawes and Gonzales said that they'd been injured during the fight. Both officers said that George bit them several times. Gonzales had an open wound on his left index finger and he also said his right shoulder had been injured. He also had multiple bite marks on his arms and hands. Dawes also had an open wound on his left index finger and several bite marks on his arms.

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Strandy called for an ambulance so that medical personnel could look over the officers' injuries and George's condition as well.

Strandy then pulled the taser barbs from George and sat him up in an effort to get him to calm down. When paramedics looked George over, they said he might have dislocated his right shoulder during the fight. Strandy drove George to Rehoboth McKinley Christian Health Care Services. Gonzales and Dawes were also treated at the hospital.

Strandy was able to talk to Dawes and Gonzales at the hospital and got their statements.

Dawes explained that he'd been at the motel investigating a possible robbery. Both officers said that when they got to the motel they met with a female victim, who pointed out a room where the robbery suspect and another man had been staying. The victim accused George of stealing from her. According to the officers, the woman began yelling at George, asking him where her personal items were.

When the officers asked George to step out of the room to speak with them, Dawes noticed several large bulges in his pockets, and George allegedly kept trying to reach into his pockets.

Dawes said he was worried that George had a weapon in his pocket, so he tried to handcuff the man. When he tried to do so, George pulled away and turned towards Dawes and Gonzales in a fighting stance.

According to the officers, that's when the fight began. At one point, Gonzales tried to pull out his taser to try and stop George, but it didn't work.

Eventually the three men ended up on the ground in a pile, and that's when George grabbed Dawes's knife and tried to stab the officer. Gonzales drew his pistol, and he said he did so because he believed he would have to use it to stop George from stabbing Dawes. Gonzales said he began yelling "knife!" repeatedly.

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George ended up dropping the knife without harming either of the officers. Spencer was finally able to intervene and tase George, but George continued to fight despite being tased.

The situation wasn't completely under control until Strandy arrived.

Strandy was able to search George's pants, and he found a glass pipe with black tar-like residue inside it. He also found several small baggies with tinfoil inside.

George was charged with two counts of battery upon a peace officer, one count of aggravated assault upon a police officer with a deadly weapon, four counts of resisting and evading an officer, and one count of drug paraphernalia possession. His preliminary hearing is scheduled for July 13.

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