



Rutherford County Sheriff's Office

MICHAEL S. FITZHUGH
SHERIFF

December 7, 2017

For Immediate Release

RCSO Detectives Close Out Inmate Death Investigation

The Sheriff's Office received notification on Wednesday, November 20, 2017, Joseph Allen Bauer, 45, of Murfreesboro had succumbed to self-inflicted injuries after Detention staff found him hanging in his cell during a routine count of inmates on Thursday, November 16, 2017.

Unable to make a \$2,500 bail, Mr. Bauer was being held on the charge of misdemeanor merchant theft resulting from a Smyrna Police Department criminal investigation on Wednesday, November 15, 2017.

Detention Officers began cardiopulmonary resuscitation and called the in-house medical staff who continued CPR until Emergency Medical Services paramedics took over. He was transported to St. Thomas Rutherford Hospital. The Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigation Division (CID) received assistance from the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation after notifying the District Attorney's Office.

Sheriff Fitzhugh stated, "Sheriff's Office employees are trained to respond to such events. The Adult Detention Center is committed and adherent to guidelines established by the Tennessee Corrections Institute (TCI)."

Mr. Bauer was released on recognizance (ROR) after Smyrna's General Sessions Court was notified of his condition. "Situations arise where an ROR is a better solution. Aside from staffing additional Deputies to provide around the clock hospital security, easing security restrictions for next of kin is a more equitable approach," according to Sheriff Fitzhugh.

CID actively investigated the incident, although Detectives received notification Mr. Bauer's family instructed hospital staff not to release any information to the Rutherford County Sheriff's Office. Aside from CID's investigation, the Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) conducted an internal investigation.