

**STATE OF ARIZONA
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS SECTION
REPORT**

DATE SUBMITTED TO SUPERVISOR: September 10, 2020

CASE NUMBER: SIS-2020-0323

DATE APPROVED BY SUPERVISOR: September 10, 2020

CASE NAME: San Luis / Guillermina Fuentes

REPORT TYPE: Yuma County SO Contact and Collaboration - Supplement #1

AGENT: Knuth, William

SUPERVISOR: Supervising Special Agent John White

On August 7, 2020, I became aware of a Yuma County Sheriff's Office (YCSO) investigation regarding possible ballot tampering at a polling place in San Luis, Arizona. On August 10, 2020, I spoke to the investigator handling the case in Yuma County, Sgt. Hemstreet. At the time of our conversation, Sgt. Hemstreet stated he was in the process of gathering information and that approximately forty potentially suspicious ballots had been secured by the Yuma County Sheriff's Office and he had sent those ballots for latent fingerprint processing. On August 13, 2020, it was determined that I would travel to Yuma to meet with Sgt. Hemstreet and assist in the investigation.

Upon arrival in Yuma, I met with Sgt. Hemstreet at a YCSO investigations building located on Pico Avenue. We spent the morning reviewing information and evidence gathered by Sgt. Hemstreet. I viewed a recording taken by Gary Snyder at a polling place located at 1015 North Main Street in San Luis, Arizona. Snyder was a write-in candidate for San Luis City Council in the August 4, 2020 primary election. The video recording showed a group of individuals gathered around a table. Some of the subjects are wearing blue shirts on which was printed "Juntos Saldremos" in white letters with "Adelante!" written in red lettering underneath. The backs of the blue shirts list candidates supported by this group of individuals; Matias Rosales, Gloria Torres, and Luis Cabrera. All are candidates for San Luis City Council. The table where the individuals are gathered has several more blue shirts on it and some other items.

As the video begins, a female in a dark shirt and black and white striped pants approaches the table. I was informed by Sgt. Hemstreet that this female has been identified as Alma Juarez. Juarez walks around the table and contacts a female in a blue shirt and light colored open top hat. I was informed by Sgt. Hemstreet that this female has been identified as Guillermina Fuentes. Fuentes walks away momentarily and another female at the table in a blue shirt and blue hat hands Juarez a small piece of paper. I was informed that this slip of paper is a list of the names of the candidates previously mentioned. Juarez can be seen holding a ballot envelope. Fuentes returns to the table and once again begins to speak with Juarez. Fuentes is seen taking the ballot envelope from Juarez, it is clear in the video that the ballot envelope is unsealed. Fuentes is viewed picking up a pen or pencil and appears to write something on the ballot envelope. Fuentes is then seen pulling the ballot partially out of the envelope and appears to be making marks consistent with filling in the spaces on the ballot to make a candidate selection. Fuentes then slides the ballot back into the envelope, takes a water bottle from the table, wets her finger and seals the ballot envelope. After the envelope is sealed, Fuentes is seen removing what appear to be several other sealed ballot envelopes from a folder on the table. She hands the stack of ballot envelopes to Juarez who begins to walk toward the polling location.

After reviewing the video and other information, Sgt. Hemstreet and I traveled to San Luis to attempt to contact subjects who may provide information regarding the investigation. Det. Jesser from the YCSO also joined us in the event we required a Spanish speaker. Throughout the afternoon, we attempted contact with a number of individuals who may have information regarding the investigation. We were able to speak to Justice of the Peace in Precinct 2, Juan Guerrero,

The interaction with Guerrero occurred in his office and was recorded by Hemstreet and Jesser's body worn cameras. These recordings have been made available to me to include in my case. Guerrero spoke mainly of

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the long standing issues surrounding elections in San Luis. He stated that San Luis is a small tight knit community and it is his belief that a small group of individuals have a significant amount of influence, particularly regarding the outcome of elections. Guerrero believes that this group, including Guillermina Fuentes, the suspect in this case, is exchanging money for the ballots of subjects within the community. Guerrero cited his 2018 election as Justice of the Peace as an example. Prior to that election, Guerrero had approved a restraining order against an influential member of the aforementioned group. Guerrero stated that in his previous election to office he had won with an overwhelming amount of support, however, after issuing the restraining order, he won the 2018 election by a very slim margin. Guerrero attributes this to the groups influence.

I was informed by Hemstreet that Guillermina Fuentes had made a previous complaint to election officials regarding a group called "Chispas". We determined that we would contact Fuentes regarding this complaint and see if she made any comments regarding our current investigation which may be useful. We made contact with Fuentes in her home,

The interaction was recorded by Hemstreet and Jesser's body worn cameras. These recordings have been made available to me to include in my case. Hemstreet asked Fuentes questions regarding "Chispas". Fuentes stated that she had found that members of "Chispas" had approached a number of people in the community with the purpose of registering them to vote. Fuentes stated that through this process, people had been "re-registered" which resulted in them not receiving their mail in ballots. While speaking to Hemstreet, Fuentes appeared to make an unintentional slip and commented on "buying ballots". When I clarified with Fuentes that she had said that she laughed and stated words to the effect of "that's what people accuse us of doing", however that was not the case.

I spent my remaining time in Yuma collecting items related to the case and meeting with Yuma County Recorder Robyn Pouquette. Prior to leaving, it was determined that the case would be handled by the Arizona Attorney General's Office with assistance from Hemstreet.

Investigation Continues.

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