

# Activist

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cer Patrick Oborski had enough reasonable suspicion to detain Buehler about 1:30 a.m. outside a convenience store at Lamar Boulevard and 10th Street.

City prosecutor Matthew McCabe has asked jurors not be distracted by “all the bells and whistles” of the chaotic night, saying officers believed Buehler was a threat to their safety and had a right to arrest him. But defense lawyer Millie Thompson argued that her client had only been questioning and filming officers, rights protected under the First and Fourth Amendments.

Oborski and officer Robert Snider, testifying publicly for the first time about the incident, told jurors Buehler had rushed up and began shouting at them as they arrested a female passenger who had been yelling

and talking on the phone when Oborski was trying to perform a field sobriety test on a driver.

Oborski said he felt Buehler’s spit on him as the two engaged in a heated face-to-face argument and stressed that he didn’t know who Buehler was or whether he was intoxicated at nearly 2 a.m. on a holiday. “It was such an unusual situation,” the officer said.

But in cross-examination Friday, Oborski said Buehler hadn’t tried to physically interfere with the arrest.

Witnesses testified that Oborski and Snider had appeared overzealous in their use of power. Before the jury, Buehler at times fought back tears, testifying that he and his friend saw officers assaulting a woman. That passenger looked at them and screamed for help, he said, repeatedly asking them to please film the arrest.

Oborski shoved him multiple times before tell-

ing him to put his hands behind his back, Buehler testified, and later made him take two Breathalyzer tests. “You don’t know what ... happened,” Buehler said Oborski told him before closing the door of a patrol car. “You don’t interfere with police. You (expletive) with the wrong cop this time, and now you are going to pay.”

Buehler has said the incident led him to found the Peaceful Streets Project, in which members record encounters with authorities and post them online. He has since been arrested several more times for minor infractions while videotaping officers. A federal lawsuit he filed against the Police Department on civil rights violations is pending and has attracted the attention of the National Press Photographers Association.

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