



## **Harris County Precinct 8**

### **Phil Sandlin, Constable**

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#### **PRESS RELEASE**

December 21, 2020

A 34 year old Baytown man is facing charges after attacking a Precinct 8 Deputy and a civilian with a steel chain on Friday. Deputy M. Self was working an approved off duty job in the 17500 block of El Camino Real at approximately 12:15 PM on December 18, 2020. A white male with long red hair, later identified as 34 year old Thomas Alton Rachal, was found on the property and inside the Islamic Center. Rachal had previously been given a Criminal Trespass Warning for this location by an officer with the Houston Police Department just last week.

During this latest incident, a witness on site asked Rachal to leave the property, at which time he became irate and began to create a verbal disturbance. Deputy Self entered the building in order to make contact with the man. As Deputy Self approached him, Rachal reached into his pocket and pulled out a thick steel dog chain with a knot tied in it. Deputy Self advised that once this chain was pulled from the defendant's pocket, he began to swing it in an apparent attempt to strike the Deputy and cause him harm. Deputy Self drew his service weapon and ordered the defendant to drop the chain. The defendant refused and continued to swing, striking Deputy Self in the left ear and left side of his head and temple. Deputy Self lost his balance and fell to the ground as a result of the assault. Once on the ground, the defendant attempted to attack Deputy Self again when a witness intervened and raised his hand to shield the Deputy from being struck again. During the encounter, the witness was also struck by the weapon and sustained a bruise and small cut to his left forearm.

Rachal was ultimately taken into custody for the assaults without further incident. The Harris County District Attorney's Office was contacted and accepted charges of Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon on a Public Servant for his attack on the Deputy and Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon for assaulting the witness. He was transported to the Harris County Joint Processing Center and booked into jail where he is being held in lieu of a \$20,000 bond. Both the Deputy and the witness were treated for their injuries and are expected to make a full recovery.

Jason Finnen, Chief Deputy  
Harris County Precinct 8 Constable's Office