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Late-Night Patrol Leads to Firearm and Drug Arrests in St. Thomas

Special operations officers seize illegal firearm and narcotics from two men

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The VIPD has not provided mugshots of the suspects.

ST. THOMAS — The V.I. Police Department on Tuesday made firearm and drugs-related arrests in St. Thomas while on patrol.

According to court documents, just after midnight on Tuesday, special operations officers were patrolling Strand Gade when they spotted two men sitting in a black Nissan Altima with the doors open.

Officers watched the man in the passenger seat roll up what looked like a marijuana cigarette. Subsequently identified as Jimmar Hodge, the front seat passenger had a black backpack between his legs.

Officers approached the car and told Hodge to exit the vehicle, saying that he would need to be patted down for officer safety. He told police that there was nothing in the vehicle they needed to know about, but claimed ownership of the black backpack.

After the pat-down, police turned their attention to the bag and felt what they believed to be a firearm inside. A search of the backpack yielded a mason jar containing a substance that returned positive field test results for marijuana, as well as a scale, an empty 22 round magazine, and a Glock 22 .40 caliber firearm with an obliterated serial number. The gun had a round in the chamber and a full 15-round magazine. Hodge reportedly admitted that he did not have a license for the weapon.

Meanwhile, police found another backpack in the vehicle – this one was on the rear left passenger seat. This bag contained bags and jars of a substance that later tested positive for marijuana, as well as a “clay-like substance” which turned out to be heroin. Asked if this backpack was his, the other man – Kenneth Rogers III – directed police to speak with his lawyer.

Both men were arrested and charged with possession of drug paraphernalia. Rogers was also charged with possession of marijuana within 100 feet of a school, and two counts of possession of a controlled substance with intent to distribute. Meanwhile, Hodge is facing charges of possession of drug paraphernalia within 100 feet of a school, possession of an unlicensed firearm within 1000 feet of a school, and possession of a firearm with an obliterated serial number.

Both men were unable to post the initial bail as set - \$150,000 for Hodge and \$30,000 for Rogers – and thus were remanded into custody to await their first court appearance.

They appeared for their advice of rights hearings on Wednesday before Magistrate Simone VanHolten -Turnbull. While the record of those proceedings have not yet been made available to the public, a lack of any receipts or assessments entered into the system suggests that despite pre-trial release orders being given, the two men have not yet been able to satisfy the bail conditions imposed by Magistrate VanHolten-Turnbull.

The next court appearance for both Hodge and Rogers is scheduled for February 23.