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Leads Develop In Wathena Officer Attack

A suspect remains on the run, but progress is made in the search for his whereabouts, following the beating of a Wathena Police Officer Monday night.

Wathena Police Chief Raymond Hall says leads are developed, by working with other area agencies, on who is responsible for the injuries suffered by Officer Blaine Kennedy(Play Audio :17 seconds)

Hall says investigators are continuing the effort to find a motive behind why the male suspect attacked Officer Kennedy around 9:00 as he was making a routine patrol of Wathena's Mount Calvary Cemetery(Play Audio :24 seconds)

During his walk-through of the cemetery, Kennedy was approached by a man from the side path of a wooded area. When the officer addressed him, the man allegedly reached for Kennedy's gun, leading to a struggle. During the altercation, the suspect grabbed Kennedy's flashlight, using it to hit him in the back of the head, fleeing on foot after the assault.

Hall says Kennedy, who was treated for injuries at Saint Joseph's Heartland Regional Medical Center, is continuing to recover following his release(Play Audio :11 seconds)

Although authorities aren't yet ready to reveal specific details of who may have been behind the attack, Hall says the public should be on the look out for a man matching the suspect's description(Play Audio :22 seconds)

Immediately following the attack, the search for the suspect began, including use of a Kansas Highway Patrol Helicopter.

It's believe he fled the scene of the crime behind the wheel of a vehicle spotted near the cemetery around the time that Kennedy was beaten.