



## Hernando County Sheriff's Office

P.O. BOX 10070 – BROOKSVILLE, FL 34603-0070 FAX 352 796-0493 PHONE 352 754-6830

### Media Release

**From: Michael Terry**  
**Deputy PIO, 352-797-3608**

**Re: K-9 Maxx Apprehends Armed Suspect Hiding in Woods – 2022-35066**

**Date: November 29, 2022**

On 11-25-2022 at 11:46 p.m., Hernando County Sheriff's deputies were conducting proactive patrol in the area of State Road 50 and the Suncoast Parkway.

Deputies attempted to make a traffic stop on the operator of a motorcycle for an inoperable tag light. The motorcyclist proceeded to flee the area.

Deputies discontinued pursuit of the motorcycle as it traveled east on Wiscon Road at a high rate of speed. A few minutes later the motorcycle was observed abandoned in front of a home located on 6400 block of California Street. The motorcycle had run out of gas.

The operator of the motorcycle, who was later identified as **Jonathan Smullen DOB/04-11-1998**, proceeded to get off the motorcycle and flee into a nearby wooded area. Smullen was believed to be armed with two knives.

K-9 Maxx and his handler Deputy J. Jernigan soon arrived on scene and began searching for the suspect. K-9 Maxx was able locate and disarm the suspect by biting Smullen in the right arm. Smullen was transported to a local hospital for treatment of a dog bite.

He was then transported to the Hernando County Detention Center on charges of **Fleeing to Elude a Law Enforcement Officer, Resisting a Law Enforcement Officer, Carrying a Concealed Weapon, No Motorcycle Endorsement, and Driving While License is Suspended or Revoked.**

Smullen is being held on a no bond status due to a previous charge of Failure to Appear.

*The Office of Sheriff:*

*The Office of the Sheriff is established by the Florida Constitution. As a constitutional officer, the Sheriff has the exclusive authority to administer his or her agency and is responsible for preserving the peace throughout the entire county, carrying out the laws of the state, the orders of Florida courts, and the*

*ordinances of the Board of County Commissioners. The Sheriff is the chief law enforcement and correctional officer of the county.*

*Sheriff Al Nienhuis was initially appointed as the Sheriff of Hernando County by the Governor in January of 2011. He was then elected by the people of Hernando County in 2012, ran unopposed in 2016, and was re-elected in 2020. Sheriff Nienhuis remains accountable to the people of Hernando County.*