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For Immediate Release

Wayne County Prosecutor Kym L. Worthy Announces Charging Decisions In Four Cases

Today Wayne County Prosecutor Kym L. Worthy announced charging decisions in four cases.

Monica Conyers' Warrant Request Denied

On December 20, 2005, the complainant and Mr. Michael Fortner went to the Crossroads Bar located at 20143 Livernois in Detroit for a birthday party in his honor. The complainant admitted she had been drinking but denied being drunk.

Ms. Monica Conyers attended the birthday party and was speaking with Mr. Fortner when there was a physical altercation between the complainant and Ms. Conyers. The complainant claimed Ms. Conyers punched her in the face several times without provocation.

A thorough investigation conducted by the Detroit Police Department and the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office shows that the complainant's account cannot be corroborated by the witnesses to the altercation. In fact, Mr. Fortner who was in the best position to observe what happened said that the Complainant was aggressive and physical with Ms. Conyers. Ms. Conyers acted in self-defense to protect herself from the complainant's physical attack.

Mr. Fortner's observations have been corroborated by the majority of witnesses. The warrant request for Ms. Conyers will be denied.

Prosecutor Worthy said: "Whenever our Public Integrity Unit evaluates a case it is a serious matter. It was important to take the time to review all of the evidence in this case to make a fair determination of the facts. Our burden is proof beyond a reasonable doubt based upon credible evidence. After interviewing numerous witnesses, the version of the facts given by the complainant does not meet this burden. Even the complainant's companion did not corroborate her version of the events. We are satisfied that Ms. Conyers had the right to defend herself in this instance."

Melvindale Police Officer - Warrant Decisions

1. Police Officer Aldrich Assault Warrant

On September 8, 2004, Melvindale police officers were called to Mr. Thomas Shay's home located in the 19000 block of Harman Street in Melvindale to answer a complaint of disturbing the peace.

It was alleged by neighbors that Mr. Shay was turning his car alarm off and on. When officers responded to his house he denied the allegation. He was told that if the problem continued the car would be towed.

After the officers left, the car alarm was activated again. When officers responded to Mr. Shay's home again, he appeared to be drunk and was verbally abusive. Mr. Shay was repeatedly ordered to go back into his house while the car was being hooked up to a tow truck. When Mr. Shay left his porch and walked upon the officers, they ordered him down on the front lawn to effect an arrest. When he refused, officers forced him to the ground to gain control of him. Officer Aldrich hit Mr. Shay with a shotgun and punched him.

Mr. Shay, who is large in stature refused to obey verbal commands, struggled and would not cooperate when being handcuffed. While Mr. Shay was struggling he continued to assert that he had a gun. All of the officers were concerned for their safety. No charges will issue in this matter because Police Officer Aldrich acted in an attempt to control Mr. Shay.

Prosecutor Worthy said, "The total footage of the tape of this incident lasted 1 hour and 36 minutes. This paints a much broader picture than watching only several seconds of footage. We evaluated this case based upon the totality of the circumstances and we do not find reason to charge Officer Aldrich."

2. Police Officer Aldrich - CSC Third Degree and Misconduct in Office Warrant Charged

Police Officer John Aldrich, 40 of Melvindale has been charged with one count of Criminal Sexual Conduct Third Degree and two counts of Misconduct In Office in connection with a April 11, 2005 sexual assault of a Melvindale woman. It is alleged that while on duty Officer Aldrich had non-consensual sex with the female and in return fixed a ticket for her.

Criminal Sexual Conduct Third Degree carries a maximum of fifteen years in prison and Misconduct In Office is a common law offense that carries a maximum of five years in prison.

“We expect our police officers to uphold the law. The type of misconduct alleged in this case is always troubling. Officer Aldrich has used his authority to prey upon the people he vowed to protect.

“Anyone who knows me is well aware that I’m not going to shy away from holding law enforcement officers accountable for criminal conduct” said Prosecutor Worthy.

Thirty Year Old Homicide Warrant Decision

Vollie Calhoun Payton, age 65 of Inkster was charged with three counts of First Degree Murder, three counts of Felony Murder, Assault With Intent to Murder and Felony Firearm. These charges stem from the March 14, 1975 shooting deaths of Maxine Kelly, 27 of Detroit, Levi Morse, 21 of Detroit and Allen Loggins, 27 of Detroit. Also injured in the shooting was Raymond Martin from New Mexico who was 37 at the time of the incident.

First Degree Murder and Felony Murder carry sentences of life in prison without parole. Assault With Intent to Murder carries a maximum sentence of up to life in prison and Felony Firearm carries a mandatory two-year sentence.

“John Calvin said, “The torture of a bad conscience is the hell of a living soul.””

“In this case, defendant Vollie Payton’s conscience was weak but wouldn’t let him rest for thirty years when he gave a statement implicating himself in these killings. We are pleased for the victim’s families that Mr. Payton will finally be prosecuted for these brutal killings,” said Prosecutor Worthy.

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