

STATE OF INDIANA

COUNTY OF VANDERBURGH)

STATE OF INDIANA

VS

JARON ANTHONY MICHAEL WELLS

B/M

DOB: 11/9/1994

DLN: 42042194319W

5'09" - 184

1228 S WEINBACH AVE

EVANSVILLE, IN 47714

Vanderburgh Superior Court
FILED
SEP 08 2023
S.A.H.
CLERK

IN THE VANDERBURGH
SUPERIOR/CIRCUIT COURT

AFFIDAVIT FOR PROBABLE CAUSE

MURDER

A FELONY

AGENCY: EVANSVILLE POLICE

DEPARTMENT

I.C. 35-42-1-1(1)

CASE #: 23-13546/EPD

The undersigned, being duly sworn upon his oath, deposes and says upon information and belief that Jaron Anthony Michael Wells has committed the offense of Count 1: Murder, a Felony, and in support thereof says as follows:

That this affiant is a Detective with the Evansville Police Department.

On 07/14/2023, officers were dispatched to 1009 Harriet St. for a deceased subject. Officers arrived on scene and requested Crime Scene and detectives to the scene. I arrived on scene and spoke with Lt. Day who pointed out the subject, identified as Scott Allen Ward, that found the decedent.

I went over and spoke with Ward who was sitting in the parking lot of Aurora. I asked Ward to explain what led up to him finding the deceased person in 1009 Harriet. Ward stated that he just took his daughter to Deaconess Midtown and she was admitted to the ICU. He stated that he was upset due to his daughter being in poor health and decided to take a walk. He stated that he used to live at 1009 Harriet St so he stopped by the home and walked to the back, 1009 Harriet St is a vacant home. He stated that as he walked around he smelled a foul odor coming from the home. He stated that he opened the window on the back side of the home and went inside. As he walked in, he observed the deceased lying on a mattress covered in maggots. He stated that he felt unwell and ran out of the home. He did not have a phone so he went across the street to Aurora to have the employees call authorities.

After speaking with Ward, I spoke with Detective Hackworth. He stated that the deceased could possibly be Shanay Hunt. He stated that Crime Scene Detective Henderson located mail with the name Shanay Evans on it. Shanay Evans is an alias for Shanay Hunt in RMS. Detective Hackworth and I then walked into 1009 Harriet. As I approached the home, I could smell a strong foul odor coming from the home. As we entered the home and approached the deceased, it was apparent that the deceased had been there for some time due to the level of decomposition. The home was in a complete state of disarray with trash all over the place and several holes in the floor and walls. The deceased was in a middle room on a mattress. She was laying on her back, covered in maggots. Due to the level of decomposition, we were unable to observe any evidence of foul play at the initial scene. After observing the scene, I left the home.

I then went to Aurora and spoke with employees. Aurora, which assists the homeless population, stated that they have dealt with Shanay Hunt in the past. They stated that she was known to stay in abandoned houses as well.

When the coroner arrived, I went back into the home and assisted Deputy Coroner Smith and CSU Detective Henderson with placing the deceased into a body bag. A cell phone which was on the decedent's person was also placed in the body bag with the victim.

On 07/17/2023, CSU Detective Henderson attended the autopsy for the deceased. During the autopsy, the medical examiner located a bullet hole on the side of the victim's head and recovered the projectile. After this information was passed along to Sgt. Thiry, I applied for a search warrant to begin recovering any evidence that could still be inside the home. Motor patrol went to 1009 Harriet and locked the home down while we waited for the search warrant to be signed. The search warrant was signed by Judge Pauli. On a later date the Coroner's Office was able to confirm the victim's identity to be Shanay Hunt.

After the search warrant was signed, CSU and detectives responded to the scene. CSU began processing the scene, and detectives began canvassing the neighborhood. Inside the home, Crime Scene Detective Henderson located a shell casing near where Hunt's body was found. I went inside with Detective Henderson and observed the shell casing near the mattress that was south of where Hunt was located. After pictures were taken, the shell casing was collected from the floor. CSU Detective Henderson advised that the shell casing was a .45 GAP round, which is a very particular and seldomly used type of ammunition.

On 07/18/2023, detectives went to Aurora and retrieved mail addressed to Shanay Hunt. The mail included a letter from William Fowler, an inmate in the Indiana Department of Corrections, a letter from Assurance Wireless regarding her cellphone, a letter from the social security office, and a bank statement from Comerica Bank covering the period of June 1st- June 30th. Detectives also began canvassing all of the local hotels in the area. Detective Hackworth and Detective Powers spoke with an employee at the Hucks gas station. The employee stated that she knew Shanay and that she frequented the gas station with her son. She did not know the son's name.

Detective Hackworth continued canvassing the local hotels and spoke with an employee from the Evansville Inn and Suites that recognized Shanay. She stated that Shanay's son dated another one of the employees at the hotel. While Detective Hackworth was speaking with the employee, Tara Raney walked in. Raney stated that she dated Shanay's son, Jaron Wells. She stated that they broke up due to the "weird" situation between Wells and his mother.

On 07/20/2023, Detective Lowe received a phone call from Donna Fowler, the mother of Shanay's boyfriend, William Fowler. Donna Fowler stated that she speaks with Shanay Hunt on a daily basis. Looking through Hunt's phone records, Donna Fowler and Shanay Hunt call each other multiple times a day. All of these calls stop on July 8th. Fowler stated that in their last conversation on the morning of July 8th, 2023, Hunt told her that she and her son had just had an argument. She stated that Shanay told her that she would be okay and would call her again later. Shanay Hunt never called her again. Fowler stated that later that night she tried to call her, but she never answered the phone. She stated that she tried reaching out to Jaron Wells, but he had blocked her number. Detectives later applied for and were granted a judicially signed search warrant for the cellular phone which was transported to the Vanderburgh County Coroner's Office with Hunt's body. The data extraction confirmed the phone call with Donna Fowler in the early morning hours of July 8th, 2023.

Fowler stated to Detective Lowe that she doesn't text, so she asked her son to try and get a hold of Jaron Wells. Her son contacted Jaron Wells through Facebook Messenger. His profile name is "Jay Wells". Ronald Fowler took screenshots of their conversation and sent them to the Adult Investigations Unit. Wells states to Fowler; "she said some foul stuff about my dead father and that was the last time I seen or spoke to her."

On 07/31/2023, I contacted Kayleigh Reeves, Shanay Hunt's daughter, on the phone. She stated that she has not had much contact with her mother or her brother Jaron due to their "rocky" relationship. She

stated that she mostly kept up with her family over Facebook. She stated that she knew something was wrong with her mother when she suddenly stopped posting on Facebook. She stated that she knew Jaron and her mom were living together in Evansville. She stated that she knew they were homeless and would bounce around between vacant homes. She stated that whenever her mom would get money she would get a hotel room for her and Jaron to stay in. Reeves stated that her brother was a "bum" that lived off of other people.

I asked Reeves if she ever observed Jaron being violent toward their mother, and she stated that her mom told her that Jaron had been violent with her and was very controlling of her. She stated that she had seen her mother and Jaron get into arguments and that he would throw things around and has on occasion punched holes in walls due to his anger.

After I finished speaking with Reeves we hung up, and she immediately called me back. She stated that her brother had just messaged her stating that their mother had passed away. She took screenshots of their messages and emailed them to me. In their messages, Jaron stated that he hasn't been in Evansville for over a month and that he was living in Texas. Jaron also told Reeves that he hasn't had much communication with their mom.

Going through Hunt's phone extraction, it is obvious that Wells communicates with his mother quite frequently. I called and spoke with Donna Fowler on the phone, and she stated that Shanay told her in their last conversation that she and Jaron were going to the Valero gas station to get coffee. She stated Shanay told her that she would call her back later that day.

Also, on Hunt's phone extraction is a web search for "45 gap bullets", including searches for .45 GAP rounds for sale in Evansville, Indiana.. The shell casing recovered from the crime scene was a .45 GAP, which is a very rare caliber. Detectives began going to all of the local gun stores in Evansville as well as Warrick County to see if .45 GAP ammunition had been purchased recently, and all of the gun stores stated that they had not sold any .45 GAP ammunition recently and do not carry it in stock. All of the stores stated that they have to do a special order to get that caliber of ammunition in the store.

Using bank statements from Shanay Hunt, Detectives were able to locate a storage unit which she was paying for at 4815 Tippecanoe Drive in Evansville. Detectives applied for and were granted a judicially signed search warrant for the storage unit. Inside, Detectives located receipts for hotel rooms at America's Best Value Inn with the name Jaron Wells on them. The dates of the receipts coincided with the searches on Shanay Hunt's phone for .45 gap ammunition in Evansville. Also in the storage unit, Detectives located an empty GLOCK gun case as well as one rifle. GLOCK is one of very few gun manufacturers that has a handgun chambered to fire 45 GAP ammunition. Shortly after, Detectives went to America's Best Value Inn and confirmed with hotel staff that Shanay Hunt was listed as a guest with Jaron Wells during those dates.

Fowler mentioned to me in our conversation over the phone that she knew Jaron Wells had two guns. She stated one of the guns was a long gun, and she believed the other was a handgun based off of statements made from Shanay about Jaron always carrying the gun around in his backpack.

Detectives further examined the cell phone extraction from Shanay Hunt's phone and found messages from Jaron Wells where he discusses his firearm. In one message on July 5th, which is three days before Shanay stops communicating with anyone, he states, "Gonna leave my pistol here NO COCKING IT JUST HAVE TO SQUEEZE TRIGGER TO FIRE NOTHING ELSE IT IS READY TO SHOOT BULLETS ALREADY JUST SQUEEZE TRIGGER AND MY PISTOL DOES NOT HAVE A SAFETY ON IT so there's no such thing as an accident everything is preventable when handling firearms". Glocks do not have traditional safeties like other gun manufacturers place on their handguns.

Based off the information that I had learned up to this point, I applied for and was granted a judicially

signed search warrant for Jaron Wells' Facebook profile "Jay Wells". On 08/09/2023, Jaron Wells' Facebook return came back and I began going through the return.

On 06/12/2023, Wells messages Montana Jolly sending him a picture of a Glock 38 .45 GAP handgun that he purchased. Wells tells Jolly about how rare the caliber is. He states, "If ya get a Glock 37,38 compact or the 39 the shells have to be ordered they ain't got em on the shelf this take a necked down 45 regular 45s won't work in it."

On 06/20/2023, Wells messages an unknown female's Facebook profile "Shaii Shaii". In the messages, it is obvious that he is angry with his boss over not getting paid money that he states he is owed. In one of his messages to "Shaii Shaii" he states that he is, "really thinking about going up the road and blowing his shit back with my 45". He goes on in the messages stating, "I had to unload my pistol I was gonna go up there and talk to him in person but I knew that would have ended badly for him his dad and everyone else at the job my hands are sweating I am scared for this man".

After further review, I went through all of Wells search history starting from 06/01/2023 through 07/07/2023 and found that he had never searched for any news organization through his Facebook page. Starting on 07/08/2023 his Facebook has no search history until 07/10/2023. Starting 07/10/2023, Wells began searching for various news media pages and began searching for the Evansville Police Department page. I began to count and found that after Hunt's murder he searched over fifty times for different news media pages in a nine-day period.

Some of the messages that he sent to his sister were missing on the Facebook return including the message that stated he was in Texas. Also, the last message that he sent his sister was not included in the Facebook return.

The Facebook return shows that on July 28th Wells deleted his mother as a friend on Facebook, this is the same day that 14 News released the name of Shanay Hunt being found in the abandoned house.

On August 1st, Wells messages his sister Kayleigh Reeves and tells her that he hasn't lived in Evansville in "a month or so". This is contradictory to all of the other messages that he has been sending to "Olivea Tison" and "Shaii Shaii". In their messages, he talks about living in Evansville and how he misses Southern Illinois. On July 22nd, "Olivea Tison" sends a message to Jaron Wells stating that she is coming to pick him up from Evansville to take him back to Illinois. In the messages, Jaron tells Olivea that he is at the downtown library and gives a description to her of what he is wearing so she can find him. In later messages to "Shaii Shaii", he talks about being in Illinois and working for his brother's neighbor clearing trees.

I began going through the return and located numerous pictures of a Glock 38 .45 GAP handgun. The shell casing recovered from the scene was a .45 GAP. The first picture of this gun is found on 06/05/2023 from Gene Pyke asking Jaron if he is interested in purchasing a firearm. Jaron states that he is interested, but he needs to get money before he can buy the gun. He stated that he would ask his mom, Shanay Hunt, to see if he could borrow some money. On 06/17/2023, Jaron ask Pyke if he has ever, "fire this 45 one handed"? Pyke states that he has and to just "hold on". Jaron also asked Pyke about picking up his "shells". Pyke tells him that he has to pick them up from Princeton.

After reading these messages, I began calling all of the gun shops in Princeton, IN. Red Dawn Armory stated that they sold two boxes of .45 GAP recently. I asked them what brand of ammunition they sold, and they stated that they had to special order the ammunition to the shop. The manager stated that he ordered two boxes of Speer Lawman .45 GAP ammunition for Gene Pyke. Speer Lawman is the brand of the shell casing which was recovered at 1009 Harriet St. After we learned all of this information, I wrote a subpoena and collected all of the sales records and documentation that Red Dawn Armory had on this sale.

At this point, Detective Sergeant Thiry contacted the Indiana State Police firearms lab technician, Mitzi Templeton, to begin looking at the shell casing and bullet that was recovered from Shanay's head. She stated that their databases contain both Glock and Springfield pistols chambered in .45 GAP. She stated that Glock has right twist rifling and Springfield has left twist rifling. She observed the shell casing and stated that the casing has a "classic Glock look". The bullet that was recovered was tested, and she was able to determine that it was in fact a .45 caliber. She went on to say that the bullet had been fired from a firearm with a right twist rifling, consistent with a Glock firearm.

Using the extraction of Shanay Hunt's cellular phone, Detectives obtained a phone number for Jaron Wells of 812-202-9808. A search through ZTEX showed that Verizon was the carrier for the number. I, Detective Wiseman, applied for and was granted a judicially signed search warrant for all call data records associated with this phone number, including location data. At a later date, I received the results of the search warrant from Verizon. Detective A. McCormick was able to use the data from Verizon to obtain tower information from the phone. On the morning of July 8th, 2023, the phone belonging to Jaron Wells was hitting off of a tower which services the address of 1009 Harriet Street. Shortly after Shanay Hunt was last heard from, Jaron's phone data stops on July 8th and does not come back on until July 17th after Shanay's body was located.


After Shanay Hunt's funeral, I contacted her daughter Kayleigh Reeves again. Reeves stated that Shanay's funeral went well and that many family members were present for the service. I asked Reeves if her brother Jaron was present for the service, and she stated "No". I asked her if Jaron had reached out to her again and she again stated "No". Throughout the course of the investigation, Jaron Wells has not reached out one time to find out anything regarding his mother's case.

Detectives conducted an extensive and thorough investigation into the murder of Shanay Hunt, which included investigations into multiple persons of interest; all of which were ruled-out as a suspect, except for one, Shanay's son, Jaron Wells. Given the totality of the circumstances and the known available evidence at the time of this affidavit, no one other than Shanay's son, Jaron Wells, could have been responsible for Shanay Hunt's murder; All available evidence and circumstances point toward Jaron as the murderer and his actions and behavior following the incident are consistent with someone of guilt.

Your affiant believes that any person who supplied the above information to your affiant speaks from personal knowledge and observation and are reliable and credible inasmuch as they volunteered information to your affiant in the course of your affiant's investigation as a law enforcement officer. Your affiant believes there is a factual basis for the above information as your affiant's personal observation corroborated said information.

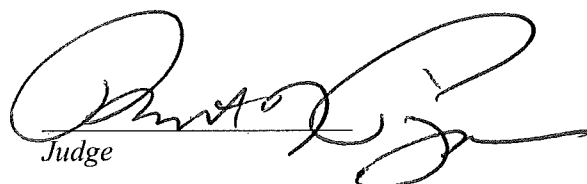
That the above-described events took place in Vanderburgh County, Indiana.

I affirm under the penalties for perjury that the foregoing representations are true.


C. Wiseman, AFFIANT

Before me, Judge PIGMAN, Judge of the Vanderburgh Superior/Circuit Court, personally appeared C. Wiseman, and being duly sworn upon his oath swears that the above facts are true and correct to the best of his knowledge.

Dated: Sept 8, 2023


Judge

ORDER

The State of Indiana, by its Prosecuting Attorney, Diana Moers, files Affidavit for Probable Cause which is examined by the Court. From said examination the Court finds that probable cause does exist for the arrest for the above reference Defendant for the crime(s) of:

Murder, a Felony

The Clerk of this Court is ordered to issue a Warrant for the arrest of the defendant, and the Court does hereby order a bond:

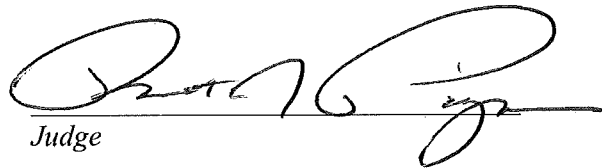
(a) ___ A bond set in the amount of \$ _____ CASH/\$ _____ SURETY.

(a.1) ___ As a condition of bond the Defendant shall be on ABK Tracking with exclusionary zones which shall include the following locations: _____

(a.2) ___ As a condition of bond the Defendant shall have no contact with the victim in this case.

(b) No bond.

Dated: Sept 8, 2023


Judge

DB:rs