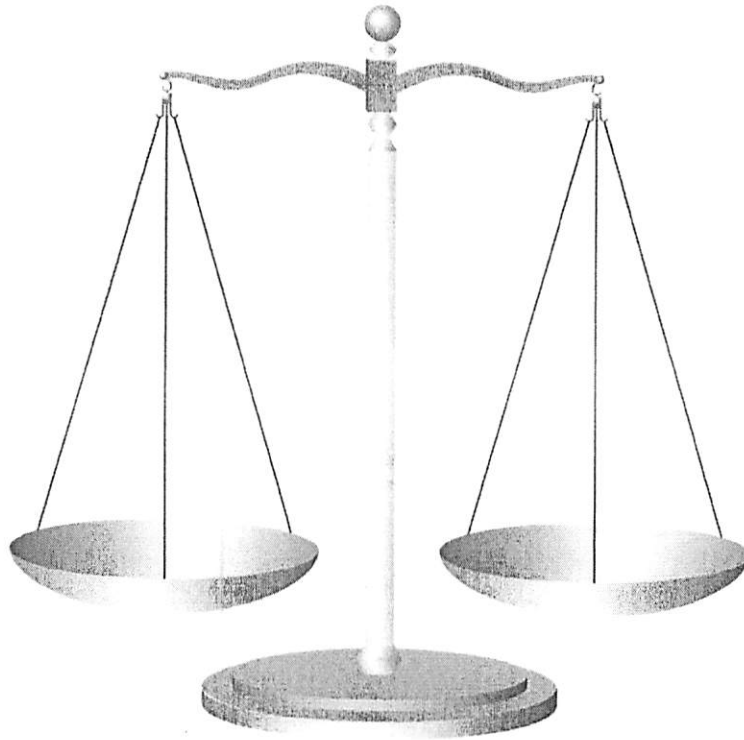


Grand Jury Final Report



The Honorable Judge Cheryl Blackburn
Criminal Court Division III
Davidson County, Tennessee

January – March 2017
Stan Fossick, Foreperson

Introduction

We, the members of the Davidson County Grand Jury for the January – March 2017 term, as commissioned by Judge Cheryl Blackburn, submit this report in summary of our service and experience.

We begin by expressing our gratitude for the dual privileges of being given both a broad education in the criminal justice system and the opportunity to perform our civic duty for Davidson County in a way that not many citizens are offered. We are confident that this experience has significantly enhanced our ability to inform others and to support the men and women in that system who act on behalf of all the residents of the County.

Instruction

Before hearing cases, we were addressed by the following:

- District Attorney General Glenn Funk regarding the overall crime statistics in the county and the purpose of the Grand Jury: “a shield for the citizen, not a sword for the State”
- Assistant District Attorney Rodney Faulk regarding the operation of the Grand Jury
- Detective David Slessinger regarding Sex Crimes
- Sergeant Gene Donegan regarding the Drug Task Force
- Sergeant John Boese regarding the Gangs Unit
- Detective John Jackson regarding Domestic Violence
- Officer Brad Nave regarding DUI
- Captain Randy Hickerson regarding Criminal Warrants
- Detective John Grubbs regarding Youth Services

During our term, ADAs Rodney Faulk and Michel-Claire Bottoms were always available and provided us with helpful explanations of the law.

Near the end of the term, Metro Nashville Police Chief Steve Anderson joined us for an extremely informative session on the organization of the MNP, as well as the density of calls and various types of incidents across the Metro area. In light of recent concerns about racial disparities, Chief Anderson also presented a chart of

10 crimes with the corresponding percentages of African-American victims and suspects (as described by victims and witnesses), which was quite enlightening. He also responded to questions about the requested budget for 2017-2018.

We wish to express our appreciation for the valuable information each of these individuals presented.

Cases

In accordance with the Tennessee Rules of Criminal Procedures, we heard and deliberated over a total of 866 cases, including presentments:

851 were returned as True Bills

13 were returned as No True Bills

2 Presentments were made, both of which had no action taken

Site Visits

We visited the Police Training Academy (training overview, as well as Aircraft and K-9 groups), Riverbend Maximum Security Institution, Judge Seth Norman's Drug Center, and the Davidson County Sheriff's facilities; and we attended the MNPD CompStat meeting, where we met our Precinct Commanders and Community Coordinators.

Recognition

In addition to the presenters listed above, we would like to take this opportunity to recognize five people who have had a special impact on our experience as the Grand Jury:

- Mr. Stan Fossick, our Foreperson, was a patient, wise, and thoughtful guide to our group of inexperienced jurors. In addition to his many years of serving in this capacity, Stan brought a low-key style that put us all at ease while keeping our sessions on track. His generosity in providing refreshments every day at his own expense, as well as treating us to lunch at Monell's, was matched by the friendliness he offered to each member, whether a regular or an alternate. Stan is, quite simply, a treasure to Davidson County; and it was an honor and a pleasure to serve with him.

- Sergeant Sean Richmond took over from Sgt. Patrick Baird as liaison to the Grand Jury very early in our term, and he excelled in his role from his first presentation. He was always well prepared with organized, detailed reports, whether delivering them himself or delegating them to another officer. His ability to help us understand the issues in each case was complemented by his good humor and easy-going style. Sgt. Richmond is a testimony to the high caliber of those in the Metro Police force.
- Officer Chad Turnbow ably presented a number of cases in Sgt. Richmond's absence. Like Sgt. Richmond, he was gracious in answering our questions.
- Ms. April Lee, Judge Blackburn's Judicial Assistant, faithfully handled attendance and the securing of alternate jurors, as well as facilitating our checks and transportation.
- Ms. Lori Hooberry, Legal Secretary to the Grand Jury Division, was always very welcoming and did a fine job of preparing our case lists.

We offer our heartfelt thanks to each of these persons for making our experience on the Grand Jury such a positive one.

Concerns and Recommendations

We are concerned with the high number of domestic violence crimes and compliment the MNPd for establishing the LAPP program, Jean Crow Advocacy Center, and other efforts to prevent and address these serious issues.

We are also concerned about the high number of crimes involving guns and the apparent ease with which young men, in particular, acquire them.

We share the concern of MNPd about the proliferation of drugs and encourage all appropriate measures to address this major problem.

We recommend that money seized from drug dealers by MNPd be used to fund the documented needs of the Metro Police Department.

While we recognize that the Court does not have jurisdiction over financial matters, we want to express our support for the budgetary requests of Chief Anderson. Given the rapid growth of Davidson County and the desire of its citizens for transparency, we believe it is important to fund the staffing and projects he has outlined.

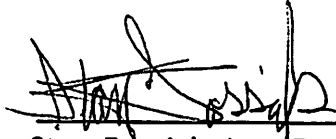
Having been presented with a large number of drug cases, we believe providers should be required to consult the Controlled Substance Monitoring Database before prescribing a controlled medication, and pharmacists before filling these prescriptions. While this would not prevent those who use different names, etc., from receiving controlled medications, prescribers and pharmacists should be held accountable for adhering to the requirement and fined heavily if they do not document that they have done so. In the same vein, we recommend a limit to the number of pills emergency room staff can prescribe.

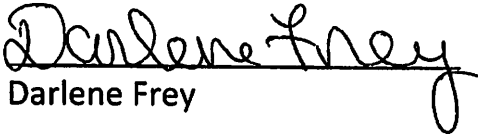
We heard multiple cases in which the defendant had more than one DUI offense, sometimes with prior charges still pending. Given the danger these offenders represent to themselves and others, we recommend a more rapid disposition of these cases and possibly stricter penalties.

Conclusion

Each of us is proud to have served on the Grand Jury. We now have a broader and deeper understanding of the criminal justice system, as well as a deeper appreciation for those individuals who serve our community, and for that we are grateful.

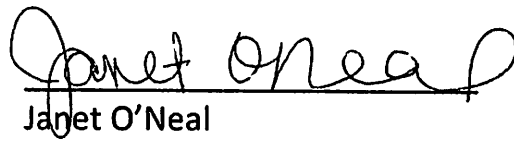
Respectfully submitted on March 30, 2017, by the Davidson County Grand Jury,
January – March 2017 term.

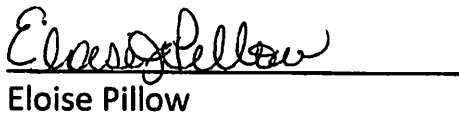

Stan Fossick, Jury Foreperson

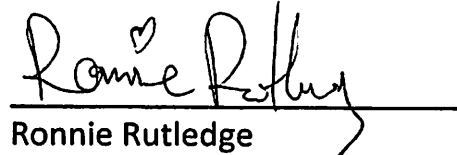

Darlene Frey

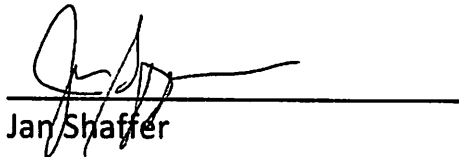

Janelle Garrett

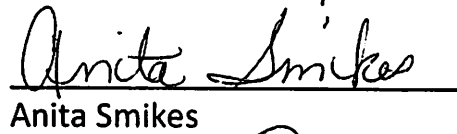

Solomon Holley

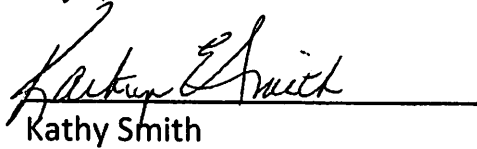

Janet O'Neal

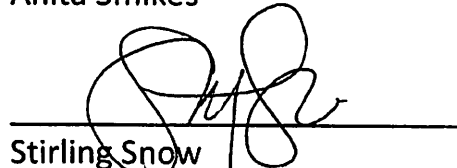

Eloise Pillow

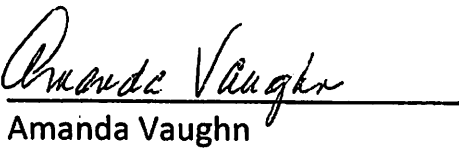

Ronnie Rutledge

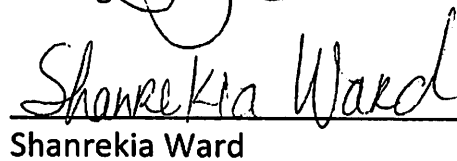

Jan Shaffer


Anita Smikes


Kathy Smith


Stirling Snow


Amanda Vaughn


Shanrekia Ward