

Grand Jury Final Report

The Honorable Judge Angelita Blackshear Dalton

Criminal Court Division II

Davidson County, Tennessee

October – December Term 2019

Foreperson, Stan Fossick

We, the members of the Metro Nashville, Davidson County Grand Jury for the Fall term of October – December of 2019, as commissioned by the Honorable Judge Angelita Blackshear Dalton, submit our Final Report as testament of our findings during this period.

Grand Jury Members

Foreperson: Stan Fossick

REGULAR JURORS	ALTERNATE JURORS
Anderson, Jalen	Werner, Kellye J.
DeHart, Martha H.	Hunter, Joshua
Eichten, Dustin	Collins, Heather L.
Grathoff, Jesse	Myers, Lisette T.
Jacks, Wayne	Voss, John H.
Holt, Sabrina	Bath, Andrew R.
Hood, Nicholas	Lorentson, Eric J.
Hughes, Melissa E.	Kimble, Barbara F.
Kiswiney, Noel S.	Ray, Michael G.
Laster, Fetima M.	Stasik, Kaitlyn M.
McDougall, Alec	Wing, Yung Tsang
Pratt, Leona M.	Flakes, Olivia
Quarles, Maurice	Stogner, Susan E.
Robertson, Sherod	Bickel, Cynthia M.
Simpson, Tamika	Small, Michael R.
Vongnarath, Cody	Parr, Soraya C.
	Gallatin, Elisabeth
	Blackwell, Brittany

Presentations to the Jury

Over the course of three months, we were given a lot of exposure to things we would not normally have access to and found all site visits, speakers and presenters to be very helpful and informative. We were responsible for not only hearing cases, but deciding what impact we wanted to make. We took our duties very seriously. We are thankful for the knowledge we gained and the insights that were provided to us. We hope this report has an impact on the process. It was also a pleasure to work with Stan Fossick, Lieutenant Sean Richmond and Sergeant Samuel Tetterton

At the beginning of our term as grand jurors, we were given the opportunity to hear from many people who work in our justice system. The purpose of these presentations was to provide information about the types of cases and evidence we would be hearing and to give us background information concerning our criminal justice processes in Metro Davidson County. We appreciate those who took the time to educate us on the workings of the criminal justice system including police procedures, application of the law, and statistics and trends occurring in our county.

We also appreciate the devoted officers, detectives, and others who presented cases and making the process very efficient. They were prepared and thorough in their presentations.

A special thanks also goes to Juror Tamika Simpson who served as our Secretary during the term and did an outstanding job recording the cases, as well as, assisting the Foreperson.

Glenn Funk, District Attorney General
Rodney Faulk, Assistant District Attorney General
Sean Richmond, MNPD Lieutenant
Officer Bill Fox
Leanna Dugan, MSN, RN, CPNP, Our Kids
Gene Donegan, MNPD Drug Task Force Sergeant
Brad Nave, D.U.I. Unit Officer
Lee Kendall, Domestic Violence Unit Lieutenant
Nate Ellsworth, Domestic Violence Unit Detective
Christopher Williams, MNPD Detective
Steve Anderson, Chief of Police

Cases

During the course of our time in the Grand Jury, we deliberated over a total of 712 cases. Of these cases, the following actions were taken:

708 indictments were returned as True Bill

4 indictments were returned as Not True Bill

We also received one (1) Presentment where no action was taken.

Site Visits

As Grand Jury members, we were given the opportunity to visit several sites during our term. These visits were educational and helped us understand the efforts made by members of the judicial system and allowed us to view the resources available in the various programs.

1. The Police Training Academy

K-9 Division

We arrived at the K-9 training field where Sergeant Warner and Sergeant Gossett educated us on the training and operations of the canines within the unit. We were able to witness the officer and his partnered dog demonstrate skills and how they work together to aid the department. We engaged in a thorough Q&A session about the full spectrum of dog training and bond development from the initial selection of the animal to the dog's eventual retirement.

Aviation Division

We witnessed a landing of an incoming helicopter and toured the helicopter service bay hangar where we learned about the history of the division including the resources currently available. Sergeant Knapp led the discussion followed with an Q&A session from the jurors.

The Police Training Academy.

After visiting the K-9 and Aviation divisions, Captain Blair gave us a tour of the facilities, discussed the training process, and allowed us the opportunity to participate in scenario simulations. We performed simulations in groups of two, having to make split-second decisions much like officers are forced to perform in their work. The experience was eye opening and gave us an appreciation for having to compile and evaluate the information in such a short amount of time and make the correct decision in these scenarios.

2. Police Headquarters and Office of Family Safety

We were able to tour the new Police Headquarters and experience the comprehensive nature of the new facility led by Captain Rita Brockmann-Baker with the Facilities Management Division. The building has been open less than a year and allows many different departments to be under one roof, allowing for faster communication and a central location for those in the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department. The Office of Family Safety provides care for the victims of domestic and sexual assault in Metro Davidson County.

Trish Davis, who serves as the President of the Nashville Coalition Against Domestic Violence and is the Director of Client Programs for the Nashville-Davidson County's Office of Family Safety (OFS), offered a tour and information about the Family Safety Center, which is completely separate from the Police Headquarters with its own entrance. Upon entering, you are met with large bullet proof glass windows and two men in full uniform nearby. While it seemed somewhat intimidating, the officials were very cordial. The facility offers several separate seating areas, as well as, rooms for families that need privacy. There's also a glass enclosed play area fondly called "the pyramid" filled with toys and child seating. A mirrored wall allows meetings to occur on the other side of wall allowing moms to keep an eye on their children. The facility also has an enclosed outdoor area with a zen like feel for those wanting to leave the building and walk around. There are offices upstairs for working cases by the dedicated staff. We learned how dangerous these domestic abuse cases can be for women as they try to escape and leave their partners. We also learned a "strangling incident" makes them 9 times more likely to be killed. Overall, it's a beautiful facility with many who are dedicated to helping women and children escape domestic abuse and toxic relationships.

3. MPD COMPSTAT

We were able to attend one of the weekly COMPSTAT or "Computer Statistics" meeting at the North Precinct headquarters which allows every precinct Commander, Community Coordinator and other staff members to gather and discuss the previous week's crimes, current trends, community outreach events, etc.

Led by Chief of Police Steve Anderson, we were warmly welcomed into the meeting and were able to hear presentations by the Midtown Hills, East, and West precincts. The presenters were very informative and the biggest takeaway was the significant reduction in crime that has occurred in Davidson country even though the population has experienced a large increase.

Recommendations and Observations

- We found the administration of the Grand Jury process to be mostly efficient and smoothly executed. Our Foreperson, Stan Fossick, was extremely helpful and his seasoned experience was a great asset as he led our Grand Jury.
- We were very impressed with the new Police Headquarters and Office of Family Safety. Having these areas in the same facility allows employees to provide greater service to the members of our city.
- On our trip to the Aviation Division, we witnessed how much pride the officers exert in not only providing a service to the city but in taking care of the facilities and helicopters. They should be commended for such an impressive job. Although the building and equipment is incredibly old, the care from the officers has extended the lives of both the building and the helicopters. For a city that has experienced unprecedented growth in the last 10 years, it appears to us the needs for this division have been overlooked. Perhaps the biggest surprise is that the city does not have any ability to airlift and evacuate people off the top of a high rise building in the case of a fire. We strongly encourage evaluating these needs before a tragedy occurs.
- During our trip to the Police Training Academy, we were surprised to learn the training facility was a small classroom trailer. While functional, it did seem inadequate for a city the size of Nashville in order to provide the best environment for training officers as the city continues to grow. We recommend additional resources be considered in updating this training building.
- Throughout our term, we have learned of the shortage of police officers which is an area of concern for a city growing like Nashville. We learned that there are over 100 vacancies among the 1,511 authorized positions on the police force. We believe actions should take place to provide more financial incentives to fill these positions.
- In the presentations given to the Grand Jury at the beginning of the term, we recommend future jurors also receive a list of misdemeanor and felony type offenses as a guide, as well as, a simple illustration of how charges are processed through the criminal justice system. We also believe it would be helpful to receive a guide on how bonds are set since they appeared to be quite varied among the cases.
- During our term, we heard many cases related to D.U.I.s, drug sale and use, and domestic violence. We recommend scheduling a visit to the Family Safety Center in the first weeks of the term since so many of the cases heard are domestic violence related.
- While we acknowledge it's the responsibility of the state, we believe the \$10 daily rate is inappropriate considering by law, all civilians must be paid a minimum wage to be employed. Even though serving on the Grand Jury is an important civic duty, \$10 a day barely covers gas and if there's any unexpected occurrence as simple as a flat tire, the juror would never recover

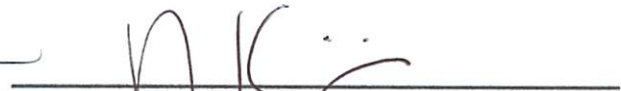
financially and be made whole for serving on the jury, especially when you take into account the hardship and burden serving on the jury imposes from people's employment and/or family responsibilities.

- We also noticed that many criminals are still on the streets for a long period of time while the case moves to the Grand Jury. Many "career criminals" seem to thrive, particularly under the current processes, and are free to incur repeat offenses.

- While the law states that possession of a firearm by a felon is considered a felony crime in itself, we noticed there are many felons that do in fact possess firearms. And while we acknowledge many times those firearms are stolen, it does appear to us the current gun laws are not adequate to prevent this from continuing to happen.

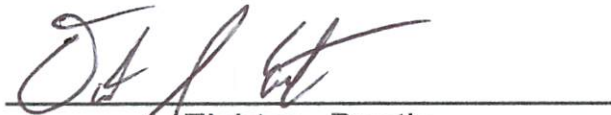
We, the Grand Jury, thank everyone who works in our criminal justice system. From serving this term, we are all leaving with an enhanced appreciation for each and every one that works in this field.

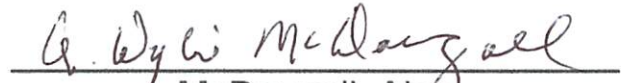

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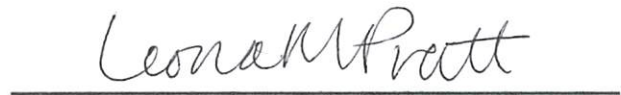

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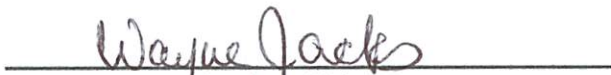

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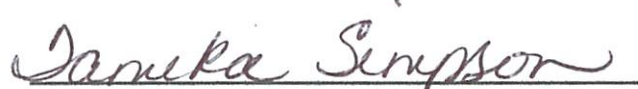

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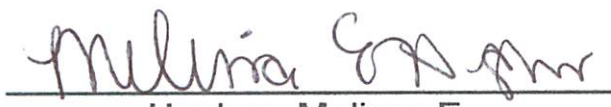

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