

**Davidson County Grand Jury**  
**April-June 2023 Session**  
**Criminal Court-Division IV**  
**Judge Jennifer Smith**

The Davidson County Grand Jury, after being sworn in on April 3, met on Wednesday and Thursday every week from April 12 through June 22.

On our first two days, we had multiple speakers. District Attorney General Glenn Funk spoke to us on the first day and emphasized the importance of the Grand Jury in the State Criminal Justice System and for us to constantly realize the difference between a Criminal Grand Jury and Criminal Trial Court Jury. The Grand Jury per state statute is only charged with determining for each case if there is simply probable cause that the accused committed the crime and not “beyond a shadow of doubt”. The Grand Jury does not determine guilt or innocence as is done in the Criminal Court Jury Trial.

Some of the other speakers we heard on the first two days were the following:

Det. Grubbs, Metro Nashville Police Dept. - Youth Services

Leanna Dugan, Our Kids Clinic

Jay Martin, District Attorney’s Office

Detective Hotz, Metro Nashville Police Dept.- Overdose Unit

Officer Steven Jones, Criminal Scene Investigation Unit, Metro Nashville Police Dept.

After the speakers presented each of their presentations, the jury decided who would take on important rolls/tasks to ensure the duties of the grand jury were completed efficiently. Such tasks were the secretary, sergeant at arms and the reporter. Although not everyone had a task each day, everyone played an important roll in making sure we sought out the best resolution for each case and each day went by as smoothly as possible. Through all of our questions and concerns, we as a whole learned a lot about the city we call home.

Another key player was our foreperson, Warner Hassell. Warner was a pleasure to have as our foreperson as he made everyone feel welcomed from day one. He knew the ins, outs, and how everything should flow due to his previous experience as a juror. He was always open to discussion but at the same time did a good job of keeping everyone on track. He had a fun sense of humor, he was down to earth, and all around a delight to work with.

**This grand jury heard 662 total cases including crimes of domestic violence, murder, drugs, evading arrest, fraud, sexual assault, identity theft, animal cruelty, property theft, driving under the influence, and the most difficult were the crimes against children. So many of these cases were repeat offenders of the same crime. Overall, we returned a true bill on 660 of the cases and 2 no true bills.**

**Our regular jurors were:**

<b>Warner Hassell, Foreperson</b>	<b>Alexander Pettey</b>	<b>Lauryn Pentecost</b>
<b>Khalil Carr, Reporter</b>	<b>Brian Dumal</b>	<b>Dawn Whidden</b>
<b>Christy Jones, Sergeant At Arms</b>	<b>Lisa Snider</b>	<b>James Ezzell</b>
<b>Debra Segelhorst, Secretary</b>	<b>Ender Hoffman</b>	<b>Amanda Warner</b>
<b>Lisa Vandenburg</b>		

**Our alternate jurors were:**

**Daysialyn Brooks    Wendy Baker    Elizabeth Gillis    Constance Hebb  
Parker Toler    Christina Stephens**

**We heard cases from various presenters such as:**

**Various Metro Nashville Police Department Officers  
Belle Meade Police Department  
Berry Hill Police Department  
BNA Nashville International Airport Police Department  
Goodlettsville Police Department  
Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI)  
Tennessee Highway Patrol  
Tennessee Department of Revenue  
Vanderbilt Police Department  
Department Stores' Loss Prevention**

**Drug Enforcement Administration**

**Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency**

### **Major Concerns of the Grand Jury**

- Several cases considered were over two years old and appropriate action needs to be taken to shorten this span of time in the interest of the crime victims.
- As reported by previous grand juries, sexual assault cases and crimes against children need to be addressed in a more expedient manner. If readjustment of priorities or additional resources are needed to address this concern, this grand jury supports this action.
- PA/Microphone system is not functional and needs to be replaced.
- As presented by previous grand juries, refrain from using color, race, and/or origin of the suspect/victims when presenting a case to the grand jury due to discriminatory purposes.
- When a witness is presenting a case, place events from the case in chronological order as it is easier for the jury to keep up with the details of the case.
- When a witness is presenting a case, refrain from stating the defendants prior convictions that are not relevant to the current case.

### **Special Thanks**

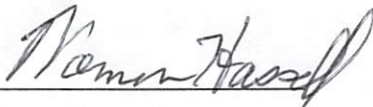
Sergeant Michael Fisher of the Metro Nashville Police Department presented a majority of the cases each day. His presentation of each case was clear and concise and understood by the grand jury. His vast knowledge of the laws and willingness to educate the jury of his knowledge is much appreciated.

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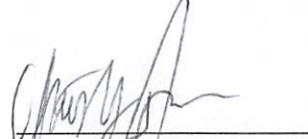
**Warner Hassell, Foreperson**

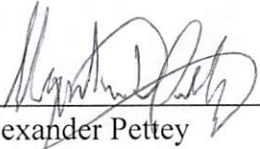
**Grand Jury Members**

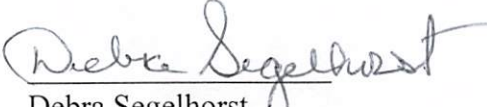
  
Warner Hassell

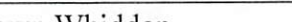
  
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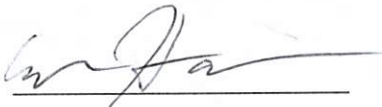
  
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