

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Trial Of Police Double Homicide Pushed To May 13

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ST. CROIX -- The trial against former Police Officer Francis Williams Jr., who the V.I.P.D. has charged with the murder of police officers Kai Javois and Lesha Lammy, was pushed back to May 13, as federal testifiers critical to the case were not able to travel due to the federal government shutdown.

The trial started around 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, and was over after the 10:00 a.m. hour. Because the case includes blood samples and other forensic evidence that must be tested in a lab -- which the territory does not have -- it was difficult to move forward with the case without the federal agents with the forensic evidence.

The shutdown of the federal government is approaching its 21st day on Saturday and would be the longest in U.S. history. The impasse between Democrats and Republicans was caused by President Donald Trump's call for a wall along the Mexico border to protect the country from illegal crossings, which Mr. Trump and border officials have argued include not only individuals looking for better lives in the U.S., but criminals who have killed Americans.

Mr. Trump is now considering moving disaster funding from the U.S. territories to pay for the wall, a decision that has yet to be finalized, according to sources who [spoke to The New York Times](#) on the condition of anonymity.

The double homicide incident enraptured the Virgin Islands [in August 2016](#) and the months that followed, as it was one of the more gruesome and tragic incidents the USVI had witnessed. Approximately 11 months following the incident, then-V.I.P.D. Commissioner Delroy Richards [told The Consortium](#) that the V.I.P.D. was “fully prepared” to move forward with the case.

“I can confirm that obviously we did what we had to and the matter is before the courts, and whenever they set the trial date both attorneys will be able to move forward and we'll take this matter to court and see what happens,” Mr. Richards told The Consortium in July 2017.

Mr. Williams, 38, was arrested at 1:43 p.m. on September 8, 2016, and charged with first-degree murder, first-degree assault, false imprisonment, stalking domestic violence, aggravated assault, battery domestic violence, and carrying and using a dangerous weapon during the commission of a crime, according to V.I.P.D. Public Information Officer Glen Dratte. Bail for Mr. Williams was set at \$2 million by Superior Court Judge Robert A. Molloy.

Mr. Williams, who had long been a suspect of the double homicide, [was previously charged with stalking and released on \\$50,00 bond](#). Court documents made available during the force's probable cause hearing against Mr. Williams shed light on how the V.I.P.D. was able to secure the charge against Mr. Williams, and build a case that led to the charges and arrest.

According to these documents — via a statement from Detective Frankie Ortiz — Mr. Williams, obsessed with Ms. Lammy, had stolen her car keys, which he then gave back after Ms. Lammy's mother demanded it. Just two days later — even after Ms. Lammy had declared that the relationship was over — Mr. Williams asked for her hand in marriage. She rejected him.

On July 29, Ms. Lammy and Mr. Javois were dancing together at Chris Hideaway, a popular nightclub and sports bar in Christiansted. Not liking the scene, Mr. Williams cut between the two officers and attempted to separate them. Officer Sharon Santiago, one of Ms. Lammy's friends, told Mr. Ortiz that she grabbed Ms. Lammy to go have a drink. The two then went outside, where Ms. Lammy told Ms. Santiago that she had ended her relationship with Mr. Williams two weeks prior, but that Mr. Williams kept incessantly messaging her. She then blocked Mr. Williams phone number, but Mr. Williams used a workaround to contact her: he blocked his number from showing up on caller ID, according to Ms. Santiago.

Escalating situation

According to the probable cause fact sheet, a day before the bodies of Ms. Lammy and Mr. Javois were discovered at the Hams Bluff beach, Ms. Lammy told Ms. Santiago, Melissa Gilbert (another police officer) and her mother Mrs. Silas, about an incident between Mr. Williams and Mr. Javois.

Mr. Williams was riding with another police officer, Karishma Smith, when Mr. Williams went off duty with a police cruiser, drove it to the home of Ms. Lammy in Frederiksted, and proceeded to block Ms. Lammy and Mr. Javois from leaving, according to Ms. Smith. She said that Mr. Javois was able to maneuver his vehicle around the police cruiser and went straightaway to file a police report, which was caught on surveillance camera at the V.I.P.D.'s Rainbow Complex at about 12:10 p.m. that day, according to Mr. Ortiz.

Mr. Williams allegedly became furious, hastily turning the police vehicle around and headed back to the police station in the Rainbow Complex. He then stopped at the Hannah's Rest stop lights before arriving at the Rainbow Complex.

"Officer K. Smith indicated that, while at the Hannah's Rest traffic light, Officer F. Williams saw [Officers Kai Javois and Lesha Lammy] in the parking lot of the police station and turned around and left the area," Mr. Ortiz wrote.

Mr. Ortiz said although Ms. Lammy spoke to Officer Mario Christian about the incident, she failed to file a formal complaint.

Ms. Lammy, then 30, joined the police force on December 13, 2010 as a police recruit. She left behind three young children. Mr. Javois, then 28, joined the force as a police recruit on May 11, 2015.

Feature Image: Scene of double homicide in Hams Bluff in August 2016. (Credit: VI Consortium)