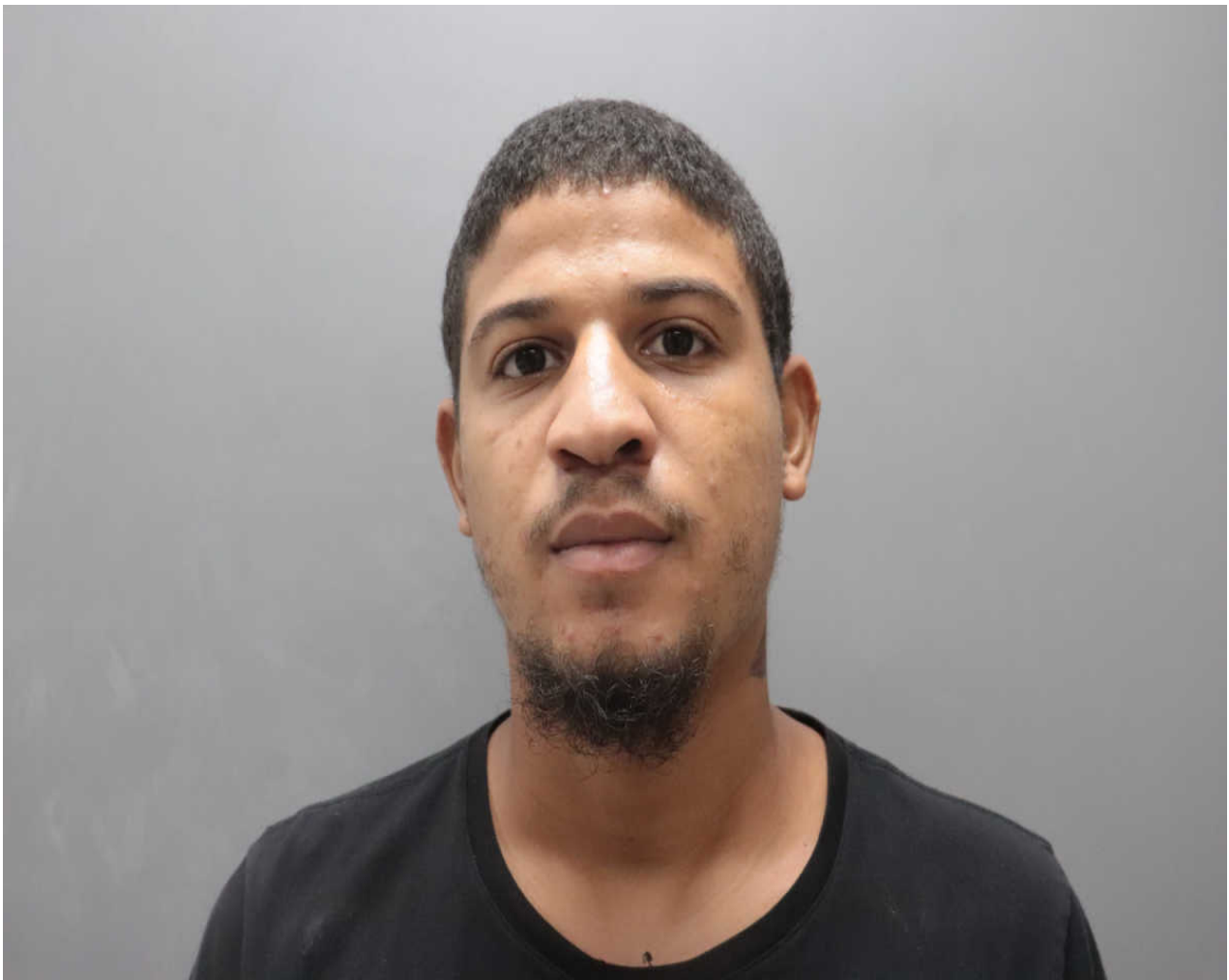


The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. John Man Seen Shooting at Victim Faces Lengthy Prison Sentence; Suspect and Victim Have Ongoing Dispute Over Woman

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Mugshot of Ezius M. Ashly By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. JOHN — A 21-year-old male is facing a series of serious charges including attempted second-degree murder, first-degree assault, reckless endangerment and unauthorized possession of an assault rifle.

Ezius Ashly was taken into custody on Thursday following the issue of a warrant. The charges against him stem from a shooting which took place in the area of Sussanaberg on the night of September 16, 2021. Surveillance footage obtained during the

investigative process led officers to identify Ashly, who is known to police from prior contact with law enforcement.

The footage in question shows the suspect stopping a vehicle on the roadway and walking towards the rear of the car when gunshots were fired from an unknown direction. According to the probable cause fact sheet, while patrons of nearby businesses ran for cover, Ashly was captured running to the driver's side of the vehicle, pulling out a firearm and firing shots in an eastward direction at an unknown individual. He was also shown running towards the individual and using a second weapon identified as an assault rifle to fire more shots. The probable cause fact sheet notes that Ashly could be heard saying "where the [expletive] you is, come out [expletive]" while firing. He then ran back to his vehicle, reversed and headed in an eastward direction at high speed.

Days later, on September 22, police made contact with the victim in the matter who stated that he was in the area and ran into nearby bushes when he heard shots being fired. He claimed that he did not see who fired the shots, nor was he involved in any dispute with the suspect, Ezias Ashly. However, the probable cause fact sheet notes that investigations revealed that both males were involved in a shootout and have an ongoing feud relating to a woman.

Investigations also revealed that while Ashly was seen using two weapons during the attack, he is not registered as a licensed firearm holder. Officers who processed the crime scene discovered fifteen .40 round shell casings and seven .223 shell casings. However, at Ashly's advisement hearing on Friday, it was revealed that neither of the weapons seen in the surveillance footage were recovered by police.

Assistant Attorney General Brenda Scales requested that bail remain as set at \$200,000, noting the seriousness of the offenses. However, Public Defender Julie Todman asked that the amount be reduced by half and that the 21-year-old be allowed to post 5 percent, which amounts to \$5,000.

Judge Carolyn Hermon- Percell noted that the defendant was considered a flight risk due to the significant jail time he faces if convicted. She also stressed that based on the allegations in the affidavit, Ashly poses a danger to the victim in the matter, as well as the wider community. As such, his bail was set at \$100,000 with no 10 percent provision.

Ashly has also been ordered to maintain a 100 feet distance from the alleged victim at all times and is prohibited from having any direct or indirect contact with that individual, or with any potential witnesses. Pending the outcome of the matter, he will be released into the third-party custody of a relative and will be subjected to 24/7 house arrest with electronic monitoring.

In total, Ashly faces 10 charges, several of which carry lengthy prison sentences and hefty fines. If found guilty of unauthorized possession of an assault rifle, he faces a maximum sentence of 25 years and a fine of \$50,000. He also faces four separate charges for unauthorized use of a firearm during the commission of a crime, each of which carries a maximum imprisonment of 20 years and a fine of \$25,000.

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