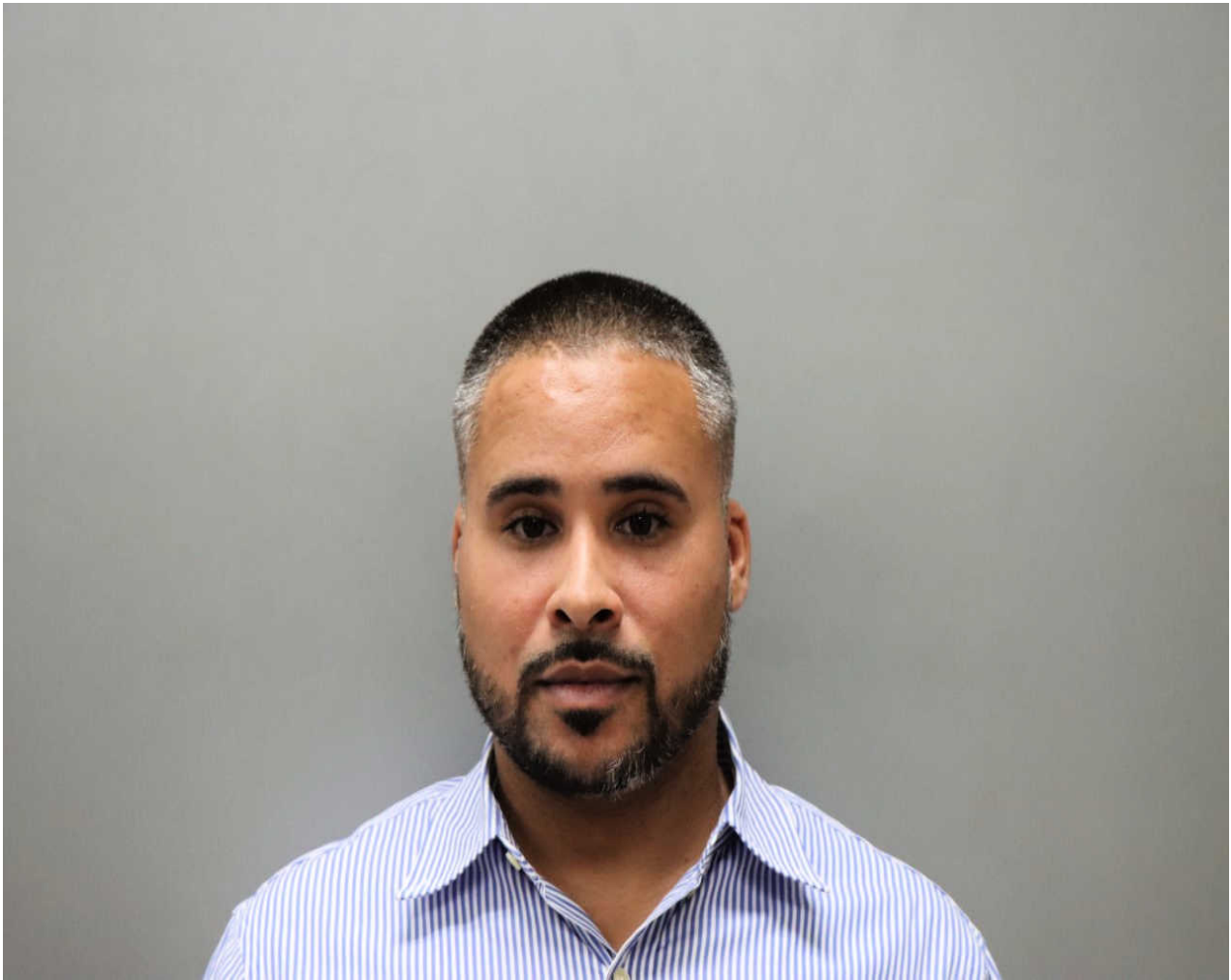


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Brutal Bar Assault on Vietnam Veteran: New Details Emerge

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Mugshot of Richard Lazarus. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. THOMAS — More details have emerged in the assault case against Richard Lazarus, who was arrested after video footage purporting to show him beating up an elderly man was shown to police.

The probable cause fact sheet, in which a law enforcement officer recounts the sequence of events leading to a suspect's arrest, indicates that it was the evening of Monday April 10 when the arresting officer was made aware of a video circulating on social media, and apprised that a report had been filed about the incident that had been recorded.

The officer watched the video in question, which showed a woman and “light skinned male” assaulting a Caucasian man, who was on the ground. First, the woman is reportedly seen punching and then stamping on the man. The light skinned male — subsequently identified as Lazarus — then shrugs off the restraining hold of another male companion and is seen joining in on the attack, beating the man on the ground with a chain that had an attached object. Lazarus reportedly struck the man several times, only stopping when someone pulled him away. The woman continued to assault the man, stomping on him while he was in the fetal position. Someone pulled her away, she broke loose to administer a few last stamps, and then was pulled away again.

After having viewed the video, the officer says she went to the area to look for businesses that may have surveillance cameras that had captured the incident. After serving subpoenas to several of those businesses, the officer was able to view footage from the owner of a car wash bar in the area.

The surveillance footage captured an interaction between the alleged assault victim and the female suspect. He had left the bar counter and was holding on to a pool table for balance, near where the woman had been dancing with her friends. She returned to the area and began pulling on the man’s arm, seemingly in an attempt to get him to move. Eventually he did so, holding on to the wall as he moved towards the restroom. When he returned, the woman was blocking his path and they seemed to have had another brief verbal exchange, during which she was seen clapping her hands together to punctuate her remarks.

Later on, the man who was being assaulted in the other video can be seen at the bar around closing time. The same suspects – the woman and the light-skinned man – are also in the footage, now walking around the bar seemingly looking for something. The bar’s owner told the officer that a group had returned to the establishment at the end of the night ostensibly looking for a diamond bracelet that reportedly cost \$9,000. The bracelet’s owner was Lazarus, it was reported – the “light-skinned male” seen in both videos. The woman left the club first, the male suspect following shortly thereafter. The reported assault victim downed his last shot of alcohol and was directed out of the bar by the establishment’s owner, again holding onto the pool table for balance as he exited. Lazarus returned for a final search before leaving again around 2:16 a.m. on the morning of April 8. Just after 2:30 am, the 911 Emergency Call center reported an unresponsive male at the bar’s address.

Officers found the reported assault victim on April 17. The 69-year old Vietnam veteran told them that he had lived on St. Thomas for several years and frequents a particular restaurant in Contant. That day, he was told that he could not be served alcohol until after 4:00 p.m., so he wandered down the street to a nearby bar. The man told police that he could not remember leaving the bar, only waking up in the emergency room. The officer reports the man as saying that he was told what had happened to him, but that mentally, he did not understand what was going on. Ten days after the alleged incident, the officer noted that the man’s injuries were very apparent, “as if the incident had just occurred”. The veteran said he had a footprint on his right side, near his ribs. The gashes in the print suggested that at least one of his assailants had been wearing cleats. He also had extensive stitching done to the inside and outside of his cheek. He received two stitches near the inner corner of his right eye, and the eye itself was filled with blood.

Initial calls to Lazarus's phone were unsuccessful, and so the officer says she [generated a wanted poster](#). On April 28, Lazarus's attorney called to advise that his client would turn himself in, which he did around 8:00 a.m. Monday, May 1. Lazarus declined to make a statement, only saying that there was "more to the story." He told authorities that the other suspect, referred to by police as his girlfriend, would likely turn herself in as well.

During his advice of rights hearing on Wednesday, May 3, the court found probable cause to uphold charges against Richard Lazarus for first and third-degree assault, aiding and abetting, elderly abuse, as well as disturbance of the peace by threats.

The initial bail requirement of \$75,000 was reduced to \$5000 in cash to secure his release, which Lazarus has since paid. His next court appearance is scheduled for May 19.