

COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA



OFFICE OF THE COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY CITY OF PORTSMOUTH



MEDIA RELEASE

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Portsmouth, VA

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DEFENDANT CONVICTED OF FIRST DEGREE MURDER AND USE OF FIREARM; LIFE SENTENCE PLUS THREE YEARS RECOMMENDED

PORTSMOUTH, VA – Portsmouth Commonwealth's Attorney Stephanie N. Morales announces that on April 25, 2018, Kevin Howell was convicted of first degree murder and use of a firearm in the commission of a felony for the April 2017 shooting death of Maurice Gore. After presenting evidence of the Defendant's criminal record and testimony from the victim's relatives, the Commonwealth argued for a life sentence on the murder charge. Deputy Commonwealth's Attorney Almetia Hardman successfully obtained a recommended life sentence on the charge of first degree murder, along with the mandatory minimum three-year sentence for use of a firearm in the commission of murder.

The Commonwealth's evidence proved beyond a reasonable doubt that the Defendant shot the victim 10-12 times, including one shot to the victim's right temple. When interviewed by police, the Defendant admitted to shooting the victim, but claimed the shooting was done in self-defense. A forensic technician found four bullets embedded in the floor under the victim's body, lending support to the Commonwealth's argument that the Defendant premeditated the execution-style shooting of the victim. The Defendant had a prior conviction for involuntary manslaughter at the time he killed the victim in this case.

The Commonwealth will argue for the imposition of the recommended sentence of life in prison plus three years at the sentencing hearing on July 23, 2018. Deputy Commonwealth's Attorney Almetia Fields Hardman prosecuted the case for the Commonwealth.

"I am thankful for my attorneys' tireless efforts to reduce violent crime in our city. It is impossible for the legal system to fill the void created by the loss of a loved one, but today's verdict is a promising sign that victims of violent crimes will receive justice in the city of Portsmouth."

- Stephanie N. Morales

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