



OFFICE OF STATE ATTORNEY, FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA

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## PRESS RELEASE

The Office of the State Attorney announced Tuesday that manslaughter charges have been dismissed against three Crestview police officers indicted in the 2021 death of Calvin Wilks, Jr.

Brandon Hardaway, William Johns, and Evan Reynolds were indicted by an Okaloosa grand jury after it found probable cause in connection with Wilks' death on October 14, 2021. Probable cause is the legal threshold needed to return an indictment, but is less than the level of proof to convict at trial.

The case proceeded through an extensive and comprehensive discovery process which is now complete. As a part of this discovery process, numerous witnesses have been presented and deposed by both the State and defense, to include experts in the field of pathology, toxicology, and use of force techniques.

The additional evidence raised "serious questions" about the cause and manner of Wilks' death, and "the evidence as it now stands," fails to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the officers should be held criminally responsible.

For the reasons stated, the charges in this matter have been dismissed.

"As State Attorney I remain committed to upholding the highest standards and practices throughout all phases of a case," Ginger Bowden Madden says. "While the Grand Jury acted on the information before it, this decision reflects the evidence as it now stands. I offer my condolences to the Wilks family for their loss, recognizing the impact this tragedy has had on all parties involved."