

State of South Carolina



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SCARLETT A. WILSON

Solicitor, Ninth Judicial Circuit

40 Years Prison Sentence After Man Convicted of Murdering Girlfriend and Attempting to Murder a North Charleston Police Officer

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Charleston, S.C.— Solicitor Scarlett Wilson announced that a Charleston County jury convicted Defendant David Beaufort of Murder, Attempted Murder and Possession of a Weapon During the Commission of a Violent Crime after nearly four days of trial. The Honorable Deadra Jefferson sentenced the Defendant to a total of 40 years in prison. Solicitor Wilson stated, “Last week we had three trials that ended in convictions, all of which involved violence against women. Brave Officers like Jamie Sylvester also suffer at the hands of these batterers. Thankfully, Officer Sylvester survived but this madness must stop.” Solicitor Wilson and Assistant Solicitor Sara Bozarth prosecuted and tried the case for the State.

Testimony at trial revealed that in the early morning hours of December 16, 2021, the Defendant and Victim engaged in consensual sexual intercourse which they recorded on video. The Victim’s recorded 911 call was initiated just over 20 minutes after the sex video ended at 2:26am. The 911 call provided a detailed account of the Victim’s frantic and desperate efforts to help the Defendant who she believed was overdosing. The call was terminated by the Victim at 2:29am after the Defendant asked the Victim to contact his mother. At 2:35am, help arrived, including EMS, NCFD, and Officer Sylvester. Officer Sylvester’s activated body worn camera (BWC) captured the Unit’s successful entry through the side door as they heard the Victim screaming frantically in fear. Ultimately, the BWC video and audio confirm Defendant Beaufort shot at Officer Sylvester four times before then shooting and killing the Victim. The Defendant admitted to EMS he had been drinking Everclear and smoking marijuana laced with cocaine.

The State docketed the Defendant for trial last year. On the eve of that trial, the Defendant gave notice of his intent to invoke the affirmative defense of not guilty by reason of insanity. As a result, the State moved the Circuit Court for an order for an independent evaluation of the Defendant’s criminal responsibility / capacity to conform his conduct. Doctors at the Medical University of South Carolina performed the court ordered evaluation on May 27, 2025. On June 25, 2025, they issued their findings that at the time of the murder and attempted murder, the Defendant had the mental capacity to distinguish moral and legal right from moral and legal wrong and that he had the capacity to conform his conduct to the requirements of the law. The Defendant was properly noticed for trial which began on November 3. At that time, the Defendant withdrew his insanity claim. The Defendant testified and claimed self-defense. The jury saw through the self-defense absurdity.

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