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Confession Thrown Out

Police coercion sets back case against accused killer

Multnomah County Circuit Judge Michael A. Greenlick has thrown out the alleged confession of accused serial killer Homer Lee Jackson, citing improper and coercive tactics used by Portland police.

Video footage of Jackson facing more than seven hours of questioning by law enforcement officials over two days was thrown out as evidence in the case last month because police improperly used a mix of threats and promises of leniency to extract a confession, according to a new report.

Jackson, 57, had lived quietly in northeast Portland for the past 13 years and was collecting disability payments and taking medical for para-



Homer Lee Jackson

noid schizophrenia when he was arrested in October 2015 in connection with a string of prostitution related deaths.

Jackson pleaded not guilty to killing two black teenage girls and two black adult women in the 1980s who

were suspected of being involved in sex trafficking and who died of asphyxiation and their bodies dumped in nearby parks and ravines. Despite this, authorities say he later confessed to the murders when detectives Meredith Hopper and James Lawrence told Jackson he would feel "great relief" and mercy from God if he admitted to the crimes. Detectives also called Jackson a "monster" and said if he didn't confess, they would propose the severest possible punishment.

The inadmissible evidence is latest setback for state prosecutors. Police announced two years ago in a press conference that they had solved the case with Jackson's arrest.

Shooting Was Covered Up

Independent review says ex-chief lied to shift blame

Former Police Chief Larry O'Dea was found to mislead three assistant chiefs and then-Mayor Charlie Hales about a camping trip in which O'Dea shot his friend, a new independent police review has found.

While police protocol calls for immediate notification to Portland's Independent Review Division about for such mishaps, the report showed that O'Dea waited four days to tell his assistants and the mayor of the off-duty incident, which occurred in Harney County.

Though O'Dea had disclosed to assistant chiefs, internal affairs, and the mayor about the non-mortal wounding of his friend after returning from the trip, O'Dea lied to the Independent Police Review investigators and Harney County Deputies about the incident, saying his friend Robert Dempsey accidentally wounded himself.

In actuality, O'Dea and some friends were shooting at ground squirrels when he accidentally shot Dempsey in the back with a hollow point bullet, the fragments of which remained in Dempsey even after hospitalization.

O'Dea instructed three assistant chiefs and the mayor's office to keep the incident quiet, and they cooperated, until investigations brought to light the details of the occurrence, officials determined.

O'Dea retired in late June 2016 amid the heat of Harney County investigations. Though a grand jury indicted O'Dea for negligently wounding his friend, charges were eventually dismissed by



Former Police Chief Larry O'Dea

a Harney County judge as part of a civil compromise.

Derek Rodrigues, who at the time headed Police Internal Affairs and is currently captain of the Family Services Division, now faces two days suspension for not reporting his knowledge of the shooting to the Independent Review Division right away.