



Joe Kline/The Bulletin via AP

A picture of missing person Kaylee Sawyer is displayed on a screen as Deschutes County District Attorney John Hummel speaks on Tuesday at the Deschutes County Courthouse in Bend.

Details emerge after arrest in death of Oregon woman

By ANDREW SELSKY
Associated Press

SALEM — Kaylee Sawyer was walking alone in the middle of the night on the edge of the picturesque town of Bend, Oregon, after getting into an argument with her boyfriend.

Police believe she encountered Edwin Lara, a 31-year-old with an associate degree in criminal justice who was working as a security guard at a community college.

A body that resembles the 23-year-old Sawyer was found later but has not yet been positively identified. Lara was in the Tahama County Jail in California on Wednesday, a day after authorities say he shot a man at a motel in Yreka, California, and stole a car with a woman and her two sons inside.

Lara's wife, Isabel Ponce-Lara, went to police in their hometown of Redmond, Oregon, on Monday, crying uncontrollably and saying Lara had told her that he hit Sawyer with his patrol vehicle, killing her, then panicked and hid her body, according to documents filed in court.

After tearfully telling his story to her, Lara drove off, said his wife, a new Bend police officer who was worried that he was suicidal.

Police went to their home and found Sawyer's blood-soaked purse, bloody women's and men's clothing and other belongings in a shed, according to 62 pages of affidavits filed with the Deschutes County Circuit Court in Bend.

The officers said evidence showed Lara had committed crimes of vehicular homicide, assault and hit-and-run.

Deschutes County District Attorney John Hummel isn't buying the story about Lara having accidentally run over Sawyer.

Lara "did unlawfully and intentionally cause the death of Kaylee Anne Sawyer," the murder charge filed against him Tuesday reads.

Circuit Court Judge Alta Brady has prohibited all parties in the case, including attorneys and the district attorney's office, from publicly commenting on it.

Hummel told The Associated Press in an email that consequently he could not say what evidence led his office to charge Lara with murder instead of vehicular homicide.

But he added: "I can tell you that I would not file charges alleging a person intentionally killed a person if I did not have evidence to support the assertion."

In California, Lara is accused of shooting a man at a motel before stealing a car and forcing one of the sons to drive at gunpoint. Lara let the family members go along Interstate 5. The gunshot victim at the Super 8 was last listed in critical condition on Tuesday.

A mug shot showed Lara with medium-length black hair and beard stubble staring sullenly into the camera.

A motive was unclear in the case against Lara, whose judicial record consists of 10 traffic citations and a fish and game violation.

His court-appointed attorney, Benjamin Kim, did not immediately return a call or email seeking comment.

Hundreds of people attended a candlelight vigil for Sawyer in a Bend park on Tuesday evening. TV news reports showed mourners remembering her as a caring person with a radiant smile.

A 19-year-old woman from Salem, Oregon, was arrested with Lara when he pulled over after being chased by California Highway Patrol at speeds over 100 mph. She was initially taken into custody on suspicion of attempted murder and kidnapping in relation to the mayhem in Yreka but was later released and all charges were dropped.

Family members told reporters that the woman had been kidnapped. The Yreka Police Department called her another victim of Lara instead of a suspect.

Prosecutors abandon case against police in Gray's death

BALTIMORE (AP) — More than a year after a young black man suffered a broken neck in a police van, the effort to hold six officers criminally responsible for his death collapsed Wednesday when the city dropped all charges in the case that tore Baltimore apart and exposed fissures between the police, prosecutors and the people.

Just one day before another trial was to begin, prosecutors dismissed the three remaining cases, blaming police for a biased investigation that failed to produce a single conviction in the death of Freddie Gray.

Gray, 25, was fatally injured in April 2015 while he was handcuffed and shackled but left otherwise unrestrained in the back of the van. His death added fuel to the growing Black Lives Matter movement, set off massive protests and led to the city's worst riots in decades.

But prosecutors suffered blow after crippling blow in the courtroom. A judge acquitted three other officers, including the van driver who prosecutors considered the most responsible and another officer who was

the highest-ranking of the group.

The case took shape soon after the rioting, when Democratic State's Attorney Marilyn Mosby confidently announced the charges atop a sweeping staircase across from City Hall.

On Wednesday, she was fiery and indignant as she spoke from behind a podium across the street from the public-housing complex where Gray was arrested. She angrily blamed the outcome on an uncooperative police department and a broken criminal justice system.

Mosby outlined what prosecutors have called sabotage, saying officers who were witnesses were also part of the department's investigative team. She said "obvious questions" weren't asked during interrogations. She alleged lead detectives were slow to provide information and failed to execute search warrants for text messages pertaining to the officers in the case. She also accused investigators of creating notes after the case was launched to contradict the medical examiner's conclusion that Gray's death was a homicide.

Trump to Russia: Uncover deleted Clinton emails

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump encouraged Russia on Wednesday to find and make public missing emails deleted by his presidential opponent, Hillary Clinton, setting off an instant debate over hacking and his urging of a foreign government to meddle in American politics.

Shortly after Trump's extraordinary remarks, his Republican running mate, Indiana Gov. Mike Pence, took a different tack and warned of "serious consequences" if Russia interfered in the election.

Democrats — and some Republicans — quickly condemned the remarks by the Republican presidential standard-bearer.

They came as the Democrats met on the third day of their national convention in Philadelphia, where Clinton will accept the presidential nomination Thursday night to face Republican Trump in November.

Trump's comments raised the question of whether he was condoning foreign government hacking of U.S. computers and the public release of information stolen from political adversaries — actions that are at least publicly frowned upon across the globe. His brief remarks managed to divert attention from an embarrassing leak of other hacked emails that exposed sensitive internal political communications that had divided Democrats.

"Russia, if you're listening, I hope you're able to find the 30,000 emails that are missing," Trump said. He was referring to emails on Clinton's private server that she said she deleted — because they were private — before turning other messages over to the State Department. The Justice Department declined to prosecute Clinton over her email practices, but FBI Director James Comey called her "extremely careless" in handling classified information as President Barack Obama's secretary of state.

The Clinton campaign called Trump's statement the "first time that a major presidential candidate has actively encouraged a foreign power to conduct espionage against a political opponent."

At a news conference in Doral, Florida, after Trump's initial remarks, he was asked whether he had any qualms about asking a foreign government to hack into computers in the United States. Trump did not directly respond except to say, "That's up to the president. Let the president talk to them."

He later added: "If Russia or China or any other country has those emails, I mean, to be honest with you, I'd love to see them."

Trump's invitation was immediately contradicted by his running mate.



AP Photo/Evan Vucci

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump speaks during a campaign rally at Lackawanna College, Wednesday in Scranton, Pa.

Pence condemned any possible cyber-espionage, breaking from Trump for the first time since being selected to run with him.

"If it is Russia and they are interfering in our elections, I can assure you both parties and the United States government will ensure there are serious consequences," Pence said in a statement.

Brendan Buck, a spokesman for Republican House Speaker Paul Ryan said bluntly: "Russia is a global menace led by a devious thug. Putin should stay out of this election."

A Trump campaign communications adviser, Jason Miller, sought to clarify Trump's statements, saying on Twitter that Trump never urged or invited Russia to hack Clinton's emails. Instead, he said, Trump was "clearly saying" that if Russia or anyone else already had Clinton's deleted emails they should share them with the FBI. But Trump never mentioned the FBI in his comments.

It was not immediately clear where or how Clinton's deleted emails might be recovered, unless an adversary had previously hacked the computer server she operated in the basement of her home in Chappaqua, New York, before she had deleted the messages.

The Associated Press, which discovered the basement server's existence in March 2015, previously reported that it was connected to the internet in ways that made it more vulnerable to hackers.

The FBI concluded it was possible hackers broke into her server but found no direct evidence.

Wednesday's exchange occurred hours after Obama identified Russia as almost certainly responsible for hacking the Democratic National Committee in a different case. WikiLeaks published on its website

last week more than 19,000 internal emails stolen from the DNC earlier this year. The emails showed DNC staffers supporting Clinton when they were publicly promising to remain neutral during the primary elections between Sen. Bernie Sanders and her.

The head of the DNC, Debbie Wasserman Schultz, resigned over the disclosures.

Trump cast doubt on whether Russia was behind that hack. He said blaming Russia was deflecting attention from the embarrassing material in the emails.

"Russia has no respect for our country, if it is Russia," Trump said. "It could be China. It could be someone sitting in his bedroom. It's probably not Russia. Nobody knows if it's Russia."

Obama traditionally avoids commenting on active FBI investigations, but he told NBC News on Tuesday that outside experts have blamed Russia for the leak. Obama also appeared to embrace the notion that President Vladimir Putin might have been responsible because of what he described as Trump's affinity for Putin. Trump said he has no relationship with Putin.

In Moscow on Wednesday, Putin's spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, said Russia would never interfere in another country's election.

"What the motives were in terms of the leaks, all that, I can't say directly," Obama said. "What I do know is that Donald Trump has repeatedly expressed admiration for Vladimir Putin."

Obama said he was basing his assessment on Trump's own comments and the fact that Trump has "gotten pretty favorable coverage back in Russia."

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange said Tuesday on CNN that "a lot more" material was coming.

