

Defendants Face Prison Time for Robbery, Burglary, Drug, and Weapons Charges

A 45-year-old Newark man faces at least 15 years in prison for a series of 2016 robberies in New Castle County. Deputy Attorney General Christina Kontis secured a guilty plea from Leo Watson to 3 counts of Robbery First Degree. In early June 2016, Watson robbed the Exxon gas station in the 5300 block of Concord Pike twice in 2 days, the Dollar Tree in the 2000 block of Philadelphia Pike, and attempted to rob the Valero gas station in the 1300 block of McKennans Church Road. Watson displayed a crow bar during one of the robberies at the Exxon and a BB gun during the Dollar Tree robbery. Watson faces a minimum mandatory 15 years in prison when sentenced by a Superior Court judge later this year.

Deputy Attorney General Matthew Frawley secured a guilty plea for Pleasant Hardy, 35, of Wilmington, on burglary and theft charges. In December 2016, Hardy walked into an open garage in the Pierson Farms neighborhood in North Wilmington and stole a small motorbike being stored for a neighbor. After the owner of the bike confronted Hardy in the neighborhood, Hardy left the area and went to a nearby home on Shipley Road where he entered through an open garage. Hardy took jewelry from that home, and was confronted by the homeowner as Hardy was leaving the house. Hardy, a habitual offender due to previous felony convictions on drug and weapons charges, pled guilty to 2 counts of Burglary Second Degree and 2 counts of Theft of Less than \$1,500, and faces a minimum mandatory 9 years in prison when sentenced later this year by a Superior Court judge.

A Newark teen will spend 4 years in prison after his sentencing on felony charges relating to his firing a gun at a car along Route 40 in Bear, then fleeing the scene. In

September 2016, Walike Parham, who was 17 years old at the time, pulled a gun out and repeatedly fired at a car traveling on Pulaski Highway near the Sparrow Run development. Several bullets hit the car, but no one inside the vehicle was hit. Two weeks later, Parham engaged police in a car chase when they tried to pull him over. Parham eventually lost control of his vehicle and crashed. Officers located a rifle in the car when taking him into custody. Deputy Attorney General Barzilai Axelrod secured a guilty plea from Parham in April to Reckless Endangering First Degree, Conspiracy Second Degree, Disregarding a Police Officer's Signal, and Possession of a Firearm During the Commission of a Felony. Parham was sentenced as an adult by a Superior Court judge to 4 years in prison, followed by 6 months of home confinement, then 1 year of probation.

Tyrone Baines, 22, of Bear pled guilty and will spend 4 years in prison on drug dealing charges. Deputy Attorney General Jeff Rigby secured the plea to Drug Dealing stemming from a July 2016 incident in which Baines was seen selling heroin outside of the Motel 6 on McIntosh Drive in Newark. Baines also pled guilty to Drug Dealing (Tier 4) for an incident in January 2017. New Castle County Police detectives, acting on behalf of the Wilmington Resident Officer Drug Enforcement Administration Task Force, were on surveillance, and saw Baines in the 200 block of Bluefield Road in Newark. Baines led police on a foot chase through neighborhood yards before being taken into custody. A Superior Court judge sentenced Baines to 4 years in prison, followed by 6 months of home confinement or work release, then 18 months of probation.