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Another inmate released in probe

by: OMER GILLHAM World Staff Writer
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 **Grand jury investigates police corruption:** Read all of the stories, view a timeline and read key documents.

A judge has released a fourth inmate from federal prison based on an investigation into alleged police corruption in Tulsa, a Tulsa World investigation shows.

Jamon Armin Pointer, 31, was released from federal prison April 9, but he remains on hold with the Oklahoma Department of Corrections, according to Tulsa Jail records.

Pointer was convicted Oct. 1, 2008, in U.S. District Court in Tulsa of possession of "crack" cocaine with intent to distribute, records show. He was serving a 10-year term.

The release of Pointer and three other inmates from federal prison is based on an ongoing federal grand jury investigation into alleged police corruption in Tulsa. An undercover Tulsa police officer and a federal agent investigated all four cases, records show.

The investigators, Jeff Henderson, 37, and Brandon McFadden, 33, have been implicated in claims of stealing drugs and money, planting drugs on individuals and using drug dealers to sell drugs, according to court testimony and records.

Henderson, an undercover Tulsa police officer, has not been charged with a crime, but his attorney, Chad A. Greer, said the defense team believes he could be indicted.

McFadden, a former agent of the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, pleaded guilty to drug conspiracy May 6. He is cooperating with federal prosecutors while he awaits a sentencing hearing, records show.

McFadden's pleading names Henderson and another officer, "Tulsa Police Officer B," as participants in his drug conspiracy, which involved stealing drugs and money, planting drugs on individuals and selling drugs for profit.

Ten people have now been released from federal prison or have had their federal or state drug felony cases dismissed because of the involvement of Henderson, McFadden or both, records show.

The World's investigation has also found that Henderson is one of two police officers named in numerous complaints by residents alleging excessive use of force or violation of police procedures.

Thirteen complaints have been filed against Henderson and three complaints have been filed against Officer Bill Yelton since May 2004, according to records associated with the settlement of the Black Officers' Coalition's lawsuit against the Tulsa Police Department.

An affidavit filed May 10 in U.S. District Court says that a drug informant accused Yelton and Henderson of soliciting false testimony from her, which led to the conviction of Bobby Wayne Haley Sr. on Sept. 30, 2005.

The affidavit is part of the grand jury investigation led by U.S. Attorney Jane W. Duke of Arkansas' Eastern District.

Henderson and Yelton have not been charged with any crime. Yelton was not available for comment.

Yelton joined the Tulsa police force in 1985. He is assigned to the Special Investigations Division.

Greer said Henderson has denied any wrongdoing and is preparing a rigorous defense if he is indicted.

Records show that Henderson ranks third among Tulsa officers named in residents' complaints or internal affairs reviews.

Of the 13 complaints against Henderson, only one was sustained and two were resolved, records show.

Investigations of the remaining 10 complaints determined them to be unfounded, not sustained or exonerated, records show.

Greer said: "This just shows how easy it is to file a complaint against a hard-working officer, and once those complaints are investigated they are shown to be false or unsustained. The only sustained complaint involved Officer Henderson failing to fill out paperwork when he released a juvenile to the custody of a guardian."

Greer said Henderson has made more than 1,000 arrests during his 15 years on the force, which means that many of the criminals file complaints in retaliation.

"When you deal with as many cases and individuals as he does, you are going to see complaints," he said. "But Jeff has never had a complaint involving stolen drugs, planting drugs or any of the other claims that have been made against him."

Capt. Jonathan Brooks, a Tulsa police spokesman, said that a complaint that is listed as "unfounded" means the complaint was shown to be false through an investigation by internal affairs officers or an administrator or supervisor.

"Not sustained" means that the complaint could not be proven or disproven, he said.

For example, a complaint of excessive use of force filed March 16, 2009, against Henderson by a 24-year-old black male is listed as "not sustained." A complaint filed Sept. 17, 2008, against Henderson alleging violation of procedure was determined to be unfounded.

In addition, either Henderson or Yelton is named in five complaints that involve a routine review of actions taken in the line of duty. For example, Yelton's use of deadly force in October 2008 was determined to be within policy, records show.

All of the complaints against Yelton since 2004 were determined to be unfounded, not sustained or within policy, records show.

In the Haley case, Rochelle Martin said that Henderson and Yelton solicited false testimony from her that drugs were being sold at Haley's home and salvage yard, according to an affidavit filed in U.S. District Court in Tulsa.

Duke filed the affidavit along with a petition to have Haley freed from federal prison, records show.

The World has learned that Duke's investigation is primarily focused on the Special Investigations Division of the Tulsa Police Department.

Henderson's defense team said that Martin's affidavit is suspect because she allegedly lied in it when she said that she had not participated in controlled drug buys for Tulsa police.

Greer said Martin had participated in as many as four controlled drug buys since 1993.

Eric Cullen, another member of Henderson's defense team, said Duke has "clearly shown she is uninformed based upon her desperation to cast yet another stone that doesn't have any truth. The affidavit that Rochelle Martin created with the assistance of her appointed public defender, Julia O'Connell, is untruthful, and we have once again shown this with our evidence."

Records show that Duke asked U.S. District Judge Terrence Kern to consider releasing Haley from federal prison, where he is serving a 20-year sentence for possession of cocaine with intent to distribute.

Haley is represented by Wes Johnson, a Tulsa attorney, who said he could not comment on Haley's possible release.

Brooks said Henderson is on paid leave pending the outcome of the federal grand jury investigation, but Yelton remains on active duty.

The Police Department did place a second officer, John K. Gray, on paid leave, pending the outcome of the investigation.

Gray, 43, was put on leave in April, soon after Henderson was placed on leave in late March.

Records show that Henderson was suspended without pay for two days in regard to a sustained complaint before 2004.

Records show Henderson had conducted a bar check at a local tavern July 20, 2001, as part of his alleged personal dispute with a bar employee.

"I was younger then and I made a mistake. I should not have gotten involved in that kind of behavior," Henderson said.

Grand jury investigation results

Ten people have been released from prison or had felony charges or convictions dismissed as a result of a federal grand jury's investigation of alleged law enforcement corruption in Tulsa.

U.S. DISTRICT COURT:

Larita Annette Barnes: Convicted of a drug felony in 2008 and freed from federal prison July 2. Was serving two 10-year sentences.

Larry Wayne Barnes Sr.: Convicted of a drug felony in 2008 and freed from federal prison July 2. Was serving two five-year sentences.

Fred Allen Shields Jr.: Convicted of drug trafficking in march 2009. Conviction dismissed Feb. 19.

Demarco Deon Williams: Convicted of drug charges in April 2008 and freed from federal prison April 30. Was serving two life sentences.

Jamon Armin Pointer: Convicted in october 2008 of drug trafficking. Conviction dismissed April 9. Was serving 10 years in prison.

TULSA COUNTY DISTRICT COURT:

Richard Miller: Charged Sept. 10 with possession of a controlled drug. Case dismissed April 20.

Melanie L. Richardson: Charged oct. 14 with possession of a controlled drug with intent to distribute. Case dismissed April 9.

Seanta G. Sinclair: Charged oct. 14 with possession of a controlled drug with intent to distribute. Case dismissed April 9.

Rodney E. Titsworth: Charged Jan. 14 with possession of a controlled drug with intent to distribute. Charge dropped April 20.

Terry U. Perryman: Charged Jan. 14 with possession of a controlled drug with intent to distribute. Charge dropped April 20.

World staff writer Curtis Killman contributed to this story.

Omer Gillham 581-8301
omer.gillham@tulsaworld.com

Associate Images:



CASE TOSSED

Jamon Armin Pointer: The development in his case comes amid a grand jury investigation of Tulsa police.



Larita Barnes



Larry Wayne Barnes



Miller



Richardson

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