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IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF WASHINGTON IN AND
FOR LEWIS COUNTY

STATE OF WASHINGTON,

Plaintiff,

vs.

WILLIAM DAVID THOMPSON,

Defendant.

No. 20-1-00237-21

DECLARATION OF
PROBABLE CAUSE

JONATHAN L. MEYER, Prosecuting Attorney for Lewis County, through his
Chief Criminal Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, William J. Halstead submits the following
declaration of probable cause.

WILLIAM J. HALSTEAD, hereby deposes and states that:

1. I am over the age of eighteen and competent to testify as to the matters
contained herein.
2. I am a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for Lewis County and am lead
counsel on the above-encaptioned cause.

Based on the attached report by Detective Jim Meldrum, the State believes there
is probable cause to charge the defendant.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the Laws of the State of Washington that
the foregoing is true and correct.

DATED: March 25, 2020


WILLIAM J. HALSTEAD, WSBA # 23838
Chief Criminal Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

DECLARATION OF
PROBABLE CAUSE

WASHINGTON STATE PATROL
CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DIVISION
Certification for Probable Cause Report



FILE TITLE	DETECTIVE	CASE NUMBER
Assault in the First Degree R.C.W. 9A.36.011(a)	J. Meldrum D631	20-005633
Assault in the Second Degree R.C.W. 9A.36.021(c)		
Hit and Run resulting in death R.C.W. 46.52.020		
Eluding R.C.W. 46.61.024		

DETAILS:

On March 24, 2020 at approximately 2:40pm in the afternoon Deputies from the Thurston County Sheriff's department located a vehicle which was involved in robbery on the day before. The suspect shoplifted an item from a convenience store and when contacted brandished a Taser and followed the victim back into the store. The suspect attempted to leave the clerk followed and while attempting to get the license plate, was assaulted by the suspect by driving towards them causing them to take evasive measures to keep from getting stuck.

Deputies attempted to stop the Ford F-150 pickup bearing license WA/HITECH when the male driver, later identified as William D. Thompson (DOB 7/27/80) failed to stop and accelerated away from. Deputies pursued the pickup south on Interstate 5 into Lewis County. The driver in an attempt to elude deputies drove in excess of 100 mph, using all lanes and even the paved shoulder. A request was made by the deputies for assistance from the Washington State Patrol to stage ahead an attempt to deploy spike strips. Troopers from the Chehalis Detachment responded and staged near the onramp from exit 77, Chambers Way.

Troopers Justin Schaffer, Michael Farkas, Dakota Russell, Sgt. William Stellmacher were standing by near the onramp to southbound I-5 from Chambers Way. Trooper Schaffer had his marked Chevrolet Tahoe pulled to the right shoulder of I-5 near the gore point from Chambers Way. Schaffer's emergency

Page 1 of 2 Officer's Signature _____ Date _____
Supervisor's Signature _____ Date _____

lights were activated at the time warning traffic of his presence.

Due to the heavy police presence on the interstate, traffic began to slow. Thompson attempted to avoid slowing and entered the paved right shoulder of I-5 at speeds of 90 mph. Thompson failed to slow or yield to pursuing patrol cars and continued his reckless attempt to avoid capture.

Thompson approached Trooper Schaffer's location. Trooper Schaffer was outside of his patrol car and was attempting to deploy spike strips when, according to deputies Thompson verred right directly towards Schaffer. Thompson struck Trooper Schaffer near the right front headlamp/bumper area. The violent force threw Trooper Schaffer nearly 120 feet forward. The force of impact tore Trooper Schaffer's duty belt off his waist. Trooper Schaffer came to rest in lane one of I-5. Thompson failed to slow or stop and continued south, leaving the roadway to the right briefly before regaining control and re-entering southbound I-5.

Trooper Farkas was pulled to the right shoulder approximately a half mile away. Trooper Farkas attempted to deploy his spike strips. Trooper Farkas was standing in front of his patrol car, when Thompson again drove straight toward Trooper Farkas and his patrol car. Thomson had a clear path to stay to the left, however Thompson chose to move right. Thompson struck Trooper Farkas' patrol car on the driver's side starting at the rear and continueing up to the front. The force of the collision sheared the left side of the vehicles PIT bar off and throwing forward hitting Trooper Farkas in the chest. The force of the three foot long metal object striking Trooper Farkas tore his jacked and had he not been wearing his issued ballistic vest, would have caused serious bodily injury, possibly mortally wounding him.

Thompson again failed to slow or stop for pursing vehicles. Thompson's vehicle was beginning to fail with his tire starting to go flat from the spike strips. Thompson continued another two miles at speeds of 80-90 mph until he attempted to exit to Rice Road/exit 77. Thompson lost control of his pickup, locked his brakes and skid through the intersection at the top of the off-ramp. His vehicle struck the guard rail and traffic light post on the opposite side of the roadway and became disabled.

Thompson failed to obey verbal commands to exit the vehicle and remained inside refusing to exit. After a lengthy attempt to deescalate the incident and talk him into getting out, several rounds of smoke canisters were fired into the vehicle in an attempt to get him to comply. After nearly an 1 ½ hour standoff, Thompson agreed to exit the vehicle and taken into custody.

Thompson was read his rights on scene and he chose to invoke his right.

Thompson was taken to the Lewis County Jail and booked. Deputy Ryan Preston from Clark County Sheriff's Office arrived at the jail as a Drug Recognition Expert. Deputy Ryan advised Thompson he was asked to take photographs of Thompson. During Preston's observation of Thompson, he noticed several indicators that based on his Preston's training and experience lead him to believe that Thompson was also under the influence of narcotic and or intoxicants. Preston found probable cause and a search warrant was applied for and granted to extract two vials of blood from Thompson. The blood was later entered in the WSP evidence system under the same case number listed above.

Based on the above statement of events, I find probable cause to believe and do in fact believe that William Thompson during the felonious act of attempting to elude police officers knowingly drove toward and struck Trooper Schaffer causing the death of Trooper Justin Schaffer. I also find probable cause to believe that Thompson failed to stop after hitting Trooper Schaffer and also chose to willfully drive toward Trooper Farkas, striking him in the chest with debris. Based on these actions I am requesting the following charges:

- Assault in the 1st Degree, RCW 9A.36.011(a), a class A felony.
- Assault in the Second Degree, R.C.W 9A.36.021(c), a class B felony.
- Hit and Run resulting in death, R.C.W. 46.52.020, a class B felony.
- Eluding, R.C.W 46.61.024, a class C felony.

END OF REPORT

I certify (declare) under penalty of perjury under the laws of Washington that the foregoing is true and correct. (RCW 9A.72.085)

/s/ Jim Meldrum
Detective J. Meldrum

#D631

Lewis County, WA. 3/24/2020
Location