

From: hpost@volusia.org
To: Joanne Magley, Daniel Eckert, Terry Sanders, James Dinneen
Subject: The case of Danielle Platt's daughter
Date: 18-Jun-2018 14:06
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This case was brought up by a woman during Public Participation in our last County Council meeting. The victim's mother, Danielle Platt, and members of the public have reached out to me as well. Here is an account:

"It has come to my attention that you are aware of the issues regarding Volusia County Medical Examiner's Office. I would like to share the following with you as we fight to seek out some sort of resolution.

On the morning of April 13, 2018, Danielle Pratt's daughter, Justis Garrett, left for school not knowing she would never see her again. She did not come home that day, and Danielle reported her missing to the Mt. Dora Police Department the next day.

On April 19th Danielle saw that a female body had been found on Gasline Rd. in Deland. She called the Deland Police Department to inquire as to whether or not the yet unidentified body they found, was her daughter, Justis. They assured her that it could not be her because this body had been decomposing for at least 10 days or longer, and at this point, Justis had only been missing for five days. Chief Umberger stated that an autopsy was scheduled for 10:45 on April 19th...where is the autopsy report?

The news gave everyone hope that Justis would be found. Family and friends continued to post on social media, and handed out flyers every day, searching for any information on the whereabouts of Justis.

It was not until May 1st, (18 days after Danielle reported Justis missing, and 13 days after the Deland Police Department had assured her that female victim was not her daughter,) that she was informed the FDLE was investigating a possible link between the unidentified body and that of her missing daughter. At this time, the FDLE/CSI took a sample of Danielle's DNA. Six days later, on May 7th, the FDLE informed her that the DNA provided confirmation that the female body found on April 18th, was, in fact, her daughter, Justis Garrett.

No one should ever have to suffer the way Danielle has when they have lost a loved one. Especially someone who is enduring the death of their child. Where are the answers she so desperately needs? Why hasn't anyone told her how the body of a child can be left for two weeks, unidentified, while recklessly telling the mother that it is in fact not their child? Why isn't anyone sharing any information regarding how her daughter was killed? How is the Volusia County's ME's resignation affecting Justis's case?"

My question is:

**** has anyone reached out with any answers from the ME's office or with any official response to her questions?

*** written clarification on this would be appreciated.

Thank you.

Heather Post

Volusia County Councilwoman


District 4

123 W. Indiana Avenue, Room 301

DeLand, FL 32720

Email: hpost@volusia.org

Assistant: Darla Zakaluzny, (386) 943-7026

From: wpellan@volusia.org
To: Marja Kolomyski
CC: Jon Thogmartin, Lindsey Crim
Subject: Fwd: The case of Danielle Platt's daughter
Date: 18-Jun-2018 16:55
Forwarded:  The case of Danielle Platt's daughter
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Marja,

Please forward to the necessary and appropriate person(s).

Following the Council meeting on June 5th, I reviewed the details of the involvement of the Medical Examiner Office as it relates to the death of Justis Garrett, whose remains were found on April 18, 2018.

Following a review of documents at the Medical Examiner Office, as well as police reports from the Deland Police Department and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), along with contact to Agent Daryl McCormick with FDLE, I personally made contact with Danielle Pratt, mother of decedent.

It was determined that when Tiffany King spoke during the Public Participation portion of the Council meeting on June 5th, she misspoke when stating that someone from the Medical Examiner Office told the mother that the decedent found on Gasline Road could not be that of her daughter. When I spoke with the mother, she confirmed that Ms. King was not correct when she stated that during the Council meeting. I also could find nothing to support that statement in the Medical Examiner Office records during my review. It should also be noted that the Medical Examiner Investigator is a female and the Forensic Pathologist that performed the autopsy is a female, and no other staff member spoke with the mother. The mother confirmed with me that she called the DeLand Police Department to inquire about the remains that were found, and that a male subject called her back and told her that information about them not being her daughter.

With regard to the autopsy report or any further specific details regarding the death, the autopsy, autopsy findings, the cause of death, etc., it should be noted that the case is under active criminal investigation by FDLE, and thus none of that information can be released pursuant to Chapter 119 of the Florida Statutes. This is why the autopsy report or other details have not been released to the family or public, if any such public record requests have been made. The FDLE Investigator has spoken with the mother on several occasions as well.

When I personally spoke with Danielle Pratt, while she is understandably upset over the loss of her daughter, she understood clearly when I explained the circumstances of an active criminal investigation and why details have not yet been released by FDLE. She was very appreciative that I explained why the autopsy report or other details have not yet been shared with her, and understood that the Medical Examiner Office does not control when those details are releasable. She was informed that she could contact the Medical Examiner Office anytime she had questions in the future, and the staff would be happy to assist her, understanding that details of the case could not be discussed at this time.

Respectfully,

Bill Pellan,
Director of Operations - Jon R. Thogmartin, MD
(Interim District Medical Examiner)
Volusia County Medical Examiner Office

>>> Lindsey Crim 06/18/18 3:40 PM >>>

>>> James Dinneen 6/18/2018 3:35 PM >>>

Dr. Thogmartin,

Mr. Dinneen asked me to forward you the attached email that was sent to him by Ms. Post regarding Danielle Pratt's daughter, Justis Garrett. We know that you looked into this after it was brought up during our last council meeting on June 5, 2018. Is there any way that you can provide an official response regarding the events that occurred?

Please send your response to Mr. Dinneen and he will distribute it.

Thank You.

Marja Kolomyski
Executive Assistant to the County Manager
County of Volusia
123 W. Indiana Avenue, Room 301
DeLand, FL 32720
(386) 740-5133