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46TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
DELAWARE COUNTY, INDIANA**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

From: Eric M. Hoffman, Prosecuting Attorney
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Date: December 8, 2023

JURY CONVICTS MUNCIE MAN OF MURDER

Muncie Indiana – Today a Delaware County jury deliberated for approximately 3 hours before convicting Brandon C. Hodge (DOB 08/06/1992) of murder, a felony, conspiracy to commit murder, a Level 1 Felony, and Obstruction of Justice, a Level 6 Felony. The jury also found the Defendant to be eligible for the Indiana firearms sentencing enhancement. A copy of the Affidavit of Probable Cause for Arrest that was filed with the case is attached. The Honorable Douglass K. Mawhorr, Judge of the Delaware Circuit Court No. 3 set sentencing for January 5, 2024 at 1:30 PM. Pursuant to Indiana law:



- Murder is punishable by 45 – 65 years in prison and up to a \$10,000 fine.
- A Level 1 Felony is punishable by 20 – 40 years in prison and up to a \$10,000 fine.
- A Level 6 Felony is punishable by 6 months – 2.5 years in prison and up to a \$10,000 fine.
- The firearm sentencing enhancement can add an additional 5 – 20 years to the total sentence imposed.

Brandon Hodge

After the verdicts were returned, Delaware County Prosecuting Attorney Eric Hoffman said “Another violent felon has been taken off the streets. I am proud of my Chief Deputy Zach Craig and Deputy Prosecutor Maricel Driscoll as well as Prosecutor’s Investigator Heather Stanley and Muncie Police Detectives including Ryan Plummer for their hard work and dedication in this case.”

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AFFIDAVIT OF PROBABLE CAUSE FOR ARREST WITHOUT WARRANT

COMES NOW, (**Ryan Plummer**), a police officer of the Muncie Police Department, and being first duly sworn upon oath, deposes and says that the following described person was arrested, without Warrant, upon the charge(s) and circumstances hereinafter stated, and makes this affidavit for the purpose of establishing probable cause for said arrest.

NAME OF ARRESTEE: (**Brandon Hodge**)

D.O.B.: 08/06/1992

ADDRESS OF ARRESTEE: 301 N Hodson Ave, Muncie IN 47303

DATE OF ARREST: 02-28-21

TIME OF ARREST: 1850

CHARGE 1: **Murder a Felony**

CHARGE 2: **Conspiracy to Commit Murder a Level 1 Felony**

The basis and reasons why this officer believes that said Arrestee committed the aforesaid offense (s) are as follows:

1) On 02/28/2021 at approximately 4:38 am, Police Officers of the Muncie Police Department were dispatched to the area of W. 9th St. and S. Batavia Ave. on a shooting call. Officers eventually located the victim, Robert Scott III, along with others, behind 2221 W. 9th St. on a concrete slab driveway off of the alley. Scott had suffered what appeared to be a gunshot wound to the chest. Scott was transported to IU Health Ball Memorial Hospital by ambulance, where he was pronounced deceased. The witnesses on scene were transported to City Hall for statements.

2) Bryon Dotson was at the residence with Scott prior to the shooting and stated that Scott was inside the residence and was watching out the window when a car arrived. Scott then exited the back door of the residence to confront the vehicle which was driving through the alley. The vehicle was described as silver colored PT Cruiser type car.

3) Dotson advised that Scott stated as he was running around the side of the house and that Morgan Bell was outside. Dotson stated that after Scott ran around the house her heard yelling, then a single gunshot, and a long pause then 3-4 more rapid

File by March 8, 2021
@ 8:30 am

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gunshots. Dotson advised that when he got to Scott and tried to render aid, Scott told him that Kyler Musick was with Bell.

4) Contact was made with neighbors directly beside the victim's residence at 2229 W 9th St, and video surveillance was provided of a Silver PT Cruiser driving around in front of the house just prior to the reported shots fired.

5) Kyler Musick is a known associate of Bell, and relative of Scott.

6) Musick was located at his residence on S Liberty Street and detained for questioning. Musick gave a statement that he was with Bell and a white male who he stated he did not know his name. Musick did advise that the male had a black 12 gauge shotgun that Musick advised he attempted to purchase. Musick was also shown a photo array and picked out Brandon Hodge, and stated that he was 100% sure that was the male with the shotgun.

7) Musick stated that after stopping at Bell's uncles house, in the area of Heekin Park, he was taken home by Bell, to the residence on Liberty.

8) Musick also provided consent to search his cellular device which was located at his residence during the encounter with officers. Musick had a Facebook messenger, from Morgan Bell on 2/26/21 at 21:28, stating during a conversation, when asked what are you doing? Bell replied " nothing just thinking about killing trey" Trey being the now nickname for Robert Scott III.

9) Officer's located the Silver 2008 PT Cruiser License Plate number: 605LFQ outside of 1107 S Jersey Ave Muncie, IN 47320 in Delaware County. This vehicle has been associated with Morgan Bell in the past.

10) While watching the residence a light Blue BMW SUV arrived at the residence, a female believed to be Morgan Bell got out of the vehicle and went in the front

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door of the house. A short time later Bell left the house and walked south bound between the houses, directly south of 1107 S Jersey. Bell later advised during interview she was going to get a friend, who she identified as Desiree Adkins.

11) A short time later two females, identified as Desiree Adkins and Morgan Bell came out of 1107 S Jersey, carrying what appeared to be cleaning supplies and rags. Bell got into the driver seat and Adkins stood at the passenger side. I then drove up to the vehicle in my patrol vehicle and turned on my emergency lights, and got out of the car and identified myself. I advised Desiree to step back to me, while Detective Nickens ordered Bell out of the front seat. Nickens advised Bell was cleaning the dash of the vehicle.

12) In plain view sitting in the front seat of the vehicle was a bottle of Dawn dish soap, a bottle of Olive Oil, cleaning rags, and Armor All clean up wipes. .

13) Adkins came to City Hall and made a statement and gave consent to search her phone. Adkins advised she had talked with Bell earlier in the night telling her she could not come over and then answered her early in the morning because she was upset after hearing the news of Scott's murder. Adkins stated when Bell came over to her house and Bell used Adkins phone briefly. Adkins search history on her phone showed one of the most recent searches for "How to clean gunpowder residue from your car." During Adkins statement she advised Bell had asked her to come help clean her car but she did not know why. When asked why Bell would ask her to come help clean out her car at 8 am on Sunday while it was raining, Adkins advised she hadn't really thought of it then but it didn't make much sense.

14) Adkins also advised she communicated with Bell during the morning about her wanting to come over. Adkins advised that Bell advised her she was with a male she could only identify as Hodge, or Hodgie.

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15) Consent to search for 1107 S Jersey was received from the owner Andrea Wright. Wright also provided video surveillance footage, which upon review shows a white male wearing a longer dark colored coat and light colored shirt carrying what appears to be a shotgun. The male calls back to a female who follows him into the house shortly, "Mo get in here."

16) Morgan Bell was transported to CID and gave a statement post Miranda with Detectives. Bell admitted that she was with Brandon Hodge, and Kyler Musick during the evening and early morning.

17) Bell was asked for consent to search her phone. A search warrant was executed on her phone, and she later identified a phone number in the phone as Brandon Hodge's number. The phone showed multiple communications between Bell and Hodge during the time frame of the homicide.

18) Bell advised after dropping Musick off at home, she and Hodge went to her the residence of Robert (Trey) Scott, or 2229 W 9th St. Bell advised she wanted to get property from the residence. Bell advised they had a fight a few days prior and she hadn't been back since. Bell specifically mentioned a Coach wallet and a red bag that contained a white urn with a deceased child's ashes. Neither of which were located upon searching the residence.

19) Bell stated that they circled the block several times to make sure Scott was not at home. Bell then advised she parked approximately 2 houses down and walked up, toward Scott's residence. Scott's body was located at 2221 W 9th St, 2 houses away from his own home.

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20) Bell advised that while she went up toward Scott's house, Hodge sat in the car with a shotgun. Bell stated Hodge wanted her to stay on the phone while she went up, so Bell advised they did.

21) Bell stated Scott came out from around the house while she was at the garage and she was struck with something.

22) Bell advised Scott then went toward the car where she heard multiple shots and then heard Scott screaming for help. Bell advised she went back to the car and Hodge was standing up at the car door telling her to get in and drive.

23) Bell advised the two then went to her house, and dropped off her sister's car, that she admitted to having taken without her knowledge. Bell advised after dropping off the car she then went to Hodges house to the garage north of his parents and grandparent's property where they got high.

24) Bell then advised that they went to Charlene Moore's residence, which was 304 N Hodson Ave. Charlene was identified as Hodge's mother. 304 N Hodson, and Charlene took her to her sister's house, in Muncie.

25) A recording on Bell's phone on the morning after the homicide was a discussion between two females and a male, during the conversation, the names, Brandon, Morgan, and Mom (believed to be Charlene Moore) are used. The female called mom during the recording calls Brandon by name. The conversation is about the situation, and the group is talking about alibis and how to live with the crime, and avoid criminal prosecution.

26) Bell gave a description of the property where Hodge lived. Bell advised she went with Hodge and they stayed there and discussed what to do. While officers were on scene and watching the residences, a male called at approximately 1845. The male who

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identified himself as Brandon Hodge made contact with Detective M. Nickens advising he wanted to turn himself in. Hodge was taken into custody at the intersection of North and Hodson in front of his grandparent's residence. Hodge also made comments to Detective Nickens that he had melted down the gun with a torch.

27) Hodge was transported to City Hall for interview. Hodge, post Miranda, advised that he went with Morgan due to Scott's past history of violence. Hodge advised that he went to protect her because of past issues with Scott. When asked, why he took the shotgun he stated he likes to be ready for a fight cause that's how he is. Hodge also made comments he shoots to kill.

28) Hodge advised that Scott came at the car, and hit the back of it. Hodge first stated that he got out of the car and shot 4 times rapidly. Later he clarified he stepped out and presented the gun, and Scott got scared, and tried to jump over the hood of the car when he shot the first time. Hodge then advised that he had to move around the front of the car and shot Scott several more times. Hodge also stated that Scott tried to jump a small fence after jumping over the hood of the car because he was scared. Hodge described that Scott was scared because he realized Hodge had a bigger gun. Hodge advised several times that he believed Scott had a weapon. Hodge adamantly advised he thought it was a shiny 1911 handgun. A pipe was located near where Scott's body was located. The pipe was wrapped in black electrical tape. During the autopsy, it appears Scott was shot in the back several times.

29) When asked about when they arrived Hodge stated that they circled the house several times to try and figure out if Scott was home alone, and clarified they wanted to make sure he was alone, not what Bell had said about trying to make sure he was not home at all.

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30) Hodge during interview at first stated that he melted down the gun, and later stated he lied and it was inside the garage at 322 N Hodson that Bell had identified. During an execution of a search warrant the gun was located in the exact spot Hodge described.

31) While taking Hodge into custody he was in possession of a blue Tracfone Wireless Smart phone model sm-s111dl(GP) Imei 352082503251409, which was later searched after application of a search warrant. The phone was identified by Hodge as being his. In the forensic examination, two of the more recent searches on Hodges web browser, were for, Best Murder Defense lawyers in Indiana, and attempted murder defense attorneys.

32) Hodge advised that Bell and he did work together to try and cover up the crime and discussed not reporting the incident. Hodge when asked why they didn't call the police if the incident was self-defense. Hodge stated he thought he would still get in trouble because he doesn't have a permit to carry.

I affirm under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and accurate to the best of my information and belief.
/s/ Detective Ryan Plummer MPD 1306 DATE: 02/28/21

JUDICIAL DETERMINATION

The undersigned, being a Judicial officer of Delaware County, and having reviewed the foregoing affidavit, now determines that probable cause existed for the arrest of said arrestee, and now fixes bond in the penal sum of \$ to be held without bond until further order of Court.

DATED: 03/01/2021

SIGNED: Zula Red Wolf, Judge of Delaware County #3

CHARGES TO BE FILED BY: _____

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