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QUEENS RESIDENT CHARGED WITH MURDER
IN SHOOTING DEATH OF 33-YEAR-OLD MAN

Defendant Faces Up to 25 Years-to-Life in Prison if Convicted

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that Mark Watson, 24, has been charged with murder and other crimes in the shooting death of a 33-year-old man in Hollis, Queens, Tuesday evening.

District Attorney Katz said, “A game of dice turned deadly after the defendant allegedly robbed and shot the victim to death. This callous, senseless shooting is yet another tragic reason why we must continue to get illegal guns off our streets.”

Watson, of 201st Street, Hollis, was arraigned last night in Queens Criminal Court on a complaint charging him with two counts of murder in the second degree, robbery in the first and second degree and two counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree. Judge David Kirschner remanded the defendant and set his return date on March 15, 2021. If convicted, the defendant faces up to 25 years-to-life in prison.

According to the charges, around 10 p.m. on March 9, 2021, the victim, Christopher McKnight, the defendant and an unapprehended third man were in front of 204-13 Hollis Ave., gambling with dice. Video surveillance shows the unapprehended man allegedly pointing a pistol at the victim and forcing him to remove his personal property from his pockets. The video also shows the unapprehended male handing the defendant the pistol. Watson allegedly fired multiple shots at the victim - striking him once in the torso. The victim died from the injuries.

The investigation was conducted by Detective James Gherardi of the New York City Police Department’s 103rd Detective Squad under the supervision of Lieutenant Stephen Faber along with Detective Anthony Faranda, of the NYPD’s Queens South Homicide Detective Squad.

Assistant District Attorney Joshua Garland, of the District Attorney’s Homicide Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Brad Leventhal, Bureau Chief, Peter J. McCormack III, Senior Deputy Bureau Chief, John W. Kosinski and Karen Ross, Deputy Bureau Chiefs and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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Note to Editors: Archived press releases are available at www.queensda.org.

