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TWO MEN INDICTED FOR FATAL SHOOTING IN MIDDLE VILLAGE

*Defendant Hunter Indicted For Murder, Defendant Capers Indicted For Attempted Murder
July 2023 Shootout Claimed the Life of 19-Year-Old and Injured One Other*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Dante Hunter and Shamel Capers were arraigned on an indictment charging Hunter with murder and Capers with attempted murder in the fatal shooting of 19-year-old Joshua Taylor in Middle Village on July 23, 2023. Evidence uncovered during the investigation of the incident indicated that the round which struck the victim was fired by Hunter.

District Attorney Katz said: “Gun violence has caused immense tragedy in our neighborhoods, steering too many of our young people toward choices that negatively impact the rest of their lives. It is a challenge that we continue to address. Following a painstaking process of evidence gathering, we have secured an indictment on very serious charges against both defendants for the early morning shootout that left one person dead. We will continue to dedicate all resources at our disposal to combatting the scourge of gun violence in this borough.”

Hunter, 25, of Mott Avenue in Far Rockaway, Queens, was arraigned yesterday on a seven-count indictment charging him with murder in the second degree, attempted murder in the second degree, four counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree and reckless endangerment in the first degree.

Capers, 24, of Herzl Street in Brooklyn, was arraigned today on the same indictment charging him with attempted murder in the second degree, four counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree and reckless endangerment in the first degree.

Hunter faces up to 25 years to life and Capers faces up to 25 years in prison if convicted of the top count. Justice Michael Aloise ordered both defendants to return to court on June 18.

According to the charges:

- On July 23, 2023, at approximately 3:17 a.m., Joshua Taylor of Brooklyn was with several other individuals in front of 79-28 Metropolitan Avenue.
- A friend of Taylor’s threw a drink he was holding in the general direction of Capers and Capers’ friend, both of whom had exited a nearby convenience store at the time. A verbal dispute followed between the two groups, with Hunter joining Capers.
- Several minutes later, the argument escalated into a four-way shootout with Hunter drawing his firearm before the others.
- Taylor was caught in the crossfire and hit by a single round in the chest. He was taken to Elmhurst Hospital where he was pronounced dead.
- More than two dozen 9 mm shell casings were recovered at the scene and an investigation was launched into the incident.
- Capers was subsequently identified using surveillance footage from nearby locations and financial records for a credit and debit card he used immediately before the incident.
- Hunter was already in custody on a parole warrant at the time of the indictment.
- Capers was arrested on May 16 in New Jersey and extradited this week to face charges.

The initial investigation was conducted by Detective Christopher Gerardi of the NYPD’s 104th Precinct Detective Squad and Detective Lizabeth Klein of the NYPD’s Queens North Homicide Squad.

Senior Assistant District Attorney Graham Amodeo of the District Attorney's Homicide Bureau is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys John Kosinski, Bureau Chief, and Karen Ross, Deputy Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Shawn Clark.

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

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