

Suspect in toddler's death facing possible 45- to 65-year sentence on murder charge filed in case

Written by Administrator

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Jason Carl Hensley, the suspect charged in the October 28 beating death of two-year-old Jacob Matthew Lord, could be facing a prison sentence of up to 65 years if he is convicted of the charge of murder.

The 26-year-old Hensley entered a not guilty plea during his initial hearing in Scott Circuit Court on the murder charge and the Class A felony charge of battery. The murder charge, advised Scott County Prosecutor Jason Mount, carries a mandatory sentence from 45 to 65 years. The battery charge carries a probable sentence from 20 to 50 years.

Jacob, his alleged victim, died without regaining consciousness on October 28 at Kosair Children's Hospital in Louisville, Ky.

The toddler was taken to Scott Memorial Hospital in Scottsburg by his mother, Shawn Lord, and Hensley, described as Shawn Lord's boyfriend, some time early on the morning of October 28. The woman told Detective Brian Busick with the Indiana State Police, Sellersburg post, that she left the child in the care of Hensley around 4 p.m. on October 27 at Hensley's Austin apartment. She said when she came back to the apartment around 6 p.m., the toddler was asleep on the floor.

Some time later, she said she checked the child because his breathing appeared to have become labored. She said she tried to wake her son and was unable to do so. When she picked him up, she said the child "...became stiff..." and continued having labored breathing. The mother said she tried mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

A brief period passed before the couple decided the child needed medical attention. After a relative arrived to watch the other children in the apartment, the couple took Jacob to the local hospital.

After an assessment of his injuries, arrangements were made to transfer the youngster to Kosair. When Det. Busick arrived at Scott Memorial, he reported that medical staff who had examined the child told him the toddler was not going to survive his injuries. The medical report, the officer related, said that Jacob had suffered "...severe trauma to his head and swelling to his brain." The treating physician at Scott Memorial told the officer that his initial assessment was that the child's injuries was the result of a "...non-accidental, inflicted event."

Jacob was pronounced dead at Kosair at 4:25 p.m. that Wednesday. On the following day, an autopsy of the child was performed by staff of the Kentucky Medical Examiner's Office in Louisville. Dr. Amy Burrows-Beckham of that office listed an "...inflicted closed head injury with extensive scalp hemorrhages..." caused Jacob's death. Her report allowed the State Police to declare the case a homicide.

A further statement by Shawn Lord included in the probable cause affidavit filed with the charges against Hensley related that, aside from times that the child was left with Hensley, Shawn Lord was with her son "...at all other times leading up to the incident, and she is not aware of any incident, accidental or otherwise, that may have caused the injuries inflicted upon Jacob."

Hensley was arrested by the State Police on October 30 and incarcerated in the local jail facility.

In Hensley's initial court hearing, Judge Roger Duvall set no bail because of the severity of the charges.

A jury trial date of April 19, 2010, has been scheduled. Hensley was assigned a public defender to assist him in his defense.

The child is survived by his mother and his father, George Lord of Chicago, Il.; a sister, Kassandra, and two brothers, George Lord III and Joshua Lord, all of Chicago.

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Grandparents surviving include Eleanor Lord of Evanston, Il., Randy Cooper of Springfield, Mo., and Joyce Bowling of Austin.

Following the funeral on Monday, November 2, at the Buchanan Funeral Home in Austin, the child was laid to rest in Scottsburg Cemetery.