

Victim's mom to move ahead with suit against Aaron Hernandez



Photo by: Matt West

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Odin Lloyd's mother Ursula Ward has the support of friends and family at a press conference after the guilty verdict for former New England Patriots TE Aaron Hernandez at the Fall River Justice Center on Wednesday, April 15, 2015.

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By: Associated Press

BOSTON — The mother of a man slain by former New England Patriots player Aaron Hernandez is moving forward with a lawsuit against him, and her lawyer said Wednesday that his first step is to figure out how much money Hernandez has left and where he's keeping it.

Lawyer Douglas Sheff also said during a news conference that he plans to call Hernandez to testify when the case goes to trial, though that could be years away. He said Ursula Ward, the mother of Odin Lloyd, wants to look him in the eye when he testifies.

"She wants to ask what happened. Very simple: 'What happened?'" And the next question: 'Why?'" Sheff said, calling Lloyd's death an unthinkable loss.

Hernandez did not testify at his criminal trial.

He was convicted April 15 of first-degree murder for killing Lloyd on June 17, 2013, for reasons that remain unclear. At the time, Hernandez had a \$40 million contract with the Patriots.

Hernandez's lawyer, John Fitzpatrick, did not immediately return a message seeking comment.

Lloyd, 27, was dating the sister of Hernandez's fiancée. Hernandez picked him up and drove him to an industrial park near his home, where Lloyd was shot six times.

The lawsuit seeking unspecified damages was filed in December 2013 but was put on hold during the criminal trial. While an appeal is automatic in the criminal case, Sheff said he plans to file papers in the next few weeks to resume the lawsuit so he can hunt down Hernandez's assets.

One asset they do know about is his home in North Attleborough, which is assessed at \$1.2 million. Hernandez's fiancée and 2-year-old daughter live there.

Donald Grady, another of Ward's lawyers, said Hernandez was paid more than \$9.2 million of his \$40 million contract. They are awaiting the outcome of a grievance filed against the Patriots by the NFL Players Association on Hernandez's behalf, Grady said. The union says he is owed an additional \$6.2 million from his contract, though the team says it doesn't owe him anything.

The Patriots and Ward's lawyers have agreed that if it is determined the team owes him more money, it will not pay Hernandez but will instead hold onto the money and alert them and the court.

Sheff said that he's not confident Hernandez has any money left after defending himself in the criminal trial but that Hernandez clearly made millions during his career. He said Lloyd's family isn't in it for the money because no amount can compensate for their loss.

Ward on Wednesday thanked people for sending cards, prayers and well wishes. She did not address or take questions about the lawsuit but focused her comments on her love for her son.

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"Odin was loved by many," she said. "Odin will be missed tremendously."

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