



Family of Odin Lloyd set to move forward with suit against Hernandez

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FALL RIVER, Mass. (MyFoxBoston.com) – It has been nearly one week since Aston Hernandez was found guilty of murdering Odin Lloyd, but for now, the calls for justice continue as Lloyd’s mother is expected to make an announcement Wednesday.

The Lloyd family filed a civil lawsuit and it’s been on hold pending the outcome of the criminal trial. However, now that Hernandez has been convicted, attorneys for Lloyd’s family are hoping to go after Hernandez’s funds and potentially the Patriots as well.

The lawsuit is looking to recoup monetary damages from Hernandez, the New England Patriots and Kraft Enterprises.

Doug Sheff, the wrongful death attorney representing Lloyd’s mother, said, “He really was the breadwinner, the head of the household as it were, he took care of everything right down to being the caretaker for his sister’s daughter.”

In advance of a major news conference slated for Wednesday to re-jump start their case, Sheff told FOX25 that “the criminal justice system did it’s job and we’re grateful for that.”

He went on to say that now the Lloyd family wants complete justice.

Sheff says it’s not just Lloyd’s family who can argue they’re suffering as a result of Hernandez’s reckless actions, but they’re also suing on the grounds that Lloyd suffered in his final moments, before he was murdered.

“There’s physical pain and suffering and then there’s mental or emotional pain and suffering. Imminent fear of death is really an element of pain and suffering,” Sheff said.

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Bill Cosby judge won't step aside as lawyers target accuser

By: MICHAEL R. SISAK, Associated Press

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NORRISTOWN, Pa. (AP) - The judge in Bill Cosby’s retrial rejected demands Thursday from the comedian’s defense lawyers to step aside during a hearing in which they made clear they plan to attack his accuser as a greedy liar who falsely accused the comedian of sexually assaulting her to collect a payoff.

Judge Steven O’Neill shot down what amounted to a last-ditch effort to postpone the trial by defense lawyers who lost their bid to overturn his ruling allowing up to five additional accusers to testify against Cosby.

Lawyers argued he should remove himself because his wife is a social worker and advocate for assault victims, pointing to a \$100 donation made in her name to an organization that gave money to a group planning a protest outside of the retrial.

O’Neill said that was made 13 months ago by the department where his wife works at the University of Pennsylvania and that he’s “not biased or prejudiced” by her work.

Jury selection is scheduled to begin Monday as the 80-year-old Cosby faces charges that he drugged and molested former Temple University athletics administrator Andrea Constand at his home in 2004.

While they sparred with him in court Thursday, Cosby’s lawyers are also counting on him to make critical rulings to bolster their defense that Constand is a money-grubbing liar.

They want O’Neill to let them call Marguerite Jackson, a woman who says Constand spoke of framing a celebrity before she went to police with allegations that Cosby drugged and molested her in 2004. They also want to let jurors know how much Cosby paid her in a 2006 civil settlement.

“Those are the bookends: I have a motive and I have a payoff,” lawyer Kathleen Bliss argued. “The jury should be allowed to view the full context of that.”

Assistant District Attorney Kristen Fedden said that they doubt the discussion with Jackson happened and Constand’s lawyer has said that Jackson is “not telling the truth.”

O’Neill blocked Jackson from testifying at the first trial because he said her testimony would be hearsay. Prosecutors want him to do the same for the retrial.

Prosecutors say the theory that Constand wanted to set up Cosby is undermined by the comedian’s testimony in a 2005 deposition that she only visited his home when invited and that he gave her pills without her asking for them.

Prosecutors also argued the settlement is irrelevant to the criminal case, but that if it is allowed in, jurors should also hear about negotiations that led to the settlement.

Assistant District Attorney Stewart Ryan contended that Cosby’s negotiators initially asked that he be released from any criminal liability and tried to bar Constand from cooperating with law enforcement. He said that amounts to obstruction of justice.

“Those things are inconsistent with a person who believes he’s innocent,” Ryan said.

Thursday’s hearing started with arguments over the judge’s wife, Deborah O’Neill, a psychotherapist at who coordinates a team that cares and advocates for student sexual assault victims.

O’Neill said that the donation cited by Cosby’s lawyers didn’t involve her money or their joint assets.

“How are my wife’s independent views of an independent woman connected to me?” O’Neill said. “She’s an independent woman and has the right to be involved in anything that she believes in.”

O’Neill said Thursday that Cosby’s old lawyers raised the prospect of having him step aside in December 2016, but never followed through. He added that he could’ve rejected the recusal request simply because Cosby’s lawyers waited too long to ask.



O'Neill spoke glowingly about his wife and said it was difficult to have her accomplishments "trivialized" in a legal motion. He said Cosby's lawyers had presented an antiquated view of marriage where spouses must agree on everything.

Cosby's lawyers could still appeal O'Neill's decision to allow the other accusers to testify to the state's Supreme Court.

The pretrial hearing will continue Friday, including for arguments over whether jurors can hear about a 2005 phone call in which Constand says she told her mother about the alleged assault for the first time.

O'Neill agreed Thursday that the trial won't start until at least April 9 and that the jury chosen from suburban Montgomery County will be sequestered in a local hotel.

The AP does not typically identify people who say they are victims of sexual assault unless they grant permission, which Constand has done.

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Follow Mike Sisak at twitter.com/mikesisak

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For more on the Cosby trial, go to <https://apnews.com/tag/CosbyonTrial>

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