

Controversial former Rogers County Assistant District Attorney now at Creek County

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Charles Betzler

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According to a story published by Fox23 News, Issac Shields, former Rogers County Assistant DA, is accused of spying on a jury during the murder trial of Robert Kraft. Here is an excerpt of that story:

“Because of COVID-19 protocols in place during the trial and the need to social distance, instead of being sent to their traditional deliberation room, a neighboring courtroom that is larger was opened up for the jurors to deliberate on Kraft’s case. That courtroom had video and surveillance equipment that allowed for it to be observed by outside parties.”



Shields

The article states that Defense attorney MJ Denman obtained text messages that he submitted as the basis for a mistrial:

“Denman argues that prosecutors gave themselves an unfair advantage and, at one point, were concerned a certain juror was going to lead to a mistrial. In text messages between Shields and Rogers County District Attorney Matt Ballard, there is a thread showing Shields said there appeared to be a holdout on the jury, but he didn’t state why he thought that.

Denman also presented a signed affidavit from a Tulsa attorney who said he witnessed Shields trying twice to listen through the crack of a jury deliberation room door during a trial back in 2017 when he was an assistant district attorney in Tulsa County at the time. According to those new court documents, attorney Brian Boeheim said he told Shields to stop attempting to listen in on deliberations twice, and the two became so heated in an argument that Tulsa County deputies had to get involved.”

It should be noted that observing a jury during deliberations is a felony offense. Apparently, there is no precedent for this in the State of Oklahoma.

Furthermore, the Sapulpa Herald obtained a legal brief submitted on the behalf of another murder defendant, Micah Turner, who has been sentenced to life in prison. The Brief alleges a series of serious violations of professional ethics by Shields.

The Sapulpa Herald reached out to Creek County District Attorney Max Cook to confirm that Shields had been hired as an Assistant DA here in Creek County.



Creek County District Attorney Max
Cook

Cook confirmed that Shields has been indeed hired. He went on to say that he had confidence in Shield’s professional ethics and thought that Shields was a skilled prosecutor. Cook said he was unaware of the news article or the brief.

According to Cook, deputies were watching the video surveillance monitor and noticed what they thought was a disturbance and summoned Shields and Gibbs. Cook maintains that the judge who placed them in that room, as well as the deputies, should have culpability.

The Sapulpa Herald then reached out to the Rogers County District Attorney's Office for clarification of the allegations, Michelle Lowry, Victim of Crime Compensation Claim Advocate, and Public Information Officer responded:

"Rogers County District Attorney Matt Ballard learned Shields and Gibbs watched jury members during their deliberations via security cameras which are video only, no audio. The two resigned from District 12 soon after," her statement said. "Ballard says, 'While I do not approve of either prosecutor's actions, and I believe I made that crystal clear from the moment their activities came to light when I requested an immediate investigation, thankfully, the resulting investigations have shown neither prosecutor had contact with any of the jurors. The jury found Kraft guilty and sent him to prison without any pressure from anyone outside of their number.'

Washington County Judge Linda Thomas was brought in to help adjudicate the case since two Rogers County judges recused themselves.

This incident is still under investigation and at the time of publication, no determination has been made.