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Karen Read murder case takes dramatic turn as others add legal muscle



Nancy Lane/Boston Herald

Karen Read, who is accused of killing her boyfriend Boston Police Officer John O’Keefe, talks with her attorney’s Alan Jackson and David Yannetti during a May 3 hearing in Norfolk Superior Court in Dedham. (Nancy Lane/Boston Herald)

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Two new defense attorneys have entered the Karen Read murder case — but explicitly not in Read's defense.

Instead, attorneys Kevin Reddington and Gregory Henning each filed new motions asking Norfolk Superior Court Judge Beverly Cannone to quash Read defense requests for live testimony from their own clients for a motions hearing scheduled for Thursday.

It's getting so hot that the court scheduled an additional hearing for Wednesday — with only a day's notice — to make some sense of all the conflicting interests at play.

Henning and Reddington represent Boston Police Officer Brian Albert and Jennifer McCabe respectively.

Albert owned 34 Fairview Road, the home where the body of Boston Police Officer John O'Keefe was found at around 6 a.m. on Jan. 29, 2022.

McCabe was a longtime friend of O'Keefe's who reportedly invited O'Keefe and his girlfriend Karen Read — who is charged with his murder — to Albert's home the evening before, as the Canton bar they were all at had closed for the night.

Karen Read's defense has fingered both Albert and McCabe as the ones allegedly responsible for O'Keefe's death.

“The defendant is pursuing a third-party culprit defense, arguing that Albert and others were responsible for O'Keefe's death,” Judge Cannone summarized in her own filing on Friday. “Part of her theory is that Albert beat O'Keefe in the home and that while he was doing so, his dog attacked O'Keefe.”

Cannone's filing was a ruling on motions Read's defense attorneys David Yannetti and Alan Jackson argued before her at the last hearing date of May 3 — a win for the defense team.

The defense had argued that they needed animal records for Albert's German Shepherd, Chloe — specifically records from the town clerk's office and the animal control office for the records “related to the licensure, ownership, quarantine, rehoming, and/or any ‘skin piercing incidents’” of any animals that had been at the home.

Her reasoning is fourfold: that “the records sought are both evidentiary and relevant,” “that the records are not otherwise procurable reasonably before trial,” that “it is undisputed that if the defendant does not obtain the records before trial, she would be unable to properly prepare her defense and the trial likely would be unreasonably delayed,” and, finally, that the request was not one of discovery, as the records already existed and just required a court order to obtain them.

The defense also wants Albert’s cell phone records, motions it had filed before the May 3 hearing, but opted not to argue until Thursday’s hearing. But Reddington, Henning and Assistant District Attorney Adam Lally, the prosecutor of the case, have offered strong objections to how the defense team is going about it.

“The Commonwealth is under the impression that the defendant is seeking to expand (the applicable criminal code, Rule 17) and call witnesses, including their forensic examiner, who are neither record holder nor third-party subjects,” Lally wrote in a Friday filing, adding that he was “aware” that the defense had summonsed McCabe and State Police Troopers Michael Proctor and Nicholas Guarino, who had participated in the murder investigation.

“The defendant’s motion is simply an improper attempt to burden and harass the witnesses in this case,” Lally later continued.

It’s a similar story from Henning’s motion to quash, in which he writes his argument forcefully in his subheadings: “The defense is inventing court procedures to try to make up for the insufficiency of its Rule 17 Motions by unilaterally ordering live testimony of witnesses” and “Permitting the subpoena for live testimony would amount to a defense-ordered deposition,” under which he concludes “Depositions are not part of the criminal discovery process.”

And from Reddington: “The subpoena should be quashed as being vexatious and harassing and calculated to embarrass the government witness.”

Wednesday’s hearing might make some clarity for Thursday’s motions hearing.

Just before deadline, Read defense attorney Yannetti began filing his own responses with the court. In the one in which he asks Cannone to deny Brian Albert’s motion to quash — the Henning motion — he writes that “the subpoena is not unreasonable or oppressive, nor is it being used to subvert the provisions” of Rule 17.



Nancy Lane/Boston Herald

Karen Read leaves the courthouse with her attorneys following her May 3 hearing in Norfolk Superior Court in Dedham. (Nancy Lane/Boston Herald)

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