ID#: 17

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF KENTUCKY
CENTRAL DIVISION
AT LEXINGTON
CIVIL ACTION NO. 5:23-CV-175-GFVT
ELECTRONICALLY FILED

KENNETH WADKINS PLAINTIFF

VS. **DEFENDANT'S, KRISTYN KLINGSHIRN, MOTION TO DISMISS**

KRISTYN KLINGSHIRN DEFENDANT

COMES NOW Defendant, Officer Kristyn Klingshirn, ("Officer Klingshirn") who moves to dismiss all of Plaintiff's Claims for Relief in Plaintiff's Complaint under Federal Rules of Civil Procedure 12 because the Plaintiff fails to state a claim and is estopped from now denying probable cause existed for his prosecution, showing in support as follows:

FACTS

The Plaintiff has filed a claim of malicious prosecution against Officer Klingshirn for his arrest for the murder of Wesley Brown.

According to the arrest warrant, for Kenneth Winston Wadkins issued on April 9, 2022 for Murder:

The Affiant, Kristyn M Klingshirn (LEXINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT 53285), states that on 1/21/2021 at 19:00 in FAYETTE County, Kentucky, the above named defendant unlawfully: Committed the offense of Murder, KRS 507.020, On January 21, 2021 at 1900, the listed offender was at 580 Breckenridge when, with the intent to cause death to another person, caused the death of the victim, Wesley Brown when he shot him. During the course of the investigation the offender was identified by a cooperating witness who was present when the shooting occurred. The cooperating witness provided details of the incident which can be corroborated by evidence located at the scene. I also received multiple crime stoppers tips advising "Ghost" shot Mr. Brown and identifying "Ghost" as Kenneth Wadkins. A separate witness also identified Kenneth Wadkins as "Ghost". The tips further advise 580 Breckenridge is

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used for gambling and Mr. Brown was set up. Utilizing Police resources, location data from a electronic device also puts Kenneth Wadkins at the scene. (Exhibit A, Case File, Arrest Warrant, p. 5).

A preliminary hearing was held in Fayette County District Court on April 19, 2022, and Plaintiff was represented by counsel. At the hearing Officer Klingshirn testified:

On January 21, 2021, at 7:00 in the evening Lexington Police were dispatched to the area of 604 Breckinridge referenced a call for shots fired. They further received a second call from a male caller advising he had been shot, he was unable to advise his location other than he was located somewhere on Breckinridge. Upon the arrival and a search of the area they located the victim, Wesley Brown, suffering from a gunshot wound to his lower back. Mr. Brown was transported by Emergency Medical Personnel to the University of Kentucky Hospital where he was pronounced deceased a few days later. I was assigned the case a few days later. I received multiple anonymous tips advising that the residence at 580 Breckinridge was used for gambling and that Mr. Wadkins was present on the evening that Mr. Brown was shot. On October 6, 2021, Sgt. Barker, who is our Homicide Sargent, received a phone call from an individual stating that they had an eye witness that was present at the homicide that wished to come forward and give information. Detectives Atkins and Moore made contact with that witness who advised he was present in 580 Breckinridge gambling at the time the shooting took place and that he saw Mr. Wadkins in possession of a firearm and shoot at Mr. Brown as he came through the doorway of 580 Breckinridge. The witness advised that then as the shots rang out everyone fled the scene and he was unable to give any of the events that transpired after that. He advised that he had known Mr. Wadkins for a long time and was able to identify him from a driver's license photo that Det. Atkins presented to him. I further was able to use various police resources to place Mr. Wadkins' cellular device in the location of the crime scene at the time the crime occurred. Therefore, I went ahead and filed for a warrant for Murder for Mr. Wadkins which was signed. (Exhibit B, Preliminary Hearing recording, time stamp 8:53:50 am-8:35:45 am).

In response to cross-examination Officer Klingshirn testified:

The only thing that I was told was from Mr. Brown's sister. She believes that Mr. Brown and Mr. Wadkins have had a longstanding beef if you will. Mr. Wadkins, I'm sorry, Mr. Brown an incident had happened in 2010 that she believes Mr. Wadkins may have been responsible for. Mr. Brown at the time was uncooperative and the incident was, um, no arrest were ever made. She stated, um, that she believes that they have just been in jail at various times and that is why the longstanding disagreement between them has never come to a head. (Exhibit B, time stamp 8:00:57 am-9:01:44 am).

The Plaintiff did not contest probable cause stating through counsel "I don't have anything on probable cause, Your Honor." (Exhibit B, time stamp 9:03:05 am-9:03:11am). Based on the foregoing, the Fayette District Court held:

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Mr. Wadkins your case is being held to the Fayette County Grand Jury. The County has established their burden of probable cause. Your bond is going to stay the same at \$500,000.00, it should actually probably be more than that but um hearing no motion to increase it from the County I am going to leave it at \$500,000.00, um [sic] it looks like you just recently got out of prison for facilitating manslaughter 1st degree. I am leaving your bond as is, your case is being held to the Fayette County Grand Jury. (Exhibit B, time stamp 9:03:10 am-9:03:46 am).

STANDARD

Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6) provides that a complaint may be attacked for failure "to state a claim upon which relief can be granted." To survive a Rule 12(b)(6) motion to dismiss, a complaint must "contain sufficient factual matter, accepted as true, to 'state a claim to relief that is plausible on its face." Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)(citing Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007)). "'[A] legal conclusion couched as a factual allegation' is not entitled to a presumption of truth." Crawford v. Tilley, No. 20-6391, 2021 U.S. App. LEXIS 30268, at *16 (6th Cir. Oct. 8, 2021)(citing *Iqbal*, 556 U.S. at 678). "A motion to dismiss is properly granted if it is beyond doubt that no set of facts would entitle the petitioner to relief on his claims." Computer Leasco, Inc. v. NTP, Inc., 194 F. App'x 328, 333 (6th Cir. 2006).

When considering a Rule 12(b)(6) motion to dismiss, the court will presume that all the factual allegations in the complaint are true and draw all reasonable inferences in favor of the nonmoving party. Total Benefits Planning Agency v. Anthem Blue Cross & Blue Shield, 552 F.3d 430, 434 (6th Cir. 2008)(citing Great Lakes Steel v. Deggendorf, 716 F.2d 1101, 1105 (6th Cir. 1983)). "The court need not, however, accept unwarranted factual inferences." *Id.* (citing *Morgan* v. Church's Fried Chicken, 829 F.2d 10, 12 (6th Cir. 1987)).

While it is generally true that an "[a]ssessment of the facial sufficiency of the complaint must ordinarily be undertaken without resort to matters outside the pleadings," Rondigo, L.L.C. v. Twp. of Richmond, 641 F.3d 673, 680 (6th Cir. 2011) (citation omitted), there are recognized

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exceptions to that blanket rule. A court may consider exhibits attached to the complaint, public records, items appearing in the record of the case, and exhibits attached to defendant's motion to dismiss, so long as they are referred to in the complaint and are central to the claims contained therein, without converting the motion to one for summary judgment. *Kreipke v. Wayne State Univ.*, 807 F.3d 768, 774 (6th Cir. 2015); *Bassett v. Nat'l Collegiate Athletic Ass'n*, 528 F.3d 426, 430 (6th Cir. 2008). One such exception includes public records, including court orders. *Jones v. City of Cincinnati*, 521 F.3d 555, 562 (6th Cir. 2008) citing *Jackson v. City of Columbus*, 194 F.3d 737, 745 (6th Cir. 1999)). Therefore, consideration of the arrest warrant taking the plaintiff into state custody and the finding that probable cause existed at his preliminary hearing are properly considered on a 12(b)(6) motion.

ARGUMENT

I. THE PLAINTIFF'S CLAIM OF MALICIOUS PROSECUTION MUST BE DISMISSED BECAUSE PROBABLE CAUSE HAD BEEN FOUND BY TWO DIFFERENT JUDGES.

The Sixth Circuit recognizes the general principle "that[,] where 'the state affords an opportunity for an accused to contest probable cause at a preliminary hearing and the accused does so, a finding of probable cause by the examining magistrate or state judge should foreclose relitigation of that finding in a subsequent § 1983 action.' "Smith v. Thornburg, 136 F.3d 1070, 1077 (6th Cir. 1998) (quoting Coogan v. City of Wixom, 820 F.2d 170, 175 (6th Cir. 1987)).

This Circuit previously found dismissal appropriate in strikingly similar facts as the ones presented here. In Smith v. Tennessee, No. 3-14-2003, 2015 WL 5330479, at *5 (M.D. Tenn. Sept. 11, 2015) the court found that:

a malicious prosecution claim is nonetheless subject to dismissal because probable cause was found at the judicial commissioner's initial review, after the preliminary hearing, and by the grand jury. *See Fox*, 489 F.3d at 237. Although Plaintiff alleges that Mr. Ransom falsely identified Plaintiff as the perpetrator of the crimes, a law

enforcement officer is entitled to rely on an eyewitness identification to establish adequate probable cause with which to sustain an arrest. Ahlers v. Schebil, 188 F.3d 365, 370 (6th Cir.1999). Plaintiff does not allege in his Complaint that Defendant Baltimore manufactured false evidence or provided false testimony and, thus, the repeated findings of probable cause made during the criminal proceedings negate any claim for malicious prosecution against him. See Legenzoff v. Steckel, 564 Fed. App'x 136, 147 (6th Cir.2014); Peet v. City of Detroit, 502 F.3d 557, 566 (6th Cir.2007); Hight v. Cox, 2013 WL 6096784, *10 (M.D.Tenn. Nov.20, 2013) (Trauger, J.). While it is unfortunate that Plaintiff was held as a pre-trial detainee for a lengthy period of time prior to his acquittal, the Constitution does not guarantee that only the guilty will be arrested. Baker v. McCollan, 443 U.S. 137, 145, 99 S.Ct. 2689, L.Ed.2d 433 (1979).61

The Supreme Court has held, that state law of collateral estoppel applies when deciding whether the state court's determination of probable cause at the preliminary hearing has preclusive effect in this § 1983 action. *Haring v. Prosise*, 462 U.S. 306, 313, 103 S.Ct. 2368, 76 L.Ed.2d 595 (1983). In Kentucky a prior finding of probable cause at a preliminary hearing raises a presumption that probable cause exists in the defense of a malicious prosecution action. *See Dean v. Noel*, 24 Ky.L.Rptr. 969, 70 S.W. 406 (1902); 52 Am.Jur. 2D *Malicious Prosecution* § 62 (2000); *cf. Davidson v. Castner–Knott Dry Goods Co., Inc.*, 202 S.W.3d 597 (Ky.App.2006).

Here, a preliminary hearing was held. Officer Klingshirn confirmed that multiple witness placed the Plaintiff at the scene, which was also electronically confirmed by pings from Plaintiff's cell phone. Most importantly, an actual eye witness confirmed and identified the Plaintiff as the shooter. After considering these facts, Fayette County District Court Judge Melissa Moore Murphy issued an arrest warrant. Subsequently, based on these same facts with the addition of a confirmed motive, a long standing animus between the victim and the Plaintiff, Fayette District Court Judge Lindsay Hughes Thurston found probable cause at the preliminary hearing in which Plaintiff was represented effectively by counsel.

II. THE PLAINTIFF HAS WAIVED ANY OBJECTION TO THE FINDING OF PROBABLE CAUSE.

Furthermore, the Plaintiff did not contest the existence of probable cause at the preliminary hearing. After questioning Officer Klingshirn on cross-examination, the Plaintiff's attorney did not make an argument opposing a finding of probable cause. Instead, Counsel admitted that "I don't have anything on probable cause Your Honor." As such, the Plaintiff cannot now do so, having waived any objection to the finding of probable cause at his preliminary hearing. The concept of waiver has long been recognized. In *State v. Freeman*, 93 Utah 125, 71 P.2d 196, 200 (1937) the court held:

And by waiving a preliminary hearing, the defendant waives all formalities and all irregularities in the proceeding prior to the filing of the information (Citation omitted). The right to a preliminary examination is merely the right to have evidence produced in support of the complaint, and to produce evidence in answer thereto, so the magistrate may determine whether an offense has been committed, and if there is probable cause to hold defendant for trial, and if defendant does not desire to have it, he may waive it, and if he waives it, he cannot thereafter claim that he should have had it. The waiver is as broad as the privilege, and when he waives, he is barred from questioning informalities or making technical objections to the regularity of the proceedings. He is thereafter estopped from asserting, in any subsequent proceeding, anything he could have asserted had the examination taken place, and he cannot claim a discharge because no examination was held. (Citation omitted).

Here, the Plaintiff had the opportunity in court to argue against probable cause at the preliminary hearing, but did not. Instead, the Plaintiff submitted to the facts exposed at the hearing and offered no probable cause argument whatsoever.

CONCLUSION

The Plaintiff has failed to state a claim against Officer Kristyn Klingshirn because probable cause was found on multiple occasions, therefore, defeating any claim of malicious prosecution.

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Respectfully submitted,

BY: <u>/s/J. Todd Henning</u>

J. Todd Henning, Esq. (KBA No. 87191)

Jason H. Hernandez, Esq. (KBA No. 98744)

Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government

Department of Law

200 East Main Street, 6th Floor Lexington, Kentucky 40507 Telephone (859) 258-3500 Facsimile (859) 258-3466 jhenning@lexingtonky.gov jhernandez@lexingtonky.gov COUNSEL FOR DEFENDANT

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on this 30th day of June, 2023, I filed the foregoing document via the Court's ECF filing system, and a true and accurate copy of the Exhibit B was served by hand delivery as follows:

Daniel E. Whitley, Sr., Esq. WHITLEY LAW OFFICE PLLC 201 E. Main St.., Ste. 510 Lexington, KY 40507 Counsel for Plaintiff

/s/ J. Todd Henning

J. Todd Henning, Esq.
Counsel for Defendant Kristyn Klingshirn

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-AOC-425e: 5:23-006-00665-66-6MT -MAS Doc # Filed: 06/30/23 Page: 1 of 22-1-09941 Page 1 of 1 district/thurston Ver. 1.01 Court **Fayette** Commonwealth of Kentucky County **COMMITMENT ORDER** Court of Justice www.kycourts.gov ATTEST, VINCENT RIGGS, CHERK COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY **PLAINTIFF** APR 19 ٧. FAYE'TTE CIRC KENNETH WINSTON **WADKINS** DEFENDANT Sex Race Date of Birth Height Weight **Operator License Number** State **Bond Amount Type** M В OL 500000.00 CASI To the Jailer/Department of Corrections of lexington , Kentucky: You are hereby commanded to receive the above-named Defendant who has been found guilty of the following: murder and sentenced by order of this Court to: Next Court Date: 2022

Date

Transporting Officer

Distribution:

Preliminary
Hearing Held.
Held to
Errand JuryThurston

Court File

Jail/Corrections

Signature of Judge or Clerk

Case: 5:23-cv-00175-GFVT-MAS Doc #: 5-1 ID#: 25 Filed: 06/30/23 Page: 2 of 7 - Page

Electronically signed by District Judge M.Murphy on 10/25/2021 at 4:58:44PM.

Agency Local Code: 2021010963

J Rothrock-RWOA

Monday, October 25, 2021 Date printed:



Filed: 06/30/23 Page: 3 of 7 - Page

AOC-E-035 WarCode: WA

Rev. 01-08

Commonwealth of Kentucky

Court of Justice RCr 2.05; RCr2.06



Case Number:

County: Court:

FAYETTE

DISTRICT COURT

Warrant Number: Generated:

E03410004085728

40/25/2021 5:02:27PM

Warrant of Arrest Complaint Warrant

Plaintiff. COMMONWEALTH VS. Kenneth Winston Wadkins Defendant

TO ALL PEACE OFFICERS IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY: You are commanded to arrest the person named below and bring him/her forthwith before the FAYETTE COUNTY - DISTRICT COURT. If Court is not in session, you shall deliver him/her to the Jailer of FAYETTE County.

Kenneth Winston Wadkins 2113 Belmont DR **LEXINGTON, KY 40516**

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X to answer charges that he/she committed the offense(s) of:

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1	09150	507.020	F	MURDER	N/A	

The defendant may post I ail in the amount of \$ 500000 , secured by full cash

Conditions: No further violations of the law

The defendant may not give bail.

Complaint

The Afflant, Kristyn M Klings irn (LEXINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT 53285), states that on 1/21/2021 at 19:00 in FAYETTE County, Kentucky, the above named defendant unlawfully: Committed the offense of Murder, KRS 507.020, On January 21, 2021 19:00, the listed offender was at the state of the when, with the intent to cause death to another person, caused the death of the victim, when the shot him. During the course of the investigation the offender was identified by a cooperating witness who was present when the snooting occurred. The cooperating witness provided details of the incident which can be corroborated evidence located at the scene. I also received multiple crime stoppers tips advising "Ghost" shot the first and identifying "Ghost" as Kenneth Wadkins. A separate witness also identified Kenneth Wadkins as "Ghost". The tips further advise used for gambling and was set up. Utilizing Police resources, location data from a electronic device also puts Kenneth Wadkins at the scene.
--

EXECUTION

Executed
Not over

Signature of Peace Officer

Case: 5:23-cv-00175-GFVT-MAS Doc #: 5-1 Filed: 06/30/23 Page: 4 of 7 - Page ID#: 27 **FAYETTE CIRCUIT COURT** INDICTMENT NO. **CRIMINAL BRANCH JUNE 2022** DIVISION THE COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY ATTEST, VINCENT RIGGS, CLERK VS. W. Church KENNETH WINSTON WADKINS, DEFENDANT 22-F-01141 COUNT 1: MURDER KRS 507.020; UOR 0091500 CAPITAL OFFENSE THE GRAND JURY CHARGES: COUNT 1: On or about the 1st day of January, 2021, in Fayette County, Kentucky, the above named Defendant committed the offense of Murder when he caused the death of W.B. by shooting him with a firearm; against the peace and dignity of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. FILED ATTEST: VINCENT RIGGS, CLERK A TRUE BILL JUN 13 2022 FAYETTE CIRCUIT CLERK **FOREPERSON** A TRUE BILL Presented by the Foreperson of the Grand Jury to the Court, in the presence of the Grand Jury, and received from the Court by me and filed in open Court this ________, day of ________, 20 22 Clerk, Fayette Circuit Court Arraignment is set for

Grand Jury Witnesses:

Det. Kristyn Klingshirn

Buford Lyvers

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COMMONWEALTH VS. WADKINS,	DI 22-F-01141 KENNETH WINSTON
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MURDER (F) (A)
408.57.28 507020

VIC'. Wesley Brown
Witnesses
CW KLINGSHIRN, K 053285

Bail / Bond Information
04/08/2022 CA \$500,000.00

Monetary Events Information

4-19-22 Preliminary
8:30(3) hearing held
8:30(3) held to grand juryDI 22-F-01141
William KveCourts 04/09/2022 3:59:53AM

COMMONWEALTH VS. WADKINS, KENNETH WINSTON

Page 1 of 1

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ID#: 30
COMMONWEALTH VS. WADKINS, KENNETH WINSTON Filed:04/09/2022 Judge No: 722020 FAYETTE COUNTY COURT SYSTEM Defendant Information WADKINS, KENNETH WINSTON MB DOB: DLN#: **AKA/ALI Information** Charges 10/21/2021 Cit# 2P4186263-1 Chg: 1 UOR 0091500 MURDER (F) (A) Dism by Grand VIC'. WESLEY Brown Witnesses CW KLINGSHIRN, K 053285 **Bail / Bond Information** CA \$500,000.00 04/08/2022 **Monetary Events Information Scheduled Events** 04/11/2022 ARR 1:00 PM 4.11.22 IPM5 1-19-22 Preliminary V.C 8:30(3) hearing held 3rd. Div held to grand COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY COUNTY OF FAYETTE 04/09/2022 3:59:53AM I, VINCENT RIGGS, CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT KyeCourts WEALTH VS. WADKINS, KENNETH WINSTON FOR THE COUNTY AND STATE AFORESAID, Page 1 of 1 DO HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND CORRECT COPY AS SAME APPEARS OF RECORD AND REMAINS ON FILE IN MY OFFICE. WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL THIS DAY **EXHIBIT A**

Doc #: 5-1

Case: 5:23-cv-00175-GFVT-MAS

Filed: 06/30/23 Page: 7 pf17 - 2207e-01141

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF KENTUCKY
CENTRAL DIVISION
AT LEXINGTON
CIVIL ACTION NO. 5:23-CV-175-GFVT
ELECTRONICALLY FILED

KENNETH WADKINS

VS.

PROPOSED ORDER GRANTING DEFENDANT'S MOTION TO DISMISS

KRISTYN KLINGSHIRN DEFENDANT

The Defendant, by counsel, have filed a Motion To Dismiss under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6).

Having considered the Defendant's Motion to Dismiss Plaintiff's Complaint for failure to state a claim,

Accordingly, the Court hereby GRANTS Defendant's Motion, and dismisses the Plaintiff's Complaint.

DISTRICT JUDGE
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF KENTUCKY