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Former judge, cops ordered to stand trial for perjury-tainted case

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Retired Wayne County Circuit Judge Mary Waterstone and two former Inkster police officers were ordered this morning to stand trial on felony charges stemming from **a perjury-tainted 2005 cocaine trial**.

Detroit 36th District Court Judge David S. Robinson Jr. said the law told Waterstone that "the fundamental part of our job" was making sure perjury does not get to the jury.

"We do not condone, we do not permit, we do not conceal perjury," Robinson said, in ordering Waterstone to stand trial on four counts of misconduct in office.

Earlier this morning, Robinson ordered former Inkster Police Officer Robert McArthur to stand trial on charges of conspiracy, perjury and misconduct in office.

The charges come on an effort by former Wayne County chief drug prosecutor Karen Plants to hide the role of the key witness as the secret paid informant in a 47-kilo cocaine bust.

The last defendant in the case, former Inkster Police Sgt. Scott Rechtzigel, was also ordered to stand trial on perjury and conspiracy charges carrying a potential life sentence.

Robinson, in his rulings, stressed that the attorney general had only to establish probable cause that the defendants had committed the crimes. He said a jury may not be persuaded that they are guilty.

Much of the case against the officers, prosecutor and judge was based on the testimony of the confidential informant, Chad Povish.

Robinson said the defense attorneys had done a good job of challenging Povish's credibility. "At some point in the future, some jury or finder

of fact may not choose to believe Mr. Povish at all," Robinson said.

Assistant Attorney General William Rollstin declined to comment as did Rechtzigel's lawyer David Griem.

Waterstone's lawyer Gerald Evelyn said, "Everybody makes mistakes and one was made today."

He said that questions of Waterstone's judgment and ethics are separate from the charges she faces. "You can't substitute the criminal law for indignation," he said.

Again, he struck this theme. "Where did she knowingly breach the law?"

They all remain free on personal bond. All four are scheduled to have an initial court appearance at the Frank Murphy Hall of Justice on Oct. 27.



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