



Aryion E. Sanders murder verdict: Jurors deliberate for 5 hours, then return guilty decision

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE - A guilty verdict was issued against Aryion E. Sanders, for first-degree murder, a Class M felony, in the death of James E. Hubbard.

State's Attorney Tom Gibbons announced the guilty verdict and conviction of a 19-year-old Alton man for the murder of 41-year-old Hubbard in August 2015.

Opening statements began on Wednesday, March 21, 2018, in the case against Sanders (d.o.b. 05/15/1998). Sanders was originally charged on August 14, 2015, with first-degree murder, a Class M felony, in the death of James E. Hubbard. Following a two-day trial, the case went to the jury shortly after 10:00 a.m. Friday. Jurors deliberated just over five (5) hours before returning a guilty verdict against Sanders.

“I want to commend the outstanding work of our trial team, led by Assistant State’s Attorneys Crystal Uhe and Lauren Heischmidt of the Violent Crimes Unit, as well as the many members of our staff for making this possible,” said State’s Attorney Gibbons, expressing satisfaction with the Jury’s verdict. Gibbons also thanked the Major Case Squad and the Madison County Coroner’s office for their work that led to the successful resolution of this case.

During the two-day trial, prosecutors presented evidence, including witness testimony, which supported the State’s claim that Sanders had walked up behind Hubbard and shot him four times at point-blank range. This was the third time Sanders has been in front of a jury on these charges. In August, the trial was continued by Associate Judge Neil Schroeder two witnesses failed to appear. In September, following a three-day trial, jurors deliberated for nearly six hours before Circuit Judge Kyle Napp was informed the jury pool had been tainted and declared a mistrial.

“Despite the repeated attempts to derail this trial, Madison County Justice has prevailed. This verdict is the result of the tireless work of the women and men of the Major Case Squad, who went days without sleep in their pursuit of the suspect and evidence. Their hard work and determination paid off today,” said State’s Attorney Gibbons. “I would also like to extend my gratitude to the Jurors for sacrificing their valuable time and attention to hear this case and render a true verdict according to the facts and the law.”

Sanders will remain in custody at the Madison County Jail in Edwardsville pending sentencing by Circuit Judge Kyle Napp. Sentencing will occur following the completion of a pre-sentencing investigation, which usually takes 6-8 weeks. A murder conviction carries a sentence of 20 to 60 years in prison. In addition, since he used a firearm, Sanders is eligible for an additional 25-year sentence, making the minimum sentence 45 years and the maximum up to 85 years. He will be required to serve 100 percent of his sentence.