



Wood River Police Chief Discusses Homicide Case

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter
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WOOD RIVER - Wood River Police Chief Brad Wells discussed a rare [homicide case](#) in the city that occurred two weeks ago and thanked the City Council for their support throughout this investigation at their meeting on Monday.

“Two weeks ago today something that we don’t have happen often in our city, but we did have a homicide,” Chief Wells said. “Within just a couple hours of the homicide happening, the men and women of the Wood River Police Department had that bad guy in custody, and he’s been in custody since that homicide happened.”

Austin L. Mullins of Alton, 19, was charged with first-degree murder after he discharged a firearm, causing the death of Jacob Wall, age 23, on Monday, July 24, 2023, according to [a previous story on Riverbender.com](#) about the case submitted by the Wood River Police Department.

Councilman Jeremy Plank asked the chief how the elimination of cash bail, effective Sept. 18, would affect this case.

“It would’ve put us under a little bit of a rush just to prove the probable cause. The defendant has a right to a hearing rather quickly ... what that does is you have to have a lot of the evidence ready to go,” Chief Wells said. “A lot of the people that signed this bill and put this bill in place have never worked a homicide.”

He added that his department will remain flexible as it continues its work to adapt to the provisions of the SAFE-T Act.

“We’ve been preparing this town at the police department by the things that we do over the last three or four years, getting ready for this bill,” he said. “There are some downfalls to it, but we’ll be alright in the City of Wood River.”

Plank asked for an estimated timeline on when this case would go to court. Chief Wells explained that there would first be a probable cause hearing, then a detention hearing when the judge would determine whether or not the defendant should be detained - however, Chief Wells noted that in cases of homicide and other violent offenses, the department automatically has the right to detain the defendant without a trial.

“Even on this type of case here, rest assured, we would’ve kept him where he should be during that time period,” Wells said. “There will be more to come on that too as we roll that out.”

Chief Wells added that he appreciates the support his department has received from city administrators.

“I’ve worked with a lot of towns where they don’t have the support from the council, the mayor, and the city manager,” Wells said. “You may not realize it sitting in the seats, but working those long hours knowing we have your support behind the Police Department is very important, and I just want to say thank you.”

A recording of the August 7 meeting is available at the top of this story, on [Riverbender.com/video](#), or on the [Riverbender.com Facebook page](#).

