

Hearing begins in CdA police officer slaying

Scott Maben/SR

The man accused of killing a Coeur d'Alene police officer in May is back in court this morning as prosecutors lay out their evidence and seek to have Jonathan Daniel Renfro held over for trial on first-degree murder and five other felony charges.

Renfro, 27, allegedly shot Moore in the face as the officer questioned him early in the morning of May 5 in a quiet neighborhood a mile northwest of Lake City High School. Moore died later that day at Kootenai Health.

Renfro was on felony parole at the time of the shooting and told investigators he feared Moore would find the stolen handgun he was carrying in his pocket – an offense that would have sent him back to prison, according to court documents.

If convicted, he could be given the death penalty.

Renfro has not entered a plea to the charges he faces, which also include:

- Grand theft – for possession of the stolen Glock handgun.
- Concealment of evidence – the stolen Glock.
- Removing a firearm from a law enforcement officer – Moore.
- Robbery – for taking Moore's handgun after he allegedly shot the officer.
- Eluding a peace officer – for fleeing police in Post Falls while driving Moore's patrol car.

Renfro, who is being held on \$2 million bond, previously was sentenced for grand theft in Kootenai County, and for grand theft and battery upon a jailer in Latah County.

During the preliminary hearing, which could last several days, the Kootenai County Prosecutor's Office may call to the stand Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls police officers and Kootenai County Sheriff's detectives who were among the first to respond to the shooting, who pursued and apprehended Moore, or who lead the investigation.

Others who were subpoenaed for the hearing include Dr. William Ganz of Neurosurgery and Spine Northwest, who treated Moore in the emergency room, and Cinda Allen, who lives on West Wilbur Avenue near the scene of the shooting.

First District Senior Magistrate Barry Watson is presiding over the preliminary hearing in a courtroom at the Kootenai County Jail.

Moore, 43, was on patrol alone that night when he stopped to check on a suspicious person about 1:20 a.m. Moore spoke with the man and ran his identification through police dispatch to check if he had outstanding warrants, then asked him to step over to his patrol car.

Moore's body camera recorded what happened next, investigators say. "At that point Renfro is observed shooting Sgt. Moore," Idaho State Police Senior Detective Michael Van Leuven said in an affidavit. "After being shot, Sgt. Moore falls to the ground, causing his body camera to point skyward. A short time later Renfro's face comes back into frame. Renfro is seen using a flashlight while searching Sgt. Moore's person.

"A few seconds later the voices of a man and a woman can be heard in the background. Renfro leaves the frame of the camera again. A car door can be heard shutting and a vehicle driving away."

About 1:35 a.m. a police dispatcher repeatedly tries to reach Moore using the officer's radio identification, K27. There's no response.

Allen called 911 about 1:34 a.m. to report hearing a loud noise from the street outside her house. "She went outside and observed a patrol vehicle drive away from the area and saw someone laying in the street," Van Leuven wrote.

Renfro stole Moore's patrol car a few minutes after the shooting, Van Leuven said in an affidavit. The car's dash-mounted camera system recorded Renfro's flight to Post Falls, where the car sped past Post Falls Police Officer Christopher Thompson at 90 mph, twice the speed limit, on Seltice Way, the detective said.

Thompson turned on his lights and siren and gave chase, and Renfro accelerated to speeds exceeding 100 mph, the affidavit states.

Van Leuven interviewed Renfro after his arrest. According to his affidavit, Renfro told the investigator, "And then I was driving, uh, speeding more and more and more. I had the car governed out. There were lights behind me, so I drove up a side street, tried to take a right and stopped right there."

The stolen police car was found abandoned at Pointe Parkway and Beck Road. Renfro told investigators he ditched the car "because he believed law enforcement was tracking it using an on-board GPS tracking system," Van Leuven said in an affidavit.

Police using a K-9 unit found Renfro hiding under a semi-trailer near a Wal-Mart store. He had 9 mm bullets in his pocket, investigators said, and Moore's service pistol was found near him. A second 9 mm pistol was found in a nearby field along with Moore's flashlight and Renfro's eyeglasses, the affidavit states.

During a police interview, Renfro also said he had used hydrocodone and methamphetamine the day before the shooting, court documents show.

Moore, the first Coeur d'Alene police officer killed in the line of duty, was married and had two children. Thousands attended his funeral May 9 at Lake City High, where he previously worked as a school resource officer. Police officers and first responders from all over the Northwest attended the service and provided an escort that stretched for miles to the cemetery.

Moore's service is remembered in "K27" decals widely displayed on police and fire vehicles and civilian cars and trucks across North Idaho.