

# Renfro referenced white supremacists in interview after arrest in shooting of CdA officer

Scott Maben/SR

Jonathan Daniel Renfro told police detectives he was out looking for a car to steal and “to collect money on behalf of white supremacists from Native Americans” the night he allegedly fatally shot Coeur d’Alene Police Sgt. Greg Moore, according to testimony in court today.

In a 2-hour interview with investigators, Renfro at first denied shooting Moore, saying instead it was someone named Davis. But he admitted doing it when a detective informed him police had recovered Moore’s body camera footage that showed the confrontation early in the morning of May 5, testified Idaho State Police Detective Michael Van Leuven, the lead investigator in the case.

The white supremacists comment was not explained further during today’s hearing, and the transcript and video of the police interview has been sealed by court order. Any ties Renfro may have had with white supremacists has not been revealed in court proceedings.

When a detective asked Renfro why he shot Moore, the suspect replied, “Fear,” according to a transcript of the police interview that was read during Renfro’s preliminary hearing today.

Fear of what, the detectives asked him.

“Having a gun in my damn pocket,” Renfro answered, according to court testimony.

One of the investigators then asked if Renfro, who was on felony parole at the time, was afraid Moore would find the handgun.

“No, I knew he was going to find it,” Renfro said.

Moore allegedly stopped to question Renfro after seeing him, dressed in dark clothing, walking down a sidewalk in the residential neighborhood a little before 1:30 a.m.

One of the detectives also asked Renfro how Moore had treated him during the encounter. Renfro said he found Moore to be nice and respectful – a “really nice man,” according to the interview transcript read in court.

In questioning Van Leuven on the stand, Kootenai County Public Defender John Adams referred to a part of Renfro’s police interview in which his defendant was asked when he decided to pull out his gun and shoot Moore, and whether it was before Moore got out of his patrol car.

“No, I had no intention of doing it in the first place,” Renfro answered, according to the transcript.

Adams asked Van Leuven if Renfro told the detectives he shot Moore because the officer had placed his hand on his service pistol.

Van Leuven said yes, but he didn't recall the exact words Renfro had used.

Adams also asked about Renfro giving Moore his identification, which the officer apparently used to run a check on Renfro's record, and which later was found in the officer's clothing at the hospital.

According to the interview transcript, Renfro told detectives, “If my intent was to shoot him, I would have shot him before I gave him my ID.”

Renfro continued in the interview, “I was feeling scared, trapped and concerned,” and that as soon as he saw Moore place a hand on his gun, “I didn't think,” he just reacted, according to the transcript Adams referenced in court.

Adams also pressed Van Leuven to testify to the facts supporting why Moore even stopped to check out Renfro that night. The detective said the location, time of night, Renfro's clothing and the area's history of car burglaries were contributing factors, but Adams argued those were more in line with Van Leuven's opinion of the reason for the stop.

The detective also noted that police had received reports of three car burglaries that night in that very neighborhood, although he couldn't verify if Moore was aware of those crimes at the time he stopped to talk with Renfro. But Van Leuven did note that Moore had not activated the overhead lights on his patrol car, an indication that it was a “consensual stop” to ask why someone is in a certain location at a certain time of day.

Moore was given a series of neurological tests in the Kootenai Health emergency room after he was shot, according to testimony earlier in the day.

Almost all of the exams showed him unresponsive, according to this morning's testimony of Dr. William Ganz, a neurological surgeon called to the hospital that morning to examine Moore in the trauma room.

“He didn't respond at all” to some of the initial tests, Ganz said, except for a few spontaneous breaths and a little gagging on his breathing tube.

Ganz, of Neurosurgery and Spine Northwest, was the first witness to take the stand in the second day of Renfro's preliminary hearing.

Renfro, 27, is charged with first-degree murder in the early morning shooting of Moore, who was on patrol in northwest Coeur d'Alene.

Moore's condition deteriorated through the morning at the hospital, and the officer was confirmed to be brain dead by about 2:30 p.m., Ganz testified. The doctor called Moore's death at 3:05 p.m.

In the early hours of his treatment, Moore's blood pressure was very low, Ganz said. The medical team gave him powerful medications to boost his blood pressure while Moore underwent a series of scans and tests to assess his injuries. Some of those tests showed bullet fragments lodged in the spine and mostly blocking one artery to the brain, Ganz said.

"There was really no treatment to be done at that point" other than to stabilize Moore and move him to the intensive care unit, he said.

Kootenai County Sheriff's Det. Jerry Northrup took the stand next and described searches and recovery of evidence in west Post Falls where police arrested Renfro following the shooting. The evidence included Moore's police car, which was stolen after he was shot, and two handguns and two ammunition magazines. Other evidence found near the abandoned patrol car was a flashlight, a lighter and a pair of eyeglasses, Northrup said.

One of the semiautomatic pistols was found on top of an air brake system reservoir on the underside of a semi-truck trailer parked west of the Wal-Mart store at the Point at Post Falls commercial center. It was the same trailer under which police had found and arrested Renfro earlier that morning, Northrup said.

The detective said he also found two magazine clips sitting atop structural frames under the trailer. Photos of the items and a schematic of where they were found were introduced as evidence.

Officers conducting a line search in a field near the Wal-Mart found the second gun.

Northrup also said he documented the patrol car, which was still running with its lights on and the radio turned on low, turned to an FM radio station. The car's dash-cam video recorder was removed from the trunk, the detective said.