



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
BUREAU OF BRANCH & AREA OPERATIONS

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August 22, 2014

Mr. Vern Nelson
The Orange Juice Blog

Re: People v. Christopher Woodard

Dear Vern:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to respond to the inaccurate account provided by civil attorney Matt Pappas. Throughout my handling of this case, I was truthful, ethical and fair. Moreover, I adhered strictly to the requirements of the law.

Following a two-year investigation by the Long Beach Police Department, Franchise Tax Board and Board of Equalization, Christopher Woodard was charged on Feb. 5 with ten felony counts. The maximum penalty for these charges was ten years of incarceration.

Given that the alleged offenses included unlawful sales of marijuana, a motion was filed under the provisions of Penal Code Section 1275 to ensure that the source of defendant Woodard's bail was not from illicit funds.

Both the prosecution and defense argued the validity of this motion before the court, as well as several later defense motions to release the defendant on bail under the provisions of 1275. Ultimately, it was at the court's discretion to decide the proper ruling on these motions according to the law.

At a preliminary hearing on June 19, the evidence gathered in the investigation was presented before an L.A. County Superior Court judge who determined there was sufficient evidence to proceed to trial on all counts.

The case did not go to trial because on Aug. 13 Woodard reached an agreement with the prosecution that allowed him to plead no contest to two felony charges: possession of an assault weapon and failure to file an income tax return.

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He was sentenced to time served (189 actual days in custody), and three years of formal probation. Woodard also agreed to pay all unpaid taxes and any other restitution, which will be decided by the court when he returns for a hearing on Oct. 16.


If you would like to confirm my account, and identify more specifically some of the many inaccuracies in Mr. Pappas' letter, I encourage you to go to the criminal clerk's office at the Long Beach courthouse to inspect the court's file in the case. The case number is NA098171.

In the court file is a transcript of the preliminary hearing and records of when all hearings occurred, who was present, who the judge was, and what happened. You can also find the court reporter's name so that you can also obtain a transcript of exactly what was said at any other hearing.

It is important for the public to have accurate information about what is done by their government officials, so I appreciate this opportunity to respond.

Very Truly Yours,

JACKIE LACEY
District Attorney

By: 

Patrick O'Crowley
Deputy District Attorney