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Press Release

December 7, 2017

Murder charges filed in April 2017 shooting

Willie Deandre Hassel, 20, of Benton Harbor, has been charged with Open Murder in the shooting death of John Conyers, age 30, also of Benton Harbor on April 7, 2017.

The incident in the parking lot of the Salvation Army at 233 Michigan Avenue in Benton Harbor at about 8:00 pm is believed to have originated as an illicit sale of pills that turned into a fight, which resulted in Willie Hassel allegedly shooting John Conyers twice in the torso.

Open Murder carries the possibility of a life sentence without the possibility of parole. Hassel is also charged with additional counts of Carrying a Concealed Weapon, a five year felony; Conspiracy to Deliver a Schedule IV Controlled Substance, a four year felony; and Felony Firearm, a mandatory 2 year consecutive offense.

At his arraignment today, bail was set at a \$700,000 cash or surety bond. The pre-exam conference is set for December 8, 2017 and the preliminary examination hearing is set for December 14, both at 8:30.

For an offense alleged to have occurred on December 1, 2016, in Benton Harbor, Hassel was also arraigned on charges of Unarmed Robbery, a fifteen year maximum; Discharging a Weapon in or at a Building, a ten year felony; two counts of Assault with a Dangerous Weapon, four year felonies; Domestic Violence and Careless Discharge of a Firearm, both misdemeanors. His bond for those charges was set at \$50,000. Hearing dates are the same as noted above.

The charges are merely accusations and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.