

Tulsa police officers named in federal probe

 tulsaworld.com/news/local/tulsa-police-officers-named-in-federal-probe/article_431f47ad-9d5e-5252-a8ea-06586175dc15.html

OMER GILLHAM World Staff Writer

March 26, 2011

Federal prosecutors have named three Tulsa police officers as unindicted co-conspirators in a corruption probe that has brought criminal charges against five other police officers, records show.

The probe also has resulted in the convictions of another Tulsa police officer and a federal law enforcement officer.

Tulsa police officers Sean Larkin, Frank Khalil and Shawn Hickey have been named as unindicted co-conspirators in a 62-count indictment of Tulsa police officers Jeff Henderson and Bill Yelton, U.S. District Court records show.

The World attempted to contact Larkin, Hickey and Khalil for comment. Tulsa Police Chief Chuck Jordan said the officers could not comment due to the pending case.

Jordan said the officers' work status has not changed. He said Larkin, Hickey and Khalil have not been placed on administrative duty.

"They are unindicted because they refuse to accommodate the government's version of events," said Stephen Jones, Henderson's attorney.

The federal indictment was unsealed July 20 as part of a grand jury investigation of alleged corruption within the Tulsa Police Department.

The indictment against Henderson and Yelton also mentions "known and unknown" individuals linked to the case.

Larkin, Khalil and Hickey were named as co-conspirators Thursday in court filings as part of a pretrial hearing next week. While the officers are not charged with a crime, federal prosecutors added their names and alleged participation in four of the alleged conspiracies facing Henderson or Yelton, records show.

A second indictment was unsealed July 20 in federal court, alleging that two police officers and a retired officer planted drugs on individuals and stole money during an FBI sting in May 2009, records show.

The officers are Nick DeBruin, Bruce Bonham and retired officer Harold R. Wells. Their trial date has been rescheduled with the new date still pending with the court. The trial for Henderson and Yelton is scheduled for June 20.

Federal prosecutors have also named additional unindicted co-conspirators in the second indictment. They include former police officers Eric Hill and Callison Kaiser, who are expected to be witnesses in the trial for Wells, DeBruin and Bonham, records show.

During separate, pretrial hearings next week, prosecutors are being asked to demonstrate possible co-conspirator statements and evidence to meet the requirement to use such statements and to support alleged conspiracies in both indictments, court records show.

The five indicted officers face almost two dozen conspiracy counts related to allegations they violated the civil rights of various individuals, including drug defendants, records show.

Since the federal probe began, 31 people have been freed from prison, had felony cases dismissed or prison sentences reduced due to alleged police misconduct, a Tulsa World investigation shows.

Larkin, Khalil and Hickey, as well as Henderson and Yelton, are members of the Tulsa Police Department's Special Investigations Division.

In addition to being named as co-conspirators, the officers have had their investigative records subpoenaed, the World has reported. In September 2010, prosecutors subpoenaed six years of investigative documents created by 10 officers, including Larkin, Khalil and Hickey.

The officers are named as unindicted co-conspirators due to their alleged actions in conspiracy counts against Henderson and Yelton, the filing states.

Larkin is named as a co-conspirator in two of the conspiracy counts against Henderson, records show. The charges involve the alleged violation of civil rights of Isaias Gonzalez and alleged witness tampering involving Rochelle Martin.

Former ATF agent Brandon McFadden is expected to testify about his involvement in the Gonzalez case and the involvement of Henderson and Larkin, the filing states.

On June 12, 2007, Henderson, McFadden and other individuals known to the grand jury, unlawfully seized drugs and money from Isaias Gonzalez for their personal benefit, the indictment states.

McFadden and former Tulsa police officer John K. Gray are listed as co-conspirators and expected to testify about numerous alleged conspiracies involving Henderson, the filing states.

McFadden and Gray have pleaded guilty and are cooperating with federal prosecutors while they await sentencing.

Larkin also allegedly participated in a conspiracy involving witness tampering, the filing states. That count involves Martin, a former informant for Henderson. Martin is expected to testify that she falsified testimony against Bobby Wayne Haley Sr. at the direction of Henderson and Yelton.

Khalil is named as a co-conspirator in two of the alleged conspiracy counts, with Hickey being named in one of the counts, the filings state.

Hickey and Khalil allegedly participated in a conspiracy involving Jose Angel Gonzalez. The indictment states that Henderson, McFadden and other TPD officers known to the grand jury entered Jose Angel Gonzalez's residence in September 2007 without a search warrant and relocated potential evidence within the house.

The indictment against Henderson alleges that officers discovered a sawed-off shotgun in a closet of the home and hid it in a vent, then came back later with a falsified search warrant prepared by Henderson using a fictitious confidential informant.

The nonexistent informant allegedly said he observed Jose Angel Gonzalez selling drugs from the home, records state. Jose Angel Gonzalez pleaded guilty in federal court to possession of an unregistered sawed-off shotgun.

Khalil is also listed as co-conspirator with Henderson, McFadden and Gray in the case of Jerry Robert Hill III. Hill was sentenced to 12 years in federal prison for possession of methamphetamine with intent to distribute and possession of a firearm while drug trafficking, records show.

Henderson, Gray, McFadden and another TPD officer known to the grand jury allegedly executed a search warrant on Hill's residence Feb. 22, 2007, stealing an undisclosed amount of money from Hill, the indictment states.

Hill remains incarcerated in federal prison.

Other unindicted co-conspirators and possible federal witnesses include Martin, Ryan Logsdon and inmate Demarrio Oates, the filing shows.

Henderson was indicted on 58 counts of conspiracy, witness-tampering, attempted bribery, perjury, possession of a firearm and distribution of drugs. Yelton has been indicted on eight counts of witness-tampering, conspiracy to suborn perjury, deprivation of civil rights and retaliation against a witness, records show.

Henderson, Yelton, Wells, DeBruin and Bonham were suspended without pay July 23.

Former U.S. Attorney Jane W. Duke is leading the investigation into alleged police corruption. Duke served as acting U.S. attorney and U.S. attorney from June 1, 2007 until Dec. 31.

Christopher R. Thyer was sworn as U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Arkansas Dec. 31. Duke is now the first assistant U.S. attorney.

Omer Gillham 918-581-8301

omer.gillham@tulsaworld.com SUBHEAD: They're named as unindicted co-conspirators in a corruption case in which other police are charged.

Original Print Headline: Feds name 3 officers in probe