



City of Edmonds Media Release

Office of the Mayor ~ 121 5th Ave N, Edmonds, WA 98020

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EDMONDS POLICE OFFICERS VINDICATED BY FEDERAL COURT JURY IN CIVIL RIGHTS LAWSUIT

Officers awarded the statutory maximum of \$1,000.00 each in counterclaim of malicious prosecution

(Edmonds, WA) - On November 11th, after a four day trial in Federal Court at Seattle, a seven person jury rendered a unanimous verdict in favor of three veteran Edmonds Police Officers, David Machado, Ryan Speer and Justin Lee, finding no merit to a claim of violation of civil rights alleged by the Plaintiff, Sheldon Soule. Further, the jury found unanimously in favor of each of the officers on their counterclaim of malicious prosecution against Mr. Soule and each were awarded the statutory maximum of \$1,000.00.

The case involved allegations of police excessive force alleged by plaintiff Sheldon Soule against the City of Edmonds and three of its officers. Plaintiff's allegations arose from his early morning interaction with police in 2012 after he assaulted a citizen on the sidewalk near Fifth and Main in Edmonds following the close of the *Taste of Edmonds*. The police were unable to gain voluntary compliance to arrest plaintiff and had to physically take him to the ground to apply handcuffs and arrest him. Plaintiff physically resisted the officers throughout their attempts to complete the arrest and was hurling threats and obscenities at them until he was successfully in custody and thereafter until he was delivered to the Snohomish County Jail. He was later convicted on charges of assault 4 and resisting arrest.

Plaintiff Soule alleged excessive force was used to make his arrest but, that characterization was rejected by the jury, not only finding that the officers' use of force was constitutional, but the jury also found in the officers' favor regarding their malicious prosecution counterclaim—that the plaintiff misused the judicial process by filing an action known to be false and with malicious intent. The three Edmonds officers were awarded damages of one thousand dollars each and the City can petition the court for a further award for the attorney fees and costs incurred in defending the action and officers. Additional claims against the City and other officers were dismissed by the judge, Hon. Thomas Zilly, prior to trial. The City and officers were successfully defended by attorney Mark Bucklin, a longtime Edmonds resident and founding shareholder of the Seattle law firm Keating, Bucklin & McCormack Inc. P.S.

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