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Eric Saia receives 10 year prison sentence for randomly attacking a man walking his dog

Today, Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill announced that Eric Saia, 34, received a 10 year prison sentence for randomly attacking a man using a hatchet.

“This was an event that will impact the victim and his wife for the rest of their lives,” said Multnomah County Deputy District Attorney Eric Collins, who litigated this case. “I can’t imagine being part of this event. The fact that they did nothing to instigate what occurred is frightening for our community. During our judicial settlement conferences, it became clear that Mr. Saia wanted to take responsibility for his actions. This is a significant sentence, but it is appropriate given the seriousness of these crimes.”

This investigation started on October 7, 2018 when Portland Police responded to reports of a robbery and assault in the area of Northeast Schuyler Street and Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in Portland, Oregon. When officers arrived on scene, they located an adult male on the ground holding a rag to his head bleeding profusely.

During the investigation, law enforcement learned that the victim was out walking his dog when Saia and another man approached the victim on bikes. The two men rode past the victim but circled back and said something to the effect of “drop your stash,” which was indicative of a robbery. The victim’s wife was in a nearby car and witnessed the attack.

During the robbery, Saia pulled out a hatchet from his backpack and struck the victim in the head with an overhead swing.

After the assault, Saia and the other suspect got back on their bikes and fled the scene.

The victim, who suffered significant head trauma, was transported to Legacy Emanuel Medical Center and required multiple surgeries because of the injuries sustained during the attack.

By pleading guilty, Saia admits that he unlawfully and intentionally caused serious physical injury to the victim by using a dangerous weapon and that he unlawfully and knowingly, while in the course of committing and attempting to commit theft, used physical force, with a weapon, to take the victim’s property.

The victim and his wife attended Wednesday’s change of plea and sentencing hearing but did not make any statement in court. During the pendency of this case, they have received continuous assistance from the Victim Assistance Program of the Multnomah County District Attorney’s Office.

The second suspect in this case has been identified. He remains innocent unless and until proven guilty.

The Multnomah County District Attorney’s Office recognizes the Portland Police Bureau and its Robbery Unit for their dedicated efforts on this case.

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