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DA's Office files bias crimes case against 30-year-old man

Today, Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill announces the filing of a five-count charging document against 30-year-old Zachary Allen Hantz for allegedly menacing and unlawfully using a weapon against a City of Portland park ranger.

It is alleged that Hantz subjected the victim to alarm by threatening to inflict serious physical injury because of his perception of the victim's race or the color of his skin.

Court documents state that on July 5, 2020, law enforcement responded to the area of West Burnside Street and Northwest Park Avenue on an in-progress disturbance.

The victim is African American and is employed by the City of Portland and its Bureau of Parks & Recreation as a park ranger.

It is alleged that Hantz approached the victim and started walking aggressively toward the victim while yelling racial hate speech. Hantz took out a knife and pointed it toward the victim in a manner that made him believe that Hantz would use it against him and placed him in imminent fear of serious physical injury.

According to court documents, as Hantz confronted the park ranger, a community member saw the events unfolding and attempted to de-escalate the situation. The community member is also an African American male.

It is alleged that Hantz then started screaming at and pointing the knife in the direction of the community member. Law enforcement arrived and took Hantz into custody without any further incident.

During the investigation, law enforcement learned the park ranger had initially contacted a person inside the North Park Blocks when Hantz approached and confronted the victim.

Hantz is charged with one count of bias crime in the first degree, two counts of unlawful use of a weapon and two counts of menacing.

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Like in all criminal and civil matters, electronic copies of court documents, which are not subject to a protective order, are available to the public through the Oregon eCourt Information (OECI) system.

No additional information can be released by the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office at this time pursuant to the Oregon Rules of Professional Conduct.

A charging document is only an accusation of a crime. Hantz is innocent unless and until proven guilty.

The Multnomah County District Attorney's Office was an active participant of the Oregon Attorney General's Hate Crimes Task Force and helped draft the language that was in Senate Bill 577. The law, which went into effect on July 15, 2019, renamed the crime of "intimidation" to "bias crime," added gender identity to the list of protected categories and removed the requirement that two or more people commit the crime in order to make it a felony in certain circumstances.

All potential bias crime cases, whether they are a felony or misdemeanor, are reviewed by the Violent Crimes Unit within the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office. If a misdemeanor crime is issued, the felony-level attorney will retain the case.

If you are the victim of a bias crime assault or you are witnessing one, immediately call 9-1-1. If you are the victim of a bias crime and the suspect is no longer present or if you have information about a bias crime committed in the past, call the non-emergency line at 503-823-3333.

COVID-19 Notice

The health and well-being of all employees and community members we serve is a top priority for the Multnomah County District Attorney. Our office is working with the court, defense bar, local law enforcement and other system partners to carefully balance the needs of public health and public safety.

For information about the operational changes implemented by the District Attorney's Office in response to the novel coronavirus, please [click here](#).

#MCDA#

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