



Report: Capital shooting suspect is sane

State health department forensic psychiatrist reaches conclusion

By ALEX MANN

A forensic psychiatrist for the Maryland Health Department believes the man charged with killing five Capital Gazette staffers is legally sane, an Anne Arundel County Circuit Court judge said Monday before denying prosecutors' request to have the man examined again.

The 124-page report was completed at

least a month ago after the doctor extensively evaluated the man charged with murdering Gerald Fischman, Rob Hiaasen, John McNamara, Rebecca Smith and Wendi Winters on June 28, 2018. The report includes a 22-page narrative of the attack that defendant Jarrod Ramos gave during interviews with the health examiners.

Prosecutors filed a motion asking a judge to let their own mental health expert examine Ramos, the 39-year-old Laurel man facing five counts of first-degree murder, one count of attempted murder, six counts of first-degree assault, among a host of other charges. He has pleaded not guilty and not

criminally responsible — Maryland's version of the insanity defense — to all counts, and is scheduled for trial on Nov. 4.

While discussing the request during Monday's pretrial hearing in Annapolis, Judge Laura Ripken revealed that the Health Department evaluation found that Jarrod Ramos was legally sane. Neither attorneys for the prosecution nor the defense disputed her description.

Ripken cited the Health Department report, which "came back favorable to the state's position," in ruling that prosecutors could not have their own experts evaluate Ramos' mental state. If the Health Department doctors had offered an opinion that he

was insane, Ripken said she would have been more inclined to allow a third examination.

Ripken said if she were to approve another examination the defense could ask to delay the trial to review the new findings. "I see almost no way this would not cause a postponement."

The trial has been split into two phases at Ramos' request. If Ramos is found guilty of the deadly attack, a second phase of the trial will determine if he is criminally responsible.

With just two weeks remaining before trial, State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess See **SANE**, page A4

EASY RIDER



PAUL W. GILLESPIE/CAPITAL GAZETTE

Warren Coelho, 5, learns to ride his bike with help from his mother, Maureen Coelho, in the Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium parking lot. It might be good to wait a day before trying again. Rain is in the forecast today.

Improved sports facilities sought

Coaches, parents and teachers ask Anne Arundel County Council to equal playing field

By OLIVIA SANCHEZ

Dozens of Anne Arundel County residents spoke before the council Monday night, imploring their representatives to find a way to give equitable funding to youth sporting facilities in south county.

The lack of good athletic fields in south Anne Arundel County are impacting kids and families far beyond the scope of athletics, the speakers said during the council's lengthy public comment period.

Parents, coaches, teachers repeatedly invited council members to come to south county and tour the facilities.

William Huggins, girls basketball commissioner with the South County Youth Association, said that better playing fields are incentive for kids to become active and get involved with athletics.

"A nice field will make kids want to participate in sports rather than just looking at their phone," Huggins said.

Mike Mulhern, a football coach from south county, said, "I've seen the good and the bad, and we are the worst!"

Mulhern cited safety concerns for his athletes when they have to have football practice on a local field that doesn't have any grass.

Councilman Nathan Volke, R-Pasadena, thanked the concerned group for advocating on behalf of young athletes.

As of press time, the council did not make decisions on a resolution that expanded the auditor's investigative power or a county bill to change forest conservation laws.

Resolution 36-19 would amend the county charter to expand the county auditor's authority. It would give the auditor access to all records and files pertaining to county business, and allow her to conduct additional financial audits of any office, department or agency that receives funding from the county.

Since this resolution amends the county charter, it requires five votes for passage. Then the charter amendment is placed on the 2020 election ballot.

This move for transparency comes after a long battle between past councils and administrations over the role of the county auditor, and how much access they should have.

In 2018, when similar legislation was brought before the council, it was met with conflicting reactions. Former County Executive Steve Schuh called the effort to strengthen the investigative reach of the county auditor "boneheaded," and said the auditor could act on political motivations and abuse investigative power.

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Pittman going public with weekly schedule

Anne Arundel County executive to post it online

By CHASE COOK AND OLIVIA SANCHEZ

Anne Arundel County Executive Stuart Pittman announced Monday his public schedule will now be available online.

The online schedule will include public events, as well as events that aren't open to the public but may still be of public interest. It can be found at aaccounty.org.



Pittman

Pittman has wanted to make his schedule publicly available for a while, but repeated requests from Capital Gazette journalists nudged the process along, said Chris Trumbauer, a senior communications and policy adviser to Pittman.

The move towards transparency is good for the community, said Rick Hutzell, editor of The Capital.

"The more the public knows what their

governments are doing, the better for our society and our democracy," Hutzell said. "We have been asking County Executive Pittman and Mayor (Gavin) Buckley to be more transparent about their schedules since they took office. This is a good step forward."

Most items on Pittman's agenda this week aren't open to the public, including a Health and Human Services meeting, a bus tour of Brooklyn Park and three days of meetings with the Baltimore Metropolitan Council for Chesapeake Connect.

On Oct. 29, Pittman will speak on a panel See **PITTMAN**, page A4