

TRUMBULL COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

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11th District Court denies appeal of rapist

The Ohio 11th District Court of Appeals, in decisions made Monday, March 11, 2024, denied an appeal from a convicted rapist serving a 25-year-to-life prison sentence.



In a decision written and filed Monday by 11th District Judge Eugene A. Lucci, the court rejected the appeal of 44-year-old Warren man who was found guilty by a Trumbull County jury last June of all 10 counts involving the sexual assault of a then 12-year-old Hubbard girl over a six-month period of 2020.

In the appeal of his conviction, Francis LaCamera of Summit Street NW, photo at left, cited two potential errors made by the trial court. He said the conviction was not supported by sufficient evidence and that the verdict went against the manifest weight of evidence.

In its decision, supported by Judges Matt Lynch and John J. Ecklund, the 11th district stated LaCamera's appeal lacked merit.

“Viewing the evidence in its entirety, the jury was in the best position to assess the credibility of witnesses and evaluated the substance of the recorded exhibits. In doing so, we cannot conclude that the jury's verdict is against the manifest weight of the evidence,” Lucci wrote.

Thus, LaCamera's conviction and sentence handed down by Common Pleas Judge Cynthia Rice will stand. LaCamera will continue to serve his prison sentence at Noble Correctional Institution.

Assistant Prosecutor Gabriel Wildman had represented the defense at trial, while the appeal was handled by Assistant Prosecutor Ryan Sanders for the state.

The 11th District Court of Appeals also on Monday upheld the conviction and prison sentence of Jeremiah Ulysses Jones, who was denied by a Common Pleas Judge of withdrawing his guilty pleas for two counts of aggravated robbery, first-degree felonies, originally made in June in 2019.



Jones, photo at left, who was sentenced to an aggregate prison term of six years, including a three-year gun specification, had filed a motion to withdraw his guilty plea on June 7, 2023. On June 12, 2023, Judge Sean O'Brien denied that motion and Jones then appealed that ruling.

In the appeals court ruling, written by Judge Robert J. Patton, Jones had limited appellate rights to make a post-sentence withdrawal of a plea, and his reasons that he did not know of his ability to appeal his competency judgement in 2019 was not a serious enough reason to withdraw a guilty plea at this time. Patton was joined by Judges Mary Jane Trapp and Matt Lynch in the decision.

Assistant Prosecutor Ryan Sanders argued the case before the appellate court, while Jones was represented by Stow attorney Michael Partlow.

Jones, 24, will continue to serve his prison sentence at Northeast Ohio Correctional Center.

For more information, contact Guy M. Vogrin, investigator/public information officer for the Trumbull County Prosecutor's Office at 330-675-2485.