

18-year-old found guilty of murder, robbery

The murder trial of Gavin Roberts ended in the early evening hours of Wednesday, Oct. 4, 2023, as the 18-year-old defendant was found guilty by a Trumbull County grand jury of one count of aggravated murder and another count of aggravated robbery, both which carry firearms specification.

Roberts of Kenilworth Avenue SE, Warren, was found not guilty of another murder count that carried a pre-calculated and design factor as well as not guilty for a count of aggravated burglary.

The jury took about two hours to deliberate Roberts' fate after hearing two days of testimony. Testimony was briefly interrupted Tuesday morning, Oct. 3 after the defendant was attacked by a spectator who jumped over the courtroom bar in Trumbull County Common Pleas courtroom of Judge Cynthia Rice and punched Roberts about three times in the face.

The defendant was not seriously injured and the judge rejected two motions for mistrial that were made by Roberts' attorney Jeff Goodman.

Roberts was convicted of killing Brice Hilton, 37, of Farrell, Pa., on Sept. 19, 2022. Hilton was shot four times at Colonial Street and South Feederle Drive SE in Warren. Hilton died shortly afterward at Trumbull Regional Medical Center. Hilton had traveled to Warren in an attempt to buy a cellphone from two men. He was robbed of \$220 by the gunmen who was identified by witnesses as Roberts, testimony stated..

Roberts faces anywhere from 23 years to life in prison to life without parole if he is found guilty of all the charges. First Assistant Prosecutor Christopher Becker said the state will be asking for the maximum penalty.

Charged in the attack in the courtroom was Destin Gregory, 24 left, of Farrell, Pa., who was identified as a relative of the murder victim. Gregory was taken into custody and held until after the trial on a contempt charge levied by Judge Rice. He also faces misdemeanor charges of assault and resisting arrest in Warren Municipal Court.

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