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54/07/21 Mayor Offers Bay Probe Aid

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Meeting in Bay murder probe in City Hall are (left to right) Police Chief Frank W. Story, Chief of Detectives James E. McArthur, Law Department Chief Counsel Joseph H. Crowley, Safety Director John N. McCormick, and Mayor Anthony J. Celebrezze.

NEWS 7-21-54

Mayor Offers Bay Probe Aid

Mayor Anthony J. Celebrezze today assured Bay Village it can have all the facilities of Cleveland's crack homicide bureau and crime detection equipment in the search for the killer of Marilyn Sheppard.

The mayor acted after receiving a resolution approved by the Bay council authorizing Mayor J. Spencer Houk to "solicit the aid of Cleveland in solving the Sheppard case."

Mayor Houk was also authorized to pay up to \$5,000 to Cleveland for its services.

Celebrezze said Cleveland was not taking over the murder investigation, but would merely give Bay authorities all the help they need.

Police Chief Frank W. Story put in a long distance phone call to Capt. David E. Kerr, head of Cleveland's homicide bureau, who is vacationing in Florida, but has not been able to locate him.

The chief said he would ask

Kerr to return at once to work with Bay police and the sheriff's office toward a solution of the crime.

Two steps are planned immediately upon Kerr's return: Arrest and extensive questioning of a principal in the case and a flying trip to Los Angeles by a Cleveland homicide detective to question Miss Susan Hayes, friend of Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard, husband of the murdered woman.

Miss Hayes, who formerly worked at the Bay View Hospital with Dr. Sheppard, admitted the osteopath bought her a wristwatch to replace one she lost.

Bay Village Council voted to

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ask Cleveland aid after a long bitter debate between Mayor Houk and Councilman Lester Schaffer.

Houk told Schaffer that he had already asked Chief Story, in a letter, to continue to assist in the investigation.

Bay Village Council last night also approved an ordinance allowing the suburb's police to take accident victims to Lakewood Hospital and the new Fairview Park Hospital if the victims so desire.

Order Issued by Houk

In the past all cases have been taken to Bay View Hospital under orders issued by Mayor Houk and approved by Council.

Dr. Samuel Sheppard, husband of the murder victim, his two brothers and his father are all on the staff of Bay View Hospital.

A proposal to order the word "osteopathic" added to the sign in front of Bay View Hospital was taken under advisement by the suburb's Council.

Councilman Schaffer accused County Coroner Samuel R. Gerber and other county officials of bungling the investigation.

Gerber's comment: "Who's Schaffer?"

Mahon Has No Comment

John Mahon, chief assistant county prosecutor said he had no comment.

Said Sheriff Joseph M. Sweeney: "We weren't called into the case until 36 hours after it happened. We did the best we can. We only have two men available, Detectives Carl Rossbach and David Yettra."

Rossbach explained why two Cleveland detectives didn't get an opportunity to query Dr. Sam Sheppard when he submitted to the first official questioning at Bay View Hospital.

"The plan was to have the county detectives and one Bay Village policeman ask questions first, then to call in the Cleveland men.

"However, after Dr. Sam had been interrogated for three hours, his father, Dr. Richard Sheppard, said he wouldn't permit any more quizzing because Dr. Sam was too shaky. That's why the Cleveland detectives were left out."

Schaffer charged Dr. Gerber with shoving Cleveland detectives out of the investigation for political reasons. Schaffer said Story would give the investigation direction and leadership, lack of which he blamed for what he called bungling of the case.

"Why should the best homicide experts in this area be errand boys to the coroner? Cleveland detectives weren't pulled off this case—they were shoved off," Schaffer said.

Houk said Story offered Cleveland police aid Saturday after a meeting to co-ordinate the investigation. Schaffer replied that newspaper stories quoted Story as being willing to help only if given a free hand. Houk denied this.

Charges Half-Hearted Probe

Schaffer accused county officials of conducting a half-hearted investigation and criticized Bay Village police for allowing people to swarm all over the Sheppard house at 28924 West Lake Rd., ruining chances for picking up clues at the murder house.

Houk denied an accusation by Schaffer that signed statements of everyone involved were not taken July 4, the day of the murder. Houk said the statements are on file in the police department.

"Writing a letter to Chief Story is not enough. We need strong action to make sure Cleveland police enter the case. County officials failed to get a statement from Dr. Sheppard immediately after the murder and it took them five days to find blood stains on a kitchen door knob," Schaffer said.

Councilman George Serb said Schaffer's requests, as head of the safety committee, were made for the benefit of the press. He accused newspapers of sensationalizing the story.

Lashes at Papers

"A bunch of junior reporters, cub reporters and copy boys are bucking for city editors' jobs," Serb said. He displayed a copy of The News and said a story of the safety committee's charges discredited Bay View Hospital.

Serb voted against the ordinance allowing the city ambulance to leave the city limits because he

said if two accidents occurred within five minutes it would take too long for the ambulance to return. He then lectured the audience which jammed the town hall for "heckling me."

Councilman Chester J. Hunt and Solicitor Richard Weygandt were successful in blocking a Council resolution asking Cleveland police to take over. Hunt said Council should not try to solve the murder, but could instruct Houk to seek Cleveland aid.

Weygandt said Houk could appoint Story "co-captain" but ruled the mayor could not give up his duties of safety director. Weygandt also said Bay Village could not keep County investigators out of the case and that Story would have to report to Houk.

\$5,000 Fund Set Aside

Council set aside a fund of \$5,000 to finance the investigation upon request of Mayor Houk.

Reading a prepared statement, the grim-faced Houk said that "Every effort has been made to solve this crime. Certain things have gotten into print that are diametrically opposite from the truth. Immediately upon discovery of this murder, the coroner and Cleveland homicide men were told to take the lead in the investigation. Coroner Gerber told me that we did exactly the right thing, and Chief Story and the two Cleveland detectives told me they received complete co-operation from our department.

"It has been said that Bay Village police gave Dr. Sam Sheppard permission to carry a gun. He requested such permission, but was

told by one of our officers that the officer had no right to grant such permission," Houk said.

Fire Trucks Blocked

Schaffer also revealed in the committee's report that the city's fire trucks were blocked in the fire station for 58 minutes during a July 4th celebration at Cahoon Park and that police have failed to stop trespassers from entering houses damaged by fires in the city.

Police Chief John P. Eaton was indignant about a "test-run" con-

ducted by the safety committee Sunday. He told committee member Dale A. Smith that someone might have been killed as police rushed to the scene of a simulated burglary.

"You fellows are lucky you didn't get shot by police who thought burglars were actually ransacking a house," Eaton told Smith, "I think you might introduce an ordinance banning false police reports like this."



Bay Village Councilman George Serb (left) displays copy of News which he charges discredited Bay View hospital. Councilman Clifton Gielow is at right.



Bay Village Councilman Lester Schaffer (left) tells Mayor J. Spencer Houk that county officials have conducted a half-hearted investigation of the murder.



Bay Village Clerk Mrs. Esther Aldrich and Councilman Chester J. Hunt listen to debate on alleged bungling of Bay Village murder investigation.



Bay Village Council President Gershom M. Barber and Solicitor Richard S. Weygandt (left to right) listen to proposal to ask Cleveland police to take over investigation of murder of Mrs. Marilyn Shepard.