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TOPICAL

Sentencing continued for mother of murdered Elwood toddler

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ANDERSON — The sentencing of an Elwood woman charged with the murder of her daughter has been continued.

Anna-Marie Pablo, 23, pleaded guilty in November to a charge of murder in connection with the March 2020 death of her 11-month-old daughter, Emmarie.

Madison Circuit Court Judge Mark Dudley on Thursday continued the sentencing hearing until Feb. 11 because two witnesses for the defense were not available.

Pablo faces a possible prison sentence of 45 to 65 years. As a result of the plea agreement, the Madison County Prosecutor's Office won't seek a sentence of life without parole.

Initially, Pablo and co-defendant Zachary Foor said the toddler suffered injuries while staying in Lafayette with Pablo's uncle.

The uncle, however, has lived in Anchorage, Alaska, since 2006.

Ten days after her arrest Pablo spoke with Elwood Police Department Detective Ben Gosnell and her story changed.

Pablo told Gosnell the toddler was in the bathroom with Foor and she heard smacking sounds. She fell asleep and when she woke up Foor was back in the bathroom with Emmarie.

"I needed justice for Emmarie," Pablo said when questioned by defense attorney Thomas Godfrey. "They needed to know the truth."

Pablo testified that it was Foor who made up the story about her uncle.

"I should taken actions to protect my daughter," she said.

Pablo said that Foor had possession of her cellphone for much of the day prior to the death of her daughter and refused to take her to the hospital.

She testified she had been dating Foor starting in January and only moved to Elwood 10 days before the incident took place.

"I should have never trusted Zach (Foor)," Pablo said. "I should never have left Lafayette."

During questioning by Prosecutor Stephanie Edwards, Pablo was shown a photo of Emmarie taken on March 4 with a giant bruise on her face.

"I tried to leave," she said.

Pablo testified on March 8 she visited her mother who questioned the bruise and she said Emmarie had fallen.

"I should have stayed there," she said.

Edwards asked about two photographs of Emmarie on March 17 with Pablo admitting the toddler was probably already dead.

"I didn't take the pictures," Pablo said.

She said Foor wouldn't take her to the hospital and she didn't know where it was located in Elwood.

Judge Dudley asked Pablo about text messages she sent on the morning her daughter died to a friend in an effort to determine her mindset.

"I don't really know what my mindset was," Pablo said. "I wanted to get Emmarie help."

Pablo said she was holding her daughter from 5 a.m. to 10 a.m. that morning and, responding to a question from Dudley, said Foor told her Emmarie was alive.

Paternity questioned

During the hearing, Edwards called Alec Severins, who said he was Emmarie's father, to testify, which was objected to by Godfrey.

"Paternity has not been established," Godfrey said.

Severins testified that he was living with Pablo in August 2018 when she became pregnant.

Severins is currently on in-home detention after a conviction for battery on a pregnant woman (Pablo).

"I was the child's father," he said. "I got a letter from her while I was incarcerated."

Severins said that to claim Emmarie's death was an accident is a "slap in the face" of everyone who loved her.

He asked that Pablo receive the maximum 6- year prison sentence.

During questioning by Godfrey, Severins said his name is not on the birth certificate and denied ever saying that he wasn't the father.

"I have nothing against your client," he said. "I'm here for justice for Emmarie."

Pablo said she tried to get Severins to establish he was the father, but he declined.

She testified she isn't sure who was Emmarie's father and didn't remember sending Severins a letter stating he was the father.

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