

# Richmond attorney helping in review of suspect's death

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Halifax County Commonwealth's Attorney Tracy Quackenbush Martin has enlisted the help of City of Richmond Commonwealth's Attorney Michael Herring in reviewing information surrounding the death of Linwood Raymond Lambert Jr. on May 4, 2013 while in the custody of the South Boston Police Department.



Gavel

Gwendolyn Smalls of Richmond, the sister of Lambert who is named the administrator of Lambert's estate, filed a \$25 million civil lawsuit against the Town of South Boston and the South Boston Police Department in April.

Lambert died after officers stunned him with a taser on May 4, 2013 after taking him into custody at the Super 8 Motel on U.S. 58 in South Boston, according to the lawsuit, filed April 29 in U.S. District Court in Danville.

The lawsuit names South Boston Police Chief Jim Binner, Deputy Chief Brian K. Lovelace, the Town of South Boston and unnamed police officers as defendants.

Virginia State Police conducted an initial investigation into the actions of the South Boston Police officers involved, according to Martin.

"After the Virginia State Police completed their initial investigation they submitted their interviews, videos and their case file to the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney," said Martin, adding the report had been received before she came into office.

"I don't believe any action had been taken on it until I came into office," Martin said.

"After that, I reviewed it, started conducting research and began to make some initial determinations into the case, but frankly it's been a complex and complicated matter of great import to the community and to the family."

According to Martin, the conclusion reached in the lawsuit contravenes what's in the autopsy report, indicating because of the way the lawsuit is worded, it is incomplete of facts concerning the cause of death.

The commonwealth's attorney said that until one looks at the autopsy report, he or she doesn't get the complete picture.

Caution in her deliberation has been a priority, Martin noted.

"That's the main reason behind asking for a special assistant, a commonwealth's attorney who has been conducting this kind of case in the past," she explained.

"The purpose of me asking for that is to get a separate review and another set of eyes to review what I've seen.

"He's seen my entire case file to get feedback from him to assess the matter and for him to report his findings to me.

"We are still working as a team to see where we are, and it's still very much an active investigation in my office."

"There's been some concern over South Boston doing some sort of cover up, but all the information I've been given has been preserved by me," said Martin.

The case file will not be available to the public until her work in the matter has been completed.

"It's not open to the public right now, but it will be once my part is complete," she said.