

Ayla Reynolds Grand Jury List Illuminating

By Carol Bengle Gilbert

PostsWebsiteBy Carol Bengle Gilbert | Yahoo! Contributor Network – 10 hrs ago This story comes from the Yahoo! Contributor Network, where individuals publish their unique perspectives on some of the world's most popular websites. Do you have a story to tell? Become a Yahoo! contributorEmailShare0PrintYou read this

Maine State Police and Waterville Police scheduled a joint press conference for 1:30 p.m. Thursday to update the public on the Ayla Reynolds investigation. The conference can be viewed on NECN's live-streaming video. Police are not telling the public the subject of the conference in advance, WMTV noted. One question on case followers' minds is whether an indictment might be at hand. Another is possible disclosure of test results on baby items recovered from the the Kennebec River spillway in April.

Ayla Reynolds Grand Jury Met in February

A grand jury convened Feb. 9 to hear testimony on Ayla Reynolds' disappearance, an anonymous source close to the case revealed Wednesday. The grand jury list may offer insight into the direction the prosecution is taking in the case.

The source, who was not a grand jury witness, confirmed members of both Ayla's maternal and paternal families were subpoenaed to present testimony at the courthouse in Augusta. Those family members include Ayla's paternal grandmother Phoebe DiPietro, aunt Elisha DiPietro, and uncle Lance DiPietro as well as Ayla's mother Trista Reynolds and maternal grandfather Ron Reynolds Sr. A subpoena also was issued to Courtney Roberts, a girlfriend of Justin DiPietro who slept at the DiPietro house Dec. 16, the night Ayla allegedly disappeared.

Ayla's father Justin DiPietro was absent. The source expressed belief the purpose of the proceeding was to determine whether there was sufficient evidence to make a case against Justin DiPietro.

Grand jury secrecy rules prevent witnesses who testify from disclosing the substance of the grand jury proceedings. Police have not publicly addressed the grand jury's consideration of the Ayla Reynolds case nor have they said whether any indictment or arrest is expected.

The blog Justice for Ayla first reported this weekend that a grand jury had met sometime prior to March. The blogger, Tori Giffords, is a Waterville resident. Giffords identified Phoebe and Elisha DiPietro, Courtney Roberts and unspecified friends of Justin DiPietro as people called to testify before the grand jury. She says her initial source was someone who saw the grand jury witnesses at the courthouse. She said former friends of Justin DiPietro later told her they had learned of the grand jury convening directly from Justin DiPietro. Giffords declined to publish her sources' names.

Prosecutorial Direction Indicated?

The identities of the witnesses called- and not called- may shed light on prosecutorial direction in the case. Typically a criminal defendant does not testify before a grand jury considering his or her indictment. All the adults who were in the DiPietro house the night Ayla allegedly disappeared were called to testify before the grand jury Feb. 9 except one, the baby's father Justin DiPietro.

Justin DiPietro is a logical candidate for grand jury focus. It was he who reported Ayla missing the morning of Dec. 17. Police have confirmed finding Ayla's blood in his basement bedroom in an amount greater than a small cut would produce. An unconfirmed report from the Reynolds family blog, Answers for Ayla, said the amount of blood was more than a cupful, enough blood loss to threaten the toddler's life in the absence of immediate medical intervention

The last press conference in the Ayla Reynolds case was two months ago when police renewed search efforts after winter snow began to melt.