

State of Minnesota
County of Hennepin

District Court
4th Judicial District

Prosecutor File No. 21A11588
Court File No. 27-CR-21-20796

State of Minnesota,

Plaintiff,

vs.

ARTURO MORALES-CERAS DOB: 09/24/1987

NPA

Defendant.

COMPLAINT

Order of Detention

The Complainant submits this complaint to the Court and states that there is probable cause to believe Defendant committed the following offense(s):

COUNT I

Charge: Murder - 2nd Degree - With Intent-Not Premeditated

Minnesota Statute: 609.19.1(1), with reference to: 609.05.1, 609.05.2, 609.19.1, 609.11.9

Maximum Sentence: 40 YEARS

Offense Level: Felony

Offense Date (on or about): 03/27/2021

Control #(ICR#): 21069862

Charge Description: That on or about March 27, 2021 to March 29, 2021, in Minneapolis in Hennepin County, Minnesota, ARTURO MORALES-CERAS, acting alone or intentionally aiding, advising, hiring, counseling or conspiring with another caused the death of victim M.M., a human being, with intent to effect the death of that person or another, but without premeditation.

COUNT II

Charge: Murder - 2nd Degree - Without Intent - While Committing a Felony

Minnesota Statute: 609.19.2(1), with reference to: 609.19.2(1), 609.05.1, 609.05.2

Maximum Sentence: 40 YEARS

Offense Level: Felony

Offense Date (on or about): 03/27/2021

Control #(ICR#): 21069862

Charge Description: That on or about March 27, 2021 to March 29, 2021, in Minneapolis in Hennepin County, Minnesota, ARTURO MORALES-CERAS, acting alone or intentionally aiding, advising, hiring, counseling or conspiring with another did without intent to effect the death of any person, cause the death of victim M.M., a human being, while committing or attempting to commit the felony offense of assault.

STATEMENT OF PROBABLE CAUSE

Complainant has investigated the facts and circumstances of this offense and believes the following establishes probable cause:

On April 4, 2021, family members of victim M.M. walked into the Minneapolis Police Department Fifth Precinct to report that he was missing. According to his family, M.M. was last seen at approximately 6:00 p.m. on March 27, 2021. The family had been told by people at a homeless camp that M.M. had gotten into a fight with another male and was hit over the head with a shovel, killing him.

On April 26, 2021, M.M.'s body was found in a farming culvert in Dakota County. M.M.'s hands were bound behind his back and a nail was observed in the back heel of one of his feet.

Subsequent investigation showed that on March 29, 2021 at approximately 8:28 p.m. a cell phone owned by Ivan Contreras-Sanchez had been in the immediate area of the culvert where M.M.'s body was found. The cell phone information also showed the cell phone at the Speedway gas station in Inver Grove Heights at approximately 7:36 p.m. that same day. Investigators reviewed video from the Speedway and observed two vehicles arriving at the gas station together, a light colored Honda CRV and a black Chevrolet Malibu Maxx. Court records show that Contreras-Sanchez was cited for driving without a license in February of 2021 in a dark colored Chevrolet Maxx. Officers located and towed a black Chevrolet Malibu Maxx from the rear of 3214 Irving Avenue North in Minneapolis. At the time, Contreras-Sanchez was also present and had gutted the interior of the vehicle. Contreras-Sanchez was taken into custody on November 2, 2021, and in a post-Miranda, taped statement he admitted that he was present at 425 36th Street in Minneapolis, Hennepin County, Minnesota, with victim M.M. and observed several people beating victim M.M. Contreras-Sanchez identified one of the males who were beating M.M. as ARTURO MORALES-CERAS (defendant Morales-Ceras hereinafter). There were also several others present at the residence, including Morales-Ceras' girlfriend, TOMASO LESHAE MARTINEZ, Defendant "Martinez" herein.

On November 5, 2021, Defendant Martinez and Defendant Morales-Ceras were both located and taken into custody. In a post-Miranda, taped statement, Defendant Morales-Ceras admitted to investigators that he went to a tent encampment at 5th Avenue South and Lake Street in Minneapolis with Ivan Contreras-Sanchez and that they located victim M.M. there. Contreras-Sanchez then forced victim M.M. into his black Chevrolet Malibu Maxx at gunpoint. Defendant Morales-Ceras suggested taking victim M.M. to the residence at 425 36th Street in Minneapolis. When they arrived, victim M.M. was taken into the basement. Both Defendant Morales-Ceras and Contreras-Sanchez were present in the basement along with several other people. Defendant Morales-Ceras admitted that he kicked victim M.M. and stated that everyone in the basement kicked and hit victim M.M. at the direction of Contreras-Sanchez. Defendant Morales-Ceras admitted that while in the basement he used a hammer to pound a roofing nail into the bone of victim M.M.'s foot/heel. Victim M.M. was then taken to the main floor of the residence where Defendant Morales-Ceras and Contreras-Sanchez interrogated him about working with the police and being a snitch. While this was happening, Defendant Morales-Ceras was holding a hammer and using it to intimidate victim M.M. Victim M.M. was then moved to the second floor of the residence and Defendant Morales-Ceras admitted that after some time he and Defendant Martinez brought him out of the house. According to Defendant Morales-Ceras, victim M.M. was in very bad shape and had a hard time walking, but he was still alive. Victim M.M. was wrapped in plastic and placed in the way back hatch area of the Malibu Maxx. Defendant Morales-Ceras, Contreras-Sanchez and Defendant Martinez all got in the vehicle and drove south. Defendant Martinez was driving. At some point while they were driving, Contreras-Sanchez, who was in the back seat, told them that victim M.M. had died.

Defendant Morales-Ceras told investigators that they then met up with another vehicle. The occupants of

that vehicle were “Miestro” and “old man Victor” (Victor Manuel Gurrero). At that point, there were two vehicles, the Malibu Maxx and a silver Honda CRV. They then drove around looking for a place where there was water and talked about finding a place to dump victim M.M.’s body.

During the course of this investigation, officers were provided three videos by Contreras-Sanchez. In one video an unknown person can be seen with their arm wrapped around victim M.M.’s neck. The person is identified by Contreras-Sanchez as Defendant Morales-Ceras. In another video, a male in a sweatshirt comes into camera view and waives a hammer at victim M.M. That male is also identified as Defendant Morales-Ceras.

Defendant Martinez can be seen in one video sitting by looking at her cell phone while victim M.M. is beaten and tortured. She did not call 911 or make any effort to intervene. Defendant Martinez later drives the vehicle that victim M.M. was put into while he was still alive.

An autopsy was performed on M.M.’s body at the Hennepin County Medical Examiner’s Office. According to their findings, M.M. had trauma to his face as lacerations. He also had fractured ribs on both sides of his body, a fractured left hand and a nail in his heel that went into the bone. The Medical Examiner’s Office concluded that M.M.’s cause of death was blunt trauma and his manner of death was homicide.

Defendant Morales-Ceras is in custody.

SIGNATURES AND APPROVALS

Complainant requests that Defendant, subject to bail or conditions of release, be:
(1) arrested or that other lawful steps be taken to obtain Defendant's appearance in court; or
(2) detained, if already in custody, pending further proceedings; and that said Defendant otherwise be dealt with according to law.

Complainant declares under penalty of perjury that everything stated in this document is true and correct. Minn. Stat. § 358.116; Minn. R. Crim. P. 2.01, subds. 1, 2.

Complainant

Mark Suchta
Sergeant
350 S 5th St
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1389
Badge: 6995

Electronically Signed:
11/08/2021 12:04 PM
Hennepin County, suchtmj0

Being authorized to prosecute the offenses charged, I approve this complaint.

Prosecuting Attorney

Krista White
300 S 6th St
Minneapolis, MN 55487
(612) 348-5550

Electronically Signed:
11/08/2021 12:01 PM

DEFENDANT FACT SHEET

Name: ARTURO MORALES-CERAS
DOB: 09/24/1987
Address: NPA
Alias Names/DOB: Arturo Morales DOB: 9/24/1987
SID: MN06128960
Height:
Weight:
Eye Color:
Hair Color:
Gender: MALE
Race: White
Fingerprints Required per Statute: Yes
Fingerprint match to Criminal History Record: Yes
Driver's License #:
SILS Person ID #: 723056
SILS Tracking No. 3251929
Case Scheduling Information: Co-Defendants: MARTINEZ, TOMASA LESHAE 21A11589
Alcohol Concentration:

STATUTE AND OFFENSE GRID

Cnt Nbr	Statute Type	Offense Date(s)	Statute Nbrs and Descriptions	Offense Level	MOC	GOC	Controlling Agencies	Case Numbers
1	Charge	3/27/2021	609.19.1(1) Murder - 2nd Degree - With Intent-Not Premeditated	Felony	H2H42	X	MN0271100	21069862
	Penalty	3/27/2021	609.19.1 Murder - 2nd Degree	Felony	H2H42	X	MN0271100	21069862
	Modifier	3/27/2021	609.11.9 Minimum Sentences of Imprisonment - Applicable Offenses	No-Level	H2H42	X	MN0271100	21069862
	Modifier	3/27/2021	609.05.1 Liability for Crimes of Another-Intentional	No-Level	H2H42	X	MN0271100	21069862
	Modifier	3/27/2021	609.05.2 Liability for Crimes of Another-Reasonably Forseeable	No-Level	H2H42	X	MN0271100	21069862
2	Charge	3/27/2021	609.19.2(1) Murder - 2nd Degree - Without Intent - While Committing a Felony	Felony	H2H42	X	MN0271100	21069862
	Modifier	3/27/2021	609.05.2 Liability for Crimes of Another-Reasonably Forseeable	No-Level	H2H42	X	MN0271100	21069862
	Modifier	3/27/2021	609.05.1 Liability for Crimes of Another-Intentional	No-Level	H2H42	X	MN0271100	21069862
	Penalty	3/27/2021	609.19.2(1) Murder - 2nd Degree - Without Intent - While Committing a Felony	Felony	H2H42	X	MN0271100	21069862