

SCSO releases information about State vs. Zimmerman jury sequestration - 07/17/2013

The Seminole County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) was responsible for the sequestration of the jury during the State vs. Zimmerman trial. The jury was originally sequestered on Friday, June 21 and spent 22 nights at the Marriott on International Parkway in Lake Mary, Fla.

During the sequestration, jurors had individual rooms and convened regularly in a suite for meals and to socialize. Jurors watched television and movies, exercised at the hotel fitness center, and spent weekends being visited by family and friends. Jurors could also request visits from members of the religious community. Anyone visiting members of the jury was asked to sign an agreement indicating they would not discuss the case with the jury member or disclose any information to outside parties about the details of their visit.

Most breakfast and dinner meals were provided through the hotel. Jurors dined out twice: at Outback Steakhouse in Sanford and at Amigo's in Altamonte Springs. Dinner was also brought in from Giovanni's in Lake Mary. Lunches typically took place at the courthouse with lunch brought in from area restaurants. The group went out for lunch twice, both times to Senior Tequila's in Winter Springs.

Jurors also enjoyed several evening and weekend excursions to include bowling, shopping at the Volusia Mall, a day and dinner in St. Augustine (to include a visit to the Ripley's Believe It or Not Museum), manicures and pedicures, and watching fireworks on the fourth of July. Jurors also went to the movies to see "World War Z" and "The Lone Ranger." All movies viewed were preapproved by the court.

Jurors were provided access to the hotel's laundry service or could send laundry home with family members. Jurors were permitted to go to appointments for personal care if accompanied by deputies. All television, internet use, reading materials, mail, and phone calls were screened, monitored and logged by deputies to ensure jurors were not exposed to any trial information, or content related to the criminal justice system. Jurors were permitted to receive their cell phones once per day to check voicemails and make telephone calls in the presence of a deputy.

SCSO deputies provided security for jurors at all times during their sequestration. SCSO will not disclose the number of deputies assigned to this duty.

In accordance with Florida Statutes, the Clerk of the Court is responsible for juror expenses for meals and lodging. Jurors paid for their own personal purchases and appointment costs. The Sheriff's Office paid for the movie and bowling excursions and the Ripley's admission. Although exact costs are not yet available, the hotel cost w

as approximately \$1,000 daily, and meals were approximately \$375 per day. The excursion expenses were approximately \$350. In total, sequestration costs were approximately \$33,000.

The Sheriff's Office is still compiling the agency's total costs associated with the trial. Preliminary figures indicate SCSO spent approximately \$320,000 on overtime, equipment, other trial-related expenses.