

Fall River Man Who Cut Off Victim's Finger Sentenced to State Prison

Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced that a 43-year-old Fall River man was sentenced today to serve 10 to 15 years in state prison cutting off another man's finger.

John Soares, formerly of 998 Middle Street, was convicted earlier this month by a jury on charges of mayhem and assault and battery with a dangerous weapon—causing substantial injury. The jury convicted the defendant in less than an hour, after a two day trial in Fall River Superior Court.

The case was prosecuted by Second Assistant District Attorney Jennifer Sowa. The defendant was ordered held in jail pending his sentencing today. During today's sentencing hearing, ADA Sowa argued for a 12-15 year state prison sentence, while the defendant requested a four to six year prison term. Judge E. Susan Garsh sentenced the defendant to serve 10-15 years in state prison.

On March 28, 2012, the victim, an employee at Columbia Towing in Fall River, was confronted regarding money missing from the business. Despite the victim's repeated denials that he had anything to do with the missing money, he was ordered by his employer, 51-year-old Donna Silvia, to sit in a hallway and write a confession about stealing the money.

After the victim refused to write out a confession, the defendant entered the business carrying a bag. The defendant walked into the office, had a brief conversation with Donna Silvia, while her husband, 47-year-old Dennis Silvia, and another employee, 50-year-old James Connors, went into the garage and allegedly tipped surveillance cameras to face the

ceiling.

The defendant then exited the office, and told the victim that he needed to speak with him in the garage where the cameras had just been moved. Once inside the garage, the defendant accused the victim of stealing money. After the victim once again denied taking any money, the defendant took a pair of pipe cutters out of his bag and cut off the defendant's right pinky finger. The defendant then exited the building, taking his cutting tools and the finger with him. The finger was never recovered.

"I would like to thank the court for imposing a significant state prison sentence for this barbaric act," District Attorney Quinn said.

The three co-defendants in this case are all still awaiting trial or disposition. Donna Silvia and her husband, Dennis Silvia are both charged with mayhem, assault and battery with a dangerous weapon-causing substantial injury and witness intimidation. James Connors is charged with mayhem and assault and battery with a dangerous weapon-causing substantial injury.