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SCENE & HEARD

Tuesday, August 27, 2013

Summary Judgment Against Lavelle Sullins Reversed

Posted By Eric Sandy on Tue, Aug 27, 2013 at 11:07 am

Lavelle Sullins, featured in a *Scene* **cover story** at the start of this year, has been embroiled in the courts since finding out that he had been featured on TV as a wanted fugitive.

...He wasn't a wanted fugitive.



Sullins

Judge Robert McClelland shot down Sullins' claims of defamation late last year via summary judgment. The supposed rationale for that call went like this:

McClelland's ruling centered around an opinion that Sullins' "fugitive" status was, in several ways, essentially true at the time the episode aired.

Sullins had five outstanding warrants for his arrest issued at the time in March 2010. None of them had to do with his passing bad checks. Rather, they revolved around a series of situations in 2008 wherein Sullins failed to appear before the court or failed to pay a fine following traffic violations like having expired plates, driving without a seatbelt and driving "too slow." Hardly fodder to be labeled a dangerous fugitive on the lam. All warrants were canceled Nov. 16, 2010.

Judge Kenneth Rocco reversed the opinion earlier this month, which will pave the way for trial hearings. There are all sorts of droll comments on the case published in the opinion, though this line stands out as particularly illustrative:

"We seriously question the identification of Sullins as one of "Cleveland 25 Most Wanted Fugitives." If Sullins was one of "Cleveland 25 Most Wanted Fugitives" based on a charged of passing a bad check, Cleveland must be one of the safest communities in the country."

Tags: lavelle sullins, defamation, fair report, crime stoppers, Image

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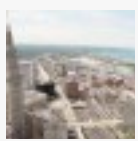
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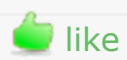
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If you don't want things like this to happen, try not having any warrants out for your arrest. That usually helps.

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