



**June 21, 2023**

Firstly, I'd like to express my sympathy to the Goody family, especially Jared. They have been through an ordeal and suffered greatly at the hands of the defendant, Courtney Goody.

Due to the public's growing interest in this case, I'd like to offer some background as to how my office came to the plea deal agreed to with Ms. Goody and clear up some of the misinformation found in the news coverage of this case.

Originally, our office charged Ms. Goody with felony poisoning. However, as more information came to light, the likelihood of obtaining a conviction at trial became more and more unlikely. In order to ensure the Goody family received some degree of justice, we moved forward with two misdemeanor charges of battery.

Some of the challenges to obtaining a conviction for felony poisoning included:

- The lab that tested evidence for the presence of selenium had previous problems in an unrelated case with the reliability of its results, making it difficult to admit the lab's findings in this case at trial. In addition, the chain-of-custody of the evidence was compromised due to the fact it was collected by the victim and his family and not by a police investigator.
- The credibility of the victim in this case was also compromised because it could be argued by the defense that he was untruthful under oath during the preliminary hearing.
- The lead detective of the case was decertified as a peace officer as a result of being untruthful in an unrelated matter.
- Finally, the state became aware that the victim and/or his family had filed a civil suit against the defendant. Although the state does not consider civil litigation to determine or influence charges, this information could have been used by the defense to argue the victim has alternative motivations to bring this case to trial.

In complying with the rights of victims of crime, our office kept the Mr. Goody and his family informed during the whole process, from start to finish. They were informed of the strengths and weaknesses of the case and were consulted about the plea agreement and the reasoning behind it before the plea agreement was offered.

This is not a perfect resolution. Our office sympathizes with Jared and the Goody's. We understand their frustration and anger. However, given the challenges presented by the facts, there has been some degree of accountability rather than an acquittal at trial with no accountability at all.

Now that the sentencing has been completed, we hope there can be some degree of closure for the families involved in this case.

**- Stephen Herzog**

Bannock County Prosecutor