

In lawsuit, jury sides with Stockton officer who fatally shot man

BY KAYLI REESE kayli.reese@thmedia.com

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STOCKTON, Ill. — A jury recently sided with a then-Stockton police officer who was being sued for fatally shooting a man while on duty following a five-day trial.

The jury rendered a verdict in favor of Sean Patridge following a civil trial that took place in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois in Rockford.

Patridge shot Troy Boyle, of Pearl City, on March 29, 2017, in Stockton. In August 2017, investigators from the Illinois State Patrol and Jo Daviess County State's Attorney's Office announced that they determined that Patridge was justified in his actions and fired his weapon in self-defense.

The civil suit was filed in 2017 by Owen Boyle, the father of Troy Boyle and administrator of his son's estate. The family was seeking damages in excess of \$1 million for excessive force and wrongful death.

The suit also initially listed the Village of Stockton as a defendant, stating that the village failed to train its officers on the proper use of deadly force. However, the village was dismissed from the suit in 2017 following a motion from one of Patridge's attorneys, Michael Bersani.

In reaction to the verdict, Bersani said he and his client were "very pleased the jury reached the correct decision." He noted that Patridge since has retired from the Stockton Police Department.

"Mr. Boyle, by his own conduct, he's the one who created the situation," Bersani said. "He's the one who escalated things to the point where deadly force was required. Obviously, the jury believed Sean was justified."



However, Rene Hernandez, the attorney who represented the Boyle family, expressed deep frustration with the outcome of the case, calling the jurors “cold-hearted simpletons who let a killer off.”

“I have no kind words for jurors who can’t see the obvious,” he said. “... And I guarantee you, the people of this jury would be the first ones in my office screaming for justice if this happened to their family or someone they loved.”

On March 29, 2019, Patridge was on duty when he responded to a call and found three people on township property, one of whom was Boyle. Another officer also was on the scene, according to Bersani.

“Mr. Boyle approached from Sean’s rear with his right hand concealed behind his back,” Bersani said. “He was ignoring commands to show his hand. Obviously, the two officers were concerned about if he had any sort of weapon.”

Boyle then “thrust his right hand out into shooting stance,” Bersani said. He added that Patridge and four eyewitnesses to the incident reported seeing Boyle get into a shooting stance and hold what appeared to be a handgun.

Investigators reported that “Officer Patridge said he was in immediate fear for his life and those around him because of Mr. Boyle’s aggressive actions.”

Patridge fired at Boyle several times, taking cover behind his squad vehicle. Boyle went behind a gravel pile, still pointing his right arm at the officers.

Patridge again fired at Boyle when he emerged on the other side of the gravel pile, according to the investigative release.

It was later found out that the object that Boyle was holding was a penlight. But from a distance in an intense situation, Bersani said, the penlight’s cylindrical shape and metallic color made the object appear to be a handgun.

“Any reasonable officer under those circumstances would believe he was being fired upon,” Bersani said. “In that case, he has the right to defend himself and protect others by using deadly force.”

He added that he felt bad for the Boyle family who lost a family member that day. But he said Boyle made “some pretty reckless choices” leading up to the shooting, including being under the influence of methamphetamine at the time.

Hernandez stressed that Boyle was unarmed during the incident, during which he was shot twice.

“Troy Boyle should’ve went to jail that day,” Hernandez said of the incident. “But Troy Boyle shouldn’t have been executed.”

Overturing the jury’s verdict would be difficult in this case, Hernandez said. But the Boyle family now has a month to decide whether to appeal a judge’s decision to bar one of their expert witnesses from testifying.

Hernandez said the witness was supposed to testify on use of force. Court documents state that the judge barred the witness following questions about his qualifications to testify on use-of-force matters.

Hernandez noted that Patridge’s legal team had its own expert witness to testify on use of force.

“The most problematic issue in a case like this is when you have a relatively poor family with no funds trying to get justice, and they have to go up against an insurance behemoth who represents a police officer and has all the money in the world to hire top experts,” Hernandez said.

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**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

Oliver Patrick Boyle,
Plaintiff,
v.
Case No. 21-cv-00022
Judge Sam D. Johnson
Oliver Terence Patridge,
Defendant.

MEMORANDUM DECISION

Judgment is hereby entered in such appropriate form:

in favor of plaintiff(s) and against defendant(s) in the amount of \$_____ which includes pre-judgment interest does not include pre-judgment interest.

Post-judgment interest accrues on that amount at the rate provided by law from the date of this judgment.

Plaintiff(s) shall recover costs from defendant(s).

in favor of defendant(s) Oliver Patridge and against plaintiff(s) Oliver Patrick Boyle. Defendant(s) shall recover costs from plaintiff(s).

other (Indicate the Village of location obtained by decision on a motion for summary judgment by the Honorable Plaintiff, J. Apple on 10/2/2021)

This action was tried at court:

oral by a jury with Judge Sam D. Johnson presiding, and the jury has rendered a verdict in favor of Judge _____ without a jury and the above decision was reached. decided by Judge _____ on a motion.

Date: 10/5/2021 Thomas G. Moran, Clerk of Court
U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois

Judgement document in Boyle/Patridge case
Oct 5, 2021

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS
WESTERN DIVISION**

OLIVER PATRICK BOYLE,
As Administrator of the Estate of
TROY J. BOYLE,
Plaintiff,
v.
Case No. 21-cv-00022
OLIVER TERENCE PATRIDGE,
In his Individual Capacity, and
THE VILLAGE OF WOODSTOCK,
Defendant's.

COMPLAINT

NEW COMER, the Plaintiff Oliver Patrick Boyle, as Administrator of the Estate of Troy J. Boyle, by and through its attorney, Bruce Rosenwald, bringing forth his Complaint against Oliver Terence Patridge and the Village of Woodstock and its support team as follows:

1. The Court has jurisdiction of this case pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331, 1341, 1342, and 40 U.S.C. § 1401. In addition to the 47th and 10th Amendments to the United States Constitution.
2. This action properly lies in the Northern District of Illinois, Western Division, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 1341, as because the claim arose in the judicial district.
3. Plaintiff Administrator Oliver Patrick Boyle is the father of Troy Boyle and is a resident of Woodstock County, State of Illinois and has been appointed to represent the Estate of Troy J. Boyle.
4. Troy J. Boyle (hereinafter Troy Boyle) was an adult male residing in Woodstock County, State of Illinois until his death on March 29, 2017.

Suit complaint in Boyle/Patridge case
Oct 5, 2021

