



Locust Police Department
Locust, NC

Jeff B. Shew
Chief of Police
jbshew@locustnc.com

Kevin R. O'Connor
Assistant Chief of Police
kroconnor@locustnc.com

PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: 01/05/2021

Subject: Armed Robbery – Murphy Express 158 James Ave., Locust

Point Of Contact: Chief of Police Jeff B. Shew (jbshew@locustnc.com or 704-888-4744)

At approximately 5:47 am on Saturday December 26th, 2020 the Locust Police Department responded to the report of an armed robbery at the Murphy Express gas station. A masked/fully covered suspect entered the business, allegedly brandished a firearm, and acquired an undisclosed amount of currency from the business's safe before fleeing from the scene. No injuries were suffered during the robbery.

The Locust Police Department Criminal Investigations Division began investigation of the incident the same day conducting extensive incident research, following available leads, and conducting numerous interviews. As additional leads developed, Locust detectives began authoring and executing search warrants of residences of interest in both Locust and Indian Trail as well as for additional digital forensic investigation. Locust detectives also utilized tremendous additional assistance and resources provided by detectives with the Stanly County Sheriff's Office.

On Monday January 4th, 2021, Locust detectives developed probable cause to obtain warrants for Ms. Melissa Sue Curtis who is an employee of the Locust Murphy Express, Mr. Paul Dewain Curtis Sr., and Mr. Paul Steffon Curtis Jr. on the charges of robbery with a dangerous weapon and conspiracy to commit robbery with a dangerous weapon. All three individuals were arrested the same day and booked into the Stanly County Jail on those charges. All three individuals have also been charged with possession of methamphetamine based on discoveries made during residential search warrant executions. Melissa Curtis and Paul Curtis Sr. were each given a \$175,000 bond and Paul Curtis Jr. was given a \$150,000 bond. Additionally, a moped/scooter previously reported stolen from Locust was recovered from an Indian Trail residence involved in this investigation. Charges are pending related to that recovery. Investigation by Locust detectives also continues to assess any additional applicable charges related to this incident.

The Locust Police Department wants to thank Sheriff Jeff Crisco and the detectives of the Stanly County Sheriff's Office for our outstanding working relationship and all of the tremendous assistance they provided. Additional immense thanks to the Union County Sheriff's Office for all the assistance they provided in the Indian Trail area.

All suspects are presumed innocent until proven guilty in court.