Gmail [redacted]

FW: Defendant Drake

1 message

[redacted] Mon, Nov 2, 2026 at 1:28 PM

From: Olsen, Kevin R. <kevin.r.olsen@nccourts.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2026 3:10 PM
To: John Deem <john.deem@wsjournal.com>
Subject: RE: Defendant Drake

John,

Thank you for the follow-up. I will try my best to answer your questions.

1. The defendant was arrested on a fugitive warrant, which brought him into first appearances court on 10/1. That is the day where he was given a $10,000 secured bond, although as I have already mentioned, I had argued for twice that amount. When it was later determined that the defendant was wanted for an Interstate Compact hold, that process was served on him while he was at the jail. Pursuant to that hold, the defendant was held without bond on that process. The fugitive warrant had been issued in error, and was therefore dismissed on 10/2 once I had confirmed that the proper detainer for Interstate Compact was served and the defendant could not be released.
2. I do not know who expunged the case, how it came about, or when that happened. The DA's office is not involved in that process. The defendant has been represented by local attorney Nils Gerber throughout these hearings, so I would recommend you reach out to him for any follow-up. I feel certain that as an officer of the court, Attorney Gerber will corroborate the fact that the DA's Office fought against any release of this defendant. Mr. Gerber's email is nilsgerber@yahoo.com and I hope you will seek independent third-party confirmation on my position and arguments in this case.
3. District Court, unlike Superior Court, does not generally have recordings or transcripts. That would be true here as well.
4. The October 1st hearing was a first appearance on a fugitive warrant, which was issued in error, as I indicated above. The Interstate Compact paperwork specifically noted that the defendant was not a fugitive from justice. You can see that language, as well as some of the confirming language I referenced in my first email, in some of the attached documents. Once that was clarified and the Interstate Compact detainer was served, the fugitive warrant was dismissed. The defendant was still held without bond pursuant to the Interstate Compact.
5. Yes, I told Judge Sipprell in court on 11/6/25 that Florida (through Officer Carollo) told me they would not pick up the defendant until his pending charges were resolved. While Judge Sipprell did make oral observations regarding the defendant's release during that court session, I would suggest that you contact Judge Sipprell for any further questions you might have about the rationale for the defendant's release.
6. The release order was not specific to any pending case in Forsyth County. It released the defendant from the hold pursuant to Interstate Compact, which is not a pending case or charge, and has no file number. Without an actual case or file number there is no case to appeal.

John, I realize that the timing of this article – nearly a full year after the defendant's last hearing on this matter – happens to coincide with a contested election cycle. I have provided you the truth and the facts in this matter, complete with all available paperwork to support what I have told you. I have also provided you with contact information of the defense lawyer involved in this case so that you can confirm for your readers as to whether I objected to the release of this defendant, pursuant to the Interstate Compact Agreement. I hope the same level of scrutiny will be applied to those anonymous people who are trying to pin a judge's decision on the release of this defendant on my actions, and by extension, our office. The Interstate Compact paperwork was clear on its face, and I argued for the defendant to remain in custody. The presiding judge disagreed with my position and released the defendant. And that is indisputable.

Your failure to include the above paragraph in your article would only serve to further confirm your newspaper's bias in the DA race for Forsyth County.

Respectfully,

Kevin R. Olsen

North Carolina Judicial Branch

O (336)779-6510

From: John Deem <john.deem@wsjournal.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2026 2:31 PM
To: Olsen, Kevin R. <kevin.r.olsen@nccourts.org>
Subject: Re: Defendant Drake

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Hi, Kevin. We are ready to post the story, so as soon as possible.

From: Olsen, Kevin R. <kevin.r.olsen@nccourts.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2026 2:28 PM
To: John Deem <john.deem@wsjournal.com>
Subject: Re: Defendant Drake

Hi John,

Thanks for the follow up. Do you have a deadline for these questions? I've been in and out of court and several meetings with witnesses so my spare time to sit down and address your questions has been limited.

Thanks,

Kevin

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From: John Deem <john.deem@wsjournal.com>
Sent: Wednesday, 21 October 2026 11:36:54
To: Olsen, Kevin R. <kevin.r.olsen@nccourts.org>
Subject: Re: Defendant Drake

You don't often get email from john.deem@wsjournal.com. Learn why this is important

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Hi, Kevin. Thanks again for your response. I do have a few follow-up questions.

- The clerk's office told me no documents related to the hearings were publicly available because the case was expunged. What specific case are they talking about?
- Why was it expunged, and who requested it?
- So, this means there is no publicly available account of what was said in the hearings, including the judge's rationale for his order?
- I'm confused about the Oct. 1 hearing because I thought the no-bond warrant was actually the subject of the hearing. Was that not the case?
- You say you asked Stephanie Carollo when Florida officials would pick up Drake, but under ICAOS Rule 5.101-1, they could not take him until his felony charges here were resolved. You mentioned that the judge referenced Florida's inaction as a factor in granting bond. Was the judge made aware of why Florida hadn't come to get Drake?
- Could your office have appealed the release order?

Thanks, Kevin.

John

From: Olsen, Kevin R. <kevin.r.olsen@nccourts.org>
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2026 5:02 PM
To: John Deem <john.deem@wsjournal.com>
Subject: Defendant Drake

John,

I was the ADA that handled the preliminary matters involving Justin Drake. In response to your questions:

Questions 1-3:

Yes, I did advise Judge Sipprell that Drake was the subject to a no-bond warrant under the Interstate Compact. Specifically, in First Appearance on October 1, 2025, I asked for no bond because at the time, the Defendant had a fugitive warrant and typically those defendants are not given a bond. The defense attorney came in with paperwork asking for a bond because the Defendant had been given a written promise to appear on his pending charge. Chief District Court Judge Sipprell said that he was going to set a bond. I asked for $20k secured. Judge Sipprell ordered $10k secured and electronic monitoring and to stay away from the neighborhood. At the time, I had not been provided confirmation that this Defendant was subject to the Interstate Compact Act. Nor had I been informed that no bond had already been ordered.

When the Defendant tried to post his bond later that day, I was at that time provided paperwork confirming that he was subject to no bond being set. The Interstate Compact paperwork was served on the Defendant and he remained in custody without bond. The improperly charged fugitive warrant was dismissed once it had been confirmed that the Defendant was in custody under the Interstate Compact Agreement, without bond.

The Defendant's next court date was set for November 6, 2025. At that hearing, I requested that the Defendant remain in custody without a bond being set. I explained to Judge Sipprell that the DAC Form indicated: "Authority to Hold and Detain", was dated October 1, 2025 stating in bold and underlined and all-caps: "THIS OUT OF STATE OFFENDER IS NOT SUBJECT TO BOND." I further pointed to a letter from a member of DAC Interstate Compact Office which reiterated that the Defendant was not subject to bond, and further stated "The Offender is Not Entitled to Any Judicial Proceedings in North Carolina."

In his discretion, Judge Sipprell Ordered that the Defendant be released from custody on the Interstate Compact Hold.

Question 4:

Prior to the Novembr 6, 2025 hearing, I called and spoke to Probation officer Stephanie Carollo in Florida. I asked her when Florida would be coming to pick up the Defendant on his Interstate Compact Warrant. I was told that they would not bring him back to Florida until his pending charge in Forsyth was resolved. Judge Sipprell referenced Florida's inaction as a reason for releasing the Defendant on November 6, 2025.

Question 5:

No one from Florida reached out to me personally. I have only spoken with Officer Carollo.

Question 6:

Obviously, I would agree which is why I had asked for the Defendant to remain in custody. It is probably fair to also mention that the victim's family here in North Carolina was acquainted with Drake and this was not an assault on a stanger. It is incredibly frustrating that the Defedant got charged with re-offending because it could have been avoided if the Defendant had remained in custody as I had asked for, or if Florida had come to pick him up in a timely manner.

Question 7:

I am aware that there is much false information circulating in this case that is not factually true. And that is sad and troubling as to why people would be spreading misinformation about such a serious matter. I am hopeful that you will write an article that will make it clear that myself and this Office did everything we could to ensure that Defendant Drake not be released from custody, but the presiding judge disagreed with us. Because in the end, what have I said here is the facts and the truth.

If I can provide anything further to you as it relates to this case, I would be more than happy to answer your questions.

Kevin R. Olsen

Assistant District Attorney
Forsyth County – District 31

North Carolina Judicial Branch

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