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Attempted murder charges certified in Suffolk shootout

By DAVE FORSTER, The Virginian-Pilot

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**Lamon
Vanshawn
Hayes**



**Travis
Markee
Boone**



**Darius
Jermol
Simmons**

SUFFOLK - The judge said it sounded like a scene from Baghdad, not downtown Suffolk.

Early on the morning of Jan. 7, three men in a pickup - one in the back with an AK-47 assault rifle - arrived on Second Avenue ready for a shootout.

The man they came for responded in kind. Neighbors counted 21 gunshots.

When it was over, one of the men in the pickup was dead from a shot to the head. Another was wounded. The dead man was left in the pickup.

General District Court Judge James A. Moore listened to the evidence Tuesday at a preliminary hearing for Travis Markee Boone, 19, and Darius Jermol Simmons, 24 - both in the pickup that morning, police said.

Attempted murder charges were certified against both men.

The gun battle in the heart of downtown's revitalized area outraged residents and prompted a petition. They asked the commonwealth's attorney to oppose bail for all people charged with gun-related crimes. The man killed, Lamon Vanshawn Hayes, 21, had been out on bond awaiting charges, including possession of a machine gun.

Commonwealth's Attorney Phil Ferguson responded by announcing that he, not his assistants, would decide whether to recommend bond for people charged with violent crimes or repeat drug offenses.

At the court hearing Tuesday, Samuel L. Eure testified that a red pickup began tailing him as he returned home from a night club. The pickup stopped in front of his driveway.

Eure said Boone stepped out and began shooting from about 12 feet away.

Defenseless, Eure ran to the water meter next to his home, he said. He had seen someone stash a gun inside the meter three days earlier, he told the judge. He pulled out the weapon, which he said was an automatic and loaded with a clip, and returned fire.

"I just want to tell you right now, I don't believe very much of what he's saying - at all," Moore told prosecutor Will Jamerson.

Earlier, Eure said he had two felony convictions for shooting at an occupied vehicle and eluding police. He was not charged in this case because he was defending himself, Jamerson said.

In his statement to authorities, Simmons said Hayes was upset and wanted to drive to Eure's neighborhood that morning.

Simmons jumped from the back of the pickup and into the cab when the bullets started flying, according to his statement.

He said Boone and Hayes were both shooting at one point, and someone was shooting back.

Simmons, who goes by the nickname "bin Laden," said he fired an AK-47 rifle as Boone drove away. Hayes was already hit and slumped over in the cab of the truck.

Police found his body in the pickup on Mahan Street shortly after 5 a.m.

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