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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Missouri Parolee Arrested for Shooting in Parsons**

Rodney Welch Jr., aged 19, a former resident of Lebanon (MO) was arrested by Parsons Police on an inter-state felony arrest warrant from Missouri on the afternoon of Friday, September 13<sup>th</sup> in Parsons. The Missouri warrant was issued for First Degree Assault with a Firearm (Attempted Murder). Welch is the suspect in the September 12<sup>th</sup> shooting of a teenager in Lebanon.

Welch had been recently placed on supervised probation in Parsons through the Interstate Commission for Adult Offender Supervision (ICAOS), routinely referred to as the 'Interstate Compact.'

The shooting happened Thursday, September 12<sup>th</sup> at the home of Noah Houston, 19 in Lebanon (MO). According to news reports, Laclede County Sheriff David Millsap says Welch allegedly shot Houston once in the mid-section with a handgun. He's currently listed in stable condition at a Springfield hospital. Although Millsap is hesitant to release a motive this early in the investigation, he did indicate drugs may have played a part.

"Robberies like this tend to have a nexus regarding drug activity. When you're investigating these particular types of robberies, we always look at that as a possible motive," says Millsap.

The victim (Houston) is currently serving supervised probation for a weapons and drug offense while the alleged shooter (Welch) is on probation for burglary.

Parsons Police began tracking Welch Friday morning after being advised of a valid inter-state warrant for Welch's arrest. "We had surveillance set up on some possible locations in Parsons," said Police Commander Michael Powell who oversees the Kansas Combined Anti-Drug Taskforce (KCAT). The Missouri shooting had a purported nexus with drugs. Powell said, "individuals were questioned and at least one search warrant was executed looking for Welch. Eventually our efforts lead officers to a residence near 26<sup>th</sup> and Grand where Welch was found hiding. He was taken into custody without incident," said Powell.

Many people are not aware of the Interstate Commission for Adult Offender Supervision (ICAOS). ICAOS was developed in 1937 and designed to regulate the movement of probationers and parolees across state lines, the ICAOS is enacted in all 50 states and three U.S. territories (District of Columbia, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico). Revised in 2002, the compact provides states the authority, accountability, and resources to track the supervision of offenders who move across state lines, thereby enhancing public safety and offender accountability.

"This is the second incident involving an out of state parolee or probationer being relocated to Parsons and then committing a felony triggering their re-incarceration," says Parsons Police Chief Robert Spinks. "The earlier incident involved a felon who had been paroled on felony charges involving kiddie porn convictions. He turned up in Parsons and began selling illegal drugs. He was arrested by the Kansas Combined Anti-Drug Taskforce (KCAT) on felony charges. Then Friday we arrest another out of state parolee on a warrant for attempted murder in Missouri."

The Parsons Police have lodged an inquiry with the ICAOS to complain about the lack of notification to local law enforcement and if this was merely an oversight or if it's a severe weakness in the Interstate Compact System or with the State of Kansas.

According to Spinks, “we have no interest in being the home away from home for out of state parolees or probationers that are going to reoffend.”

This continues to be an on-going investigation and citizens are encouraged to “See It, Hear It, Report It.” If anyone has any further information on this incident or any other criminal activity, please contact the Parsons Police Department at 421-7060 or call the Tip Line at 421-7057 or email at [tips@parsonspd.com](mailto:tips@parsonspd.com).

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