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Questions remain about information, footage reportedly collected on Paul Murdaugh

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MAR 31, 2022



On June 8, 2021, investigators huddle on the property along Moselle Road in rural Colleton County where Paul Murdaugh, 22, and his mother, Margaret, 52, were found shot the night of June 7.
File/Andrew J. Whitaker/Staff

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HAMPTON — Questions are swirling around secretive video footage and information a private investigator reportedly collected on Paul Murdaugh before he and his mother were shot to death at their Colleton County hunting lodge last year.

In a recent court hearing, attorney Mark Tinsley told a judge that the investigator, Sara Capelli, had videotaped Murdaugh within three days of his death, according to a hearing transcript. As he understood it, Tinsley said, Capelli had tailed Murdaugh for more than a year, searching for evidence to bolster a narrative that the Murdaughs, a powerful legal family in South Carolina's Lowcountry, were "terrible people."

Tinsley represents the family of a young woman killed in a 2019 boat crash involving Murdaugh, and Capelli was hired by one of the defendants who has been sued in connection with her death.

Tinsley's statements at a March 16 court hearing have sparked news stories and speculation about what Capelli might have captured on video and how that could affect the open investigation into the unsolved killings of Murdaugh and his mother Maggie in June 2021.



MURDAUGH NEWS

Murdaugh family hopes for answers as investigation continues in loved ones' killing

BY OLIVIA DIAZ ODIAZ@POSTANDCOURIER.COM

But Capelli sharply disputed Tinsley's claims in a March 31 interview with The Post and Courier.

Her investigation, she said, only lasted roughly six weeks, from February to March 2021. Tinsley, she said, was speculating on evidence he had not yet seen.

Still, she declined to discuss her investigation in detail and would not confirm if it included video surveillance of Paul Murdaugh.

Capelli said she turned over her findings to the State Law Enforcement Division, which has investigated the Murdaugh double-murder for the past nine months but made no arrests and named no suspects. She declined to say what she gave them.

The murders have generated international intrigue, sparking book deals, podcast episodes, cable news documentaries and hundreds of news stories.

The personal and professional unraveling of Alex Murdaugh, the family patriarch and a prominent Hampton County lawyer, has tossed more fuel onto the flames. Since the death of his son and wife, he has been arrested and charged with trying — and failing — to stage his own murder in a botched assisted suicide scheme and indicted on charges of stealing more than \$8 million from his law clients and legal partners.



MURDAUGH NEWS

Beaufort attorney posts bail on charges tied to Murdaugh fraud case

BY STEVE GARRISON SGARRISON@POSTANDCOURIER.COM

SLED officials have said little about their investigation into the murders of Maggie and Paul Murdaugh. The agency declined to comment for this story.

Rumors have been rampant in the void of information. And that has left Murdaugh family members frustrated that they don't know more about what led to the death of their family members. John Marvin Murdaugh, Alex Murdaugh's younger brother, said in a recent interview with The Post and Courier that he worried the investigations of his brother's alleged financial crimes had overshadowed the quest to find out who killed Maggie and Paul Murdaugh.

Before he died, prosecutors charged Paul Murdaugh with felony boating under the influence in the 2019 boat crash that killed teenager Mallory Beach.

Tinsley is representing Beach's family in lawsuits against Parker's, a company that owns a convenience store where Paul Murdaugh, then underage, purchased alcohol before the crash.

Tinsley revealed the existence of Capelli's investigation in a hearing related to one of the cases. According to the transcript, the attorney told a judge the Parker's chain wanted private investigators to find evidence that the Murdaughs were bad people, a narrative that might help the convenience store chain avoid blame for the crash.

Among other things, the chain wanted investigators to prove that Paul Murdaugh was a partier and drinker, Tinsley said. He said a camera was placed outside the driveway of the "Moselle" property in Colleton County where Paul and Maggie Murdaugh were found shot to death. But it is not clear from the transcript who put the camera there, when or what it captured.

In an interview March 31, Tinsley said he did not know if Capelli had any footage of the property.

At the hearing, Tinsley also accused Capelli of using unscrupulous methods. He said she, at one point, purchased alcohol for minors in Columbia in exchange for information about Paul Murdaugh.

In the interview, Capelli said her investigation was lawful.

Tinsley asked the judge to grant him access to Capelli's records. The judge recently ruled in Tinsley's favor and ordered the information to be turned over within weeks.

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