

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **PRESS CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS SERIOUS CONCERNS FOLLOWING SENTENCING IN WESLEY COLE CASE**

### **Victims, Counsel, and DA Candidate Call for Accountability, Transparency, and Victim-Centered Justice**

**Tulsa, OK** — Following today’s sentencing of former Tulsa massage therapist Wesley Cole, victims, their legal counsel, and Tulsa County District Attorney candidate Colleen McCarty held a press conference to address the outcome of the case and broader concerns about how violent crimes are handled in Tulsa County.

Cole, who was originally charged with ten counts including rape by instrumentation and sexual battery, was allowed to plead to reduced, non-sexual offenses and received a probationary out-time sentence that does not require sex offender registration. Cole’s sentencing took place on the second day of Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

### **Victims Opposed Plea Deal**

Rachel Farrar, attorney for multiple victims in the case, made clear that the resolution did not reflect the wishes of her clients.

“My clients did not approve this plea deal and were fiercely opposed to it,” Farrar stated. “Their position was communicated directly to the prosecution, including their belief that, in the interest of public safety, Mr. Cole should be required to register as a sex offender.”

Farrar also addressed public statements suggesting the plea was supported by victims or driven by evidentiary issues, calling those claims inaccurate as they relate to her clients.

“Their stories have not been refuted in any way,” she said.

### **Victims Describe Lasting Impact**

Victims who spoke publicly described feeling ignored and excluded from the process, despite voicing opposition to the plea agreement.

One victim stated:

*“That deal benefited only the perpetrator—not public safety. He gets to walk free while I try to pick up the pieces of my life.”*

Another victim described being contacted directly about the plea deal in a manner that bypassed her attorney and left her feeling dismissed and disbelieved.

*“I was denied my day in court,” she said. “This plea deal does not feel like justice.”*

### **Broader Concerns About Transparency and Public Trust**

During the press conference, McCarty emphasized that the issue extends beyond a single case and raises broader concerns about transparency, accountability, and public trust in the justice system.

“The people of Tulsa County were told that this plea deal had the support of victims. Today, we know that is not true,” McCarty said. “If the public cannot rely on basic representations like that, it undermines trust in the entire system.”

McCarty also highlighted the fact that Cole’s attorney endorse the sitting DA, Steve Kunzweiler, only a week after the plea deal was announce. She raised concerns about the appearance of insider relationships influencing case outcomes, while making clear she was not alleging criminal wrongdoing.

“To the public, it looks wrong. And when trust erodes, public safety suffers.”

### **Call for Reform and Victim-Centered Justice**

Speakers called for reforms to ensure victims are meaningfully informed, respected, and considered throughout the prosecution process.

McCarty outlined her vision for the District Attorney’s Office:

- Restore transparency and honesty in communications with the public
- Place victims at the center of prosecutorial decision-making
- Ensure accountability in the handling of violent crimes
- Rebuild public trust in the justice system

“We can have an office that tells the truth—even when it’s inconvenient,” McCarty said. “We can have an office where justice is not influenced by who you know, but by what is right.”

## **Moving Forward**

Speakers emphasized that the outcome of this case should serve as a turning point for Tulsa County.

“Today is about accountability,” McCarty said. “And moving forward, it must be about rebuilding trust—because without trust, there is no justice, and without justice, there is no public safety.”

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