

ALERT TOP STORY

Man ordered to serve 45 years in Spotsylvania restaurant slaying

Keith Epps

Aug 14, 2023

A man who shot and killed a Spotsylvania man outside a county restaurant last year was ordered Monday to serve 45 years in prison.

Jesse Dean Beebout, 35, of Ruther Glen was sentenced in Spotsylvania Circuit Court to a total of 58 years with 13 years suspended. Judge William Glover's sentence exceeded the recommended state sentencing guidelines, which called for a maximum active sentence of 39 years.

A jury in June convicted Beebout of three charges, including first-degree murder. The charges stemmed from the April 30, 2022, slaying of 35-year-old Shawn Hastings, who was gunned down outside Fatty's Taphouse on Patriot Highway (U.S. 1).

Beebout claimed that he was acting in self-defense when he fired multiple shots into Hastings. But witnesses and camera footage contradicted the story told by Beebout, who was seen firing shots into Hastings while he was lying on the ground.

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The slaying occurred about an hour after Beebout was asked to leave the restaurant following a dispute involving Hastings and several others. Hastings was at the bar with his close friend, Dana Williams, but eventually moved to another section to do shots with other patrons.

After Hastings moved, according to the evidence, Beebout sat next to Williams and attempted to talk to her. Williams testified that she politely asked Beebout to leave her alone.

Beebout didn't immediately comply with Williams' request, leading to a disagreement that ended with Beebout being asked to leave. Beebout claimed he never said a word to Williams and was harassed by others for no reason.

Beebout walked to a nearby restaurant and stayed for about an hour before walking back to Fatty's to get his car. Williams testified that when she and Hastings came out of the building, Beebout was waiting near the entrance and said, "Remember me?"

Williams said she began walking to her car as directed by Hastings. Second later, she heard gunfire and turned around to see Beebout shooting down at the fallen Hastings.

Beebout was arrested at his home the next morning and has been in custody ever since.

Before sentencing Beebout Monday, Glover heard from Williams and Hastings' family members about the devastating effect his murder has had on them.

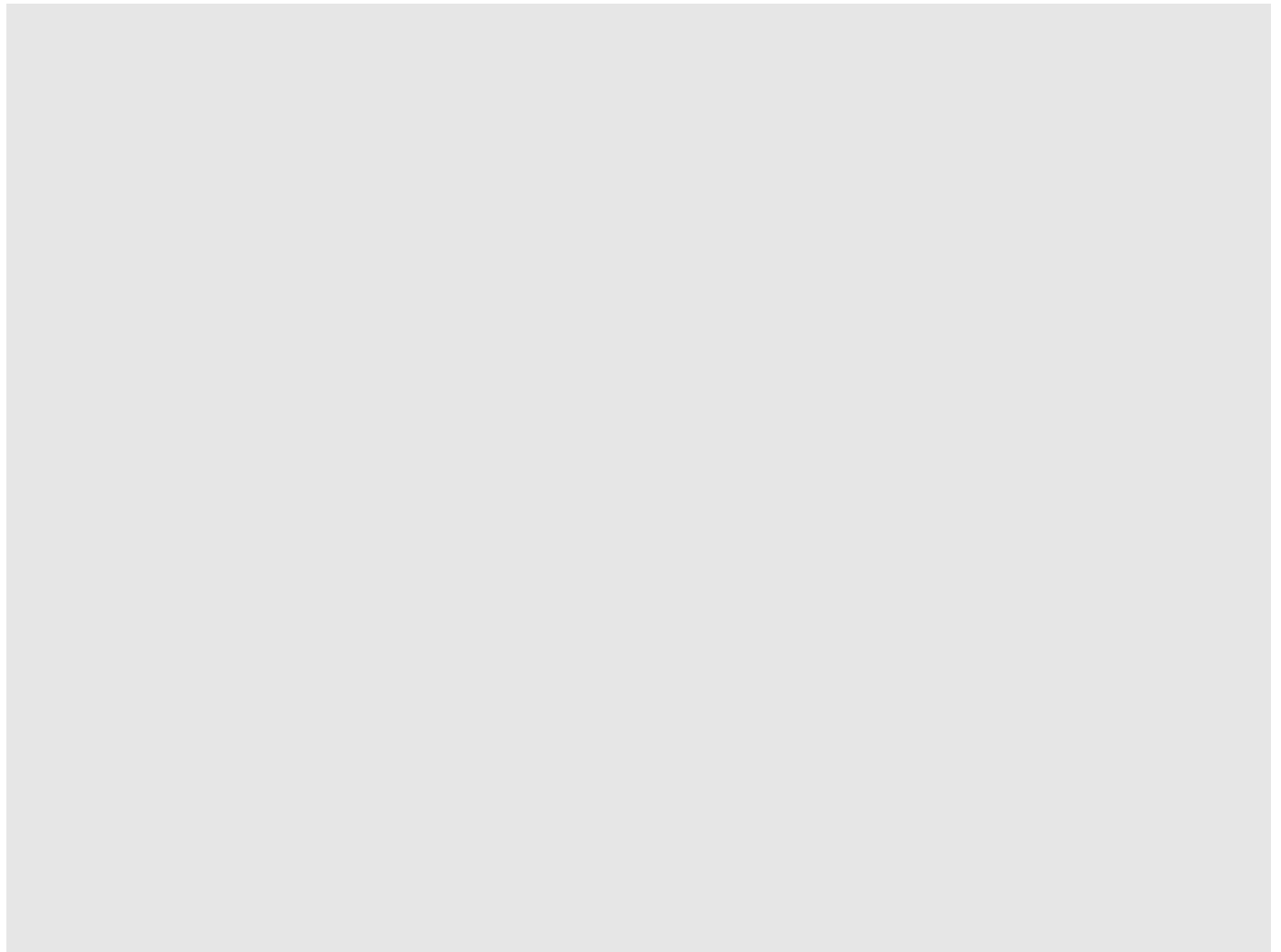
Williams, who said Hastings was her closest friend and was like a brother to her, said the slaying "has destroyed my life . . . my heart constantly aches and I feel lost. Life will never be the same for me."

Several of Beebout's family members testified on his behalf, saying he was a good Christian who was kind to everyone and never prone to violence.

Prosecutor Ryan Mehaffey asked the judge for a minimum of 40 years. He said Beebout "dumped his mag" into an unarmed man who was lying on the ground for no good reason and never showed any remorse.

Defense attorney Charles Cosby asked for a sentence at or below the guidelines, which started at 23 and a half years. He called Beebout a "good person who did a bad thing" and added, "the stars were aligned against him that night."

Judge Glover said that Beebout's actions that night "were not the acts of a Christian, a devoted grandson or a kind person."



Beebout

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