

Local Democrat official arrested for murder of Las Vegas investigative reporter

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A local Democratic Party politician and lawyer Robert Telles has been arrested for the September 2 stabbing death of Jeff German, 69, a long-time investigative journalist for the *Las Vegas Sun* and the *Las Vegas Review Journal*.

Within the last year, German with the assistance of Telles subordinates at the public administrator's office for Clark County, which includes Las Vegas, began writing a series of articles which exposed Telles as a bully who fostered a hostile work environment.

A particularly salacious article published in May of this year by German, featured secret video recorded by workers at the office, which only employed eight full-time workers, showing their boss engaging in apparent affair with a lower-level staffer.

As German continued to publish articles exposing Telles, who was elected in 2018 as the Clark County public administrator, Telles took to social media to denounce German as a "bully" who published "lying smear" pieces.

This past June, Telles' top deputy, Rita Reid, defeated him in a three-person Democratic primary for his position as public administrator.

In a hearing held last week, prosecutors have alleged that Telles "lashed out" at German for his reporting, which he blamed for him losing the election and ruining his marriage.

The public administrator, while an elected position, is not a high-level post within local government. It is more akin to a bailiff for a probate court. Telles was responsible for securing the property of deceased persons until an executor or the family is located.

Typically, the public administrator, or employees of the office, will accompany police following the death of a person. If a coroner is unable to locate next of kin, the public administrator's office will take an inventory

of the valuables left behind by the deceased, such as cash, jewelry or credit cards found within a residence, and then lock up the property until a next of kin is located.

In the event families, an executor or next of kin are not located, or are unable to handle the affairs of the estate, the public administrator's office could be appointed by a court to serve as administrator of the estate.

In a statement released after the arrest of Telles, German's family wrote, "Jeff was a loving and loyal brother, uncle and friend who devoted his life to exposing wrongdoing in Las Vegas and beyond. We're shocked, saddened and angry about his death. Jeff was committed to seeking justice for others and would appreciate the hard work by local police and journalists in pursuing his killer. We look forward to seeing justice done in this case. We also want to thank everyone for the outpouring of love, support and recognition for Jeff and his life's work."

German's body was found outside his home in Las Vegas on Saturday, September 3. Police have claimed that he suffered seven stab wounds to his throat and torso and "defensive" lacerations on his hands and arms.

Telles, 45, is currently incarcerated at the Clark County Detention Center. He is facing one charge of open murder with the use of a deadly weapon and in his first court appearance last Thursday, Judge Elana Lee Graham ruled that Telles will be held without bail as he awaits trial.

Prosecutors and police have claimed that Telles' DNA was found at the crime scene and that German's DNA was found underneath Telles' fingernails, suggesting a struggle. Surveillance video taken outside German's home around the time of the killing shows a

man wearing a straw hat. At Telles' residence police claim to have recovered a straw hat and a pair of bloody sneakers, both crudely ripped up in haste.

Telles was arrested due in large part to investigative work done by German's colleagues at the *Las Vegas Review Journal*. Reporters at the paper, already aware of public threats German had received from Telles following his reporting, used a police description of a vehicle of interest and Google Maps to confirm a vehicle matching the police description was previously photographed in Telles' driveway and in fact, registered to Telles' wife.

Last Tuesday, after reporters at the paper confirmed the vehicle, a maroon GMC Yukon Denali with a sunroof, was located in Telles' driveway, the reporters began a stakeout at Telles' residence. During the stakeout, reporters photographed Telles attempting to clean out the vehicle hours after its description was released by police.

The next day, early Wednesday, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police executed a search warrant on the vehicle at Telles' house. Later that same day, police returned to the residence to arrest Telles on murder charges.

Police claim that when they showed up to make the arrest for the murder of German, Telles barricaded himself inside his house, leading to an over hour-long standoff. After the police breached the residence, Telles was taken out of his house on a stretcher with bandages on his arms. Police claim Telles was injured due to "self-inflicted wounds."

As an elected official, Telles will continue to draw his \$120,000 salary while incarcerated, likely until January 2023 when his replacement assumes office.

German had spent the last 40 years of his life reporting on local corruption, murder, organized crime, mass shootings and various forms of social injustice in Las Vegas, Nevada. In the Democratic Party-dominated center of the gambling industry, dubbed "Sin City," he did not lack for material for muckraking.

In January 2020, German published an expose on the deadly Alpine Motel Apartment fire which occurred the month prior and left six people dead and 13 injured. In his report German revealed that the Las Vegas fire department had not conducted an inspection of the property in over two years despite the fact that the facility had a recent history of failed inspections.

Two days after the fire ripped through the building, fire inspectors found 42 safety-code violations, from defective smoke alarms to the use of a steel bar on an exit door which prevented residents from exiting the burning building.



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