

FORM 4

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
 COUNTY OF YORK
 IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

JUDGMENT IN A CIVIL CASE
 CASE NUMBER 2012CP4602640

Colin Duane Fitzgerald	Fort Mill City Of
PLAINTIFF(S)	DEFENDANT(S)

Submitted by:	Attorney for: <input type="checkbox"/> Plaintiff <input type="checkbox"/> Defendant <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Represented Litigant
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DISPOSITION TYPE (CHECK ONE)

- JURY VERDICT.** This action came before the court for a trial by jury. The issues have been tried and a verdict rendered.
- DECISION BY THE COURT.** This action came to trial or hearing before the court. The issues have been tried or heard and a decision rendered.
- ACTION DISMISSED (CHECK REASON):** Rule 12(b), SCRPC; Rule 41(a); SCRPC (Vol. Nonsuit);
 Rule 43(k), SCRPC (Settled); Other: _____
- ACTION STRICKEN (CHECK REASON):** Rule 40(j) SCRPC; Bankruptcy;
 Binding arbitration, subject to right to restore to confirm, vacate or modify arbitration award; Other: _____
- DISPOSITION OF APPEAL TO THE CIRCUIT COURT (CHECK APPLICABLE BOX):**
 Affirmed; Reversed; Remanded; Other: _____

NOTE: ATTORNEYS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR NOTIFYING LOWER COURT, TRIBUNAL, OR ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCY OF THE CIRCUIT COURT RULING IN THIS APPEAL.

IT IS ORDERED AND ADJUDGED: See attached order; (formal order to follow) Statement of Judgment by the Court:

ORDER

ORDER INFORMATION

This order ends does not end the case.

Additional Information for the Clerk:

INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC INDEX

Complete this section below when the judgment affects title to real or personal property or if any amount should be enrolled. If there is no judgment information, indicate "N/A" in one of the boxes below.

Judgment in Favor of (List name(s) below)	Judgment Against (List name(s) below)	Judgment Amount To be Enrolled (List amount(s) below)
n/a	n/a	n/a

If applicable, describe the property, including tax map information and address, referenced in the order:

The judgment information above has been provided by the submitting party. Disputes concerning the amounts contained in this form may be addressed by way of motion pursuant to the SC Rules of Civil Procedure. Amounts to be computed such as interest or additional taxable costs not available at the time the form and final order are submitted to the judge may be provided to the clerk. Note: Title abstractors and researchers should refer to the official court order for judgment details.

s/Lee S. Alford
 Circuit Court Judge

2113
 Judge Code

September 28, 2012
 Date

For Clerk of Court Office Use Only

This judgment was entered on September 28, 2012, and a copy mailed first class or placed in the appropriate attorney's box on September 28, 2012, to attorneys of record or to parties (when appearing pro se) as follows:

J Tyler Burns Reeves Aiken And Hightower L L P P O Box 1297 Fort Mill,
SC 29716

ATTORNEY(S) FOR THE PLAINTIFF(S)

Jenny E. Desch York County Solicitor'S Office 1675-1A York Hwy York,
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ATTORNEY(S) FOR THE DEFENDANT(S)

David Hamilton

David Hamilton - Clerk of Court

Court Reporter

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
FOR THE SIXTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

COUNTY OF YORK)

City of Fort Mill,)

Respondent,)

C. A. No. 2012-CP-46-02640

vs.)

Colin Duane Fitzgerald,)

Appellant.)

ORDER

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2012 SEP 28 PM 2:29
DAVID HAMILTON
C.C.P. & G.S.
YORK COUNTY, SC

This matter is before the Court on Appeal from the City of Fort Mill Municipal Court. Colin Duane Fitzgerald, Defendant (Appellant), was represented by J. Tyler Burns of the law firm of Reeves, Aiken and Hightower, LLP. The City of Fort Mill was represented by Jenny Desch of the Sixteenth Circuit Solicitor's Office.

Factually and procedurally, this is an unusual case. Fitzgerald was stopped in the City of Fort Mill by a York County Sheriff's Deputy. The deputy was transporting someone in his vehicle at the time, and he called in a Fort Mill policeman to investigate the matter. The police vehicle driven by the city officer did not have a working video recorder. The county deputy remained on scene with his video recorder on. However, the microphone was attached to his person, and when he got into his vehicle, there was no audio recording of the field sobriety test or Miranda warnings being given by the arresting officer.

Fitzgerald was charged with DUI and went to trial on a DUAC charge. Defense counsel made pretrial motions for dismissal on the grounds that the State failed to comply with the requirements of Section 56-5-2953. The motions were denied.

The case was tried before a judge and jury on April 24, 2012. The jury found Fitzgerald guilty of DUAC. The jury was dismissed. Before sentencing, it was brought to the attention of the trial judge that the required verdict form in which the jury was required to make a finding as to alcohol content was not submitted to the jury and no finding was made by the jury. The trial judge realized the oversight and ordered a mistrial, sua sponte, and placed the case back on the jury trial docket.

Fitzgerald appealed to the Circuit Court on June 27, 2012. Judge John C. Hayes, III, ordered the mistrial to be set aside as improvidently granted and remanded back to the trial court for sentencing according to the jury verdict. Fitzgerald was subsequently sentenced by the trial judge.

Issues on Appeal

1. The Court erred in not dismissing the case for failure by the arresting officer to comply with S. C. Code Ann. § 56-5-2953 (B) to provide a sworn affidavit to explain why no video of the incident site could be provided.
2. The Court erred in not dismissing the case for failure of the non-arresting officer to comply with S. C. Code Ann. § 56-5-2953 (B) to provide a sworn affidavit to explain why no audio was included in his video of the incident site.
3. The Court erred in not dismissing the case for violation of S. C. Code Ann. § 56-5-2953 in that the video at the incident site does not show the Appellant being advised of his Miranda warnings.

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Section 56-5-2953 provides in pertinent part as follows:

(A) A person who violates Section 56-5-2930, 56-5-2933, or 56-5-2945 **must** have his conduct at the incident site and the breath test site video recorded.

(1)(e) The video recording at the incident site **must**:

(ii) include any field sobriety tests administered; and

(iii) include the arrest of a person for a violation of Section 56-5-2930 or Section 56-5-2933, or a probable cause determination in that the person violated Section 56-5-2945, and shows the person being advised of his Miranda rights. [Emphasis added]

(B) Nothing in this section may be construed as prohibiting the introduction of other relevant evidence in the trial of a violation of Section 56-5-2930, 56-5-2933 or 56-5-2945. Failure by the arresting officer to produce the video recording required by this section is not alone a ground for dismissal of any charge made pursuant to Section 56-5-2930, 56-5-2933, or 56-5-2945, if the arresting officer submitted a sworn affidavit certifying that the video recording equipment at the time of the arrest or probable cause determination or video equipment at the breath test facility was in an inoperable condition, stating which reasonable efforts have been made to maintain the equipment in an operable condition ___ or, in the alternative, submits a sworn affidavit certifying that it was physically impossible to produce the video recording because the person needed emergency medical treatment, or exigent circumstances existed. In circumstances, including but not limited to, road blocks, traffic accident investigations, and citizens arrests, where an arrest has been made and the video recording equipment has not been activated by blue lights, the failure by the arresting officer to produce the video recordings required by this section is not alone a ground for dismissal. However, as soon as video recording is practicable in these circumstances, video recording must begin and conform with the provisions of this section. Nothing in this section prohibits the Court from considering any other valid reason for the failure to produce the video recording based upon the totality of the circumstances; nor do the provisions of this section prohibit the person from offering evidence relating to the arresting law enforcement officer's failure to produce the video recording.

Section 56-5-2953 was amended in 2008 and rewrote subsection (A) and substituted "video recording" for "videotape," "videotapes" and "videotaping," throughout.

Discussion

The visual part of the video recording of the administration of the field sobriety tests is included in the video recording at the incident site. However, the audio part of the video recording of the field sobriety tests, Miranda warnings, and verbal communication by Fitzgerald is not included. Therefore, the wording of any Miranda warnings, instructions by the officer administering the field sobriety tests, and verbal responses by Fitzgerald are not included.

The cardinal rule of statutory construction is to ascertain and effectuate the legislative intent whenever possible. All rules of statutory construction are subservient to the one that legislative intent must prevail if it can be reasonably discovered in the language used, and that language must be construed in the light of the intended purpose of the statute. The determination of legislative intent is a matter of law. State v. Landis, 362 S.C. 97; 606 S.E. 2d 503 (Ct. App. 2004).

The 2008 amendment to Section 56-5-2953 by the legislature must have been made for a reason and purpose. The only logical and rational basis for the amendment is a legislative intent to require the video at the incident site and the breath test site to include audio of those procedures in the videos.

The arresting officer did not provide an affidavit to the trial court which provides information creating an exception to the video recording required by Section 56-5-2953 (B). Failure to install operative video recording equipment does not meet the requirements of that section. See Town of Mt. Pleasant v. Roberts, 393 S.C. 332 (S.C. 2011). In fact, no sworn affidavit by the arresting officer was offered to the Court.

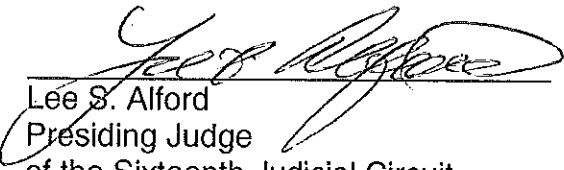
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The remedy for failure to provide a video recording or an affidavit of the arresting officer which meets the requirements of Section 56-5-2953 is a dismissal of the charge. City of Rock Hill v. Suchenski, 374 S.C. 12, 646 S.E. 2d 879 (S.C. 2007).

Conclusion

The State has failed to provide a video recording or an affidavit of the arresting officer creating an exception, as set forth in Section 56-5-2953. The conviction in the Fort Mill City Municipal Court of Colin Duane Fitzgerald on a charge of DUAC is reversed and the charge is dismissed.

IT IS SO ORDERED.


Lee S. Alford
Presiding Judge
of the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit

York, South Carolina

September 28, 2012

