‘They gave my baby justice,’ mom says after jury quickly convicts man for fatal shooting at Harrisburg bar

Updated: Jan. 08, 2020, 4:22 p.m. |Published: Jan. 08, 2020, 2:26 p.m.
By Matt Miller | mmiller@pennlive.com

Members of Jawan Washington’s family gave a muffled cheer Wednesday afternoon as a Dauphin County jury convicted a Harrisburg man of gunning him down outside a city bar.

The jurors took less than an hour to find Charles Williams guilty of first-degree murder for Washington’s slaying and attempted murder for the wounding of another man outside Double D’s bar early on March 24, 2018.

The shootings were captured on the bar’s extensive network of security cameras. That video was the lynchpin of District Attorney Fran Chardo’s case during the three-day trial.

After the jury left the courtroom, Judge William T. Tully promptly sentenced the 43-year-old Williams to life in prison for the slaying of Washington. He added a consecutive 5- to 10-year jail term for the attempted murder of Deion Shumate.

Shumate suffered 12 gunshot wounds and survived. Washington, who was killed on his 20th birthday, was shot three times in the chest.

“They gave my baby justice,” Washington’s sobbing mother Jowana told Tully, praising the jury’s decision. She and several other family members softly told the jurors “Thank you” as the panel left the courtroom.

“He was just a 20-year-old kid trying to find his way in life,” she said. “He was just trying to be young and to fit in with everybody else.”

Williams said nothing when Tully gave him the chance to speak. Defense attorney Petra Gross merely asked the judge not to impose consecutive prison terms.

Investigators said they don’t know the motive for the shooting. Williams’ silence ensures that remains a mystery, Tully observed.

“It appears at times that grudges seem to go back and forth,” the judge said. “I guess we can continue not to know the rest of the story in this case.”

Williams showed no reaction to the verdict or his sentencing. He spoke and laughed with supporters as sheriff’s deputies escorted him from the courtroom in shackles.

“Stay strong,” one woman told him.