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# DOTHAN EAGLE



Laymond Reynolds looks through paperwork Wednesday morning at the Dale County Courthouse in Ozark.

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## Man found guilty of attempted murder

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OZARK — A man who grabbed an officer's gun and fired two shots was found guilty of attempted murder on Wednesday, despite authorities' admission the officer may have used excessive force.

A Dale County jury spent more than two hours determining whether Laymond Reynolds, 33, was attempting to murder Ozark Officer Billy Driggers when Reynolds pulled Driggers' Glock .40-caliber handgun from his holster during a fight with the officer.

Neither of two shots fired hit Driggers.

The argument began a little after Driggers received a call of Reynolds possibly assaulting a victim at Applebee's, according to court testimony.

Reynolds and his brothers eventually left the restaurant and were stopped by Drig-

gers during a traffic stop on Holiday Lane.

Driggers, who testified during the case, said he might have reacted more aggressively than he should have from the time Reynolds allegedly cursed and punched him when told to get out the vehicle to the time Driggers realized Reynolds had taken the gun.

"I was extremely scared, a little upset, little bit confused at that point. ... (Reynolds was) so hostile and confrontational," Driggers said. "If it wasn't for (Officer Walt Russell), I don't think I would be here."

Defense attorney David Robinson said it was Reynolds who was "attacked" during the incident.

Driggers had been trained to deal with an assault suspect and responded inappropriately to Reynolds by

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## Guilty

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demanding and pulling him out of a vehicle after Reynolds cursed at Driggers, Robinson added.

Robinson said Reynolds had just been in an argument with his ex-wife before the stop and had been drinking.

"Cursing at an officer is not illegal. ... The evidence is why, if (Reynolds) was tryin' to kill somebody, was the gun not pointed at Officer Driggers?" Robinson asked.

"What we don't have is

evidence Laymond Reynolds ever pointed that pistol at anybody whatsoever. Zero. We're down to guessing, surmising. That's what this case is about. ... Law enforcement, the district attorney, they protect their own, and when somebody messes with one of theirs, they want blood."

Dale County Assistant District Attorney Bill Filmore said no matter what Driggers' demeanor was, it never changed the fact Reynolds tried to kill the officer.

"You might very well say the first shot was to try to scare (Reynolds), that it was an accident, but it's kinda

hard to explain the second shot unless you're tryin' to kill somebody," Filmore said.

Reynolds, who had been on bond on the charge, was to remain in custody after the verdict on Wednesday until a bond hearing expected today.

Dale County District Attorney Kirke Adams said the case was evidence of how no traffic stop was routine.

"There's a reason for tint laws and other regulations, because officers never know what's going to happen," Adams said. "We were lucky to have video footage that told it all."