

Former trooper wants to go on trial for theft

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BRIDGEPORT -- The Scalesse family came to court Tuesday hoping to see former State Police Trooper Aaron "AJ" Huntsman finally admit he stole their son's gold chain and money as he lay dying on the Merritt Parkway last year.

They left disappointed.

"I was hoping it would be all over today but he (Huntsman) is still refusing to take responsibility for his actions," said a dejected Marguerite Scalesse. "Now he wants to go on trial, but I'm confident justice will be done."

Huntsman, 43, a 19-year veteran of the state police, turned down a plea bargain that would have led to him serving one year in prison and instead told Superior Court Judge Richard Arnold he wanted a trial. The judge then continued the case to Dec. 17.

"The deal is now off the table," Assistant State's Attorney Marc Durso told Huntsman's lawyer, Ryan McGuigan.

If Huntsman goes to trial and is convicted, he could face up to 10 years in prison.

Neither Huntsman nor McGuigan would comment as they left the Golden Hill Street courthouse.

Huntsman is charged with two counts of third-degree larceny, and one count each of interfering with police and tampering with evidence.

Huntsman is accused of stealing \$3,700 from 49-year-old John Scalesse on Sept. 22, 2012. Scalesse, a former executive of JAS Masonry in Milford, was killed after his motorcycle crashed into a construction company truck on the northbound section of exit 44 on the Merritt Parkway in Fairfield.

State police said Huntsman has maintained his innocence even after he was shown a video of him taking the money that was captured on the dash camera of his own police car.

The arrest warrant affidavit states that Huntsman, who was the first trooper at the crash scene, walked over to where Scalesse lay, bent down and picked up Scalesse's gold chain from a pool of blood. Later, Huntsman told Scalesse's grieving father that he didn't see any money on the victim.

State police later found the cash held with a rubber band under the front seat of Huntsman's cruiser.

Following his arrest, Huntsman spent two weeks in a drug rehabilitation center for a claimed addiction to pain medication, court records show.

"I'm absolutely appalled he (Huntsman) is taking no responsibility for this horrendous thing he has done to John," said Scalesse's fiance who would only give her name as Lisa.

Huntsman did agree to allow the victim's chain and money to be photographed so that it could finally go back to Scalesse's family.