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NEWS
For Immediate Release:
Tuesday, September 10, 2013

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Stow Joins Direct Indictment Program
Program will increase efficiency in felony cases

AKRON, OHIO – September 10, 2013 – Summit County Prosecuting Attorney Sherri Bevan Walsh and City of Stow Law Director Brian Reali announced today that the City of Stow has joined the Summit County Prosecutor’s Office Direct Indictment Program. As part of this program, felony cases in Stow, Boston Township, Northfield Center Township, Sagamore Hills Township and Twinsburg Township will bypass the preliminary hearing in Stow Municipal Court and move directly to the Summit County Prosecutor’s Office, where they will be presented to the Grand Jury.

“By joining our Direct Indictment Program, the City of Stow has joined many other jurisdictions in streamlining the indictment process on felony cases,” said Prosecutor Walsh. “We have found that the Direct Indictment Program reduces the time between the date of arrest and arraignment in the Court of Common Pleas by approximately three weeks. This decreases the time defendants spend in the Summit County Jail, thus reducing costs for the Sheriff’s Office and the financial burden on taxpayers.”

“First and foremost, bypassing the preliminary hearing will benefit victims and witnesses of felony crimes by reducing the number of times they must testify about one of the most horrific moments of their lives,” said Reali. “Additionally, this program will save time and resources for Stow and all of the townships involved. This is another good example of how local governments, in this case the county and city, can work together to save resources.”

“I was first introduced to the Direct Indictment Program when it was introduced in the Akron Police Department,” said Stow Police Chief Louis Dirker. “I quickly became an advocate of this program due to the fact this it streamlined the criminal felony process and that it eliminated court appearances for the officers, the prosecutors and the victims of crimes. I have been involved in the process of examining the benefits of this program to the City of Stow, and I am very pleased that the City of Stow and Summit County were able to reach an agreement that is mutually beneficial.”

“I am very pleased the City, Court District and County have been able to forge a cooperative agreement to more efficiently serve our community,” said Stow Mayor Sara Drew. “Not only will this increase the efficiency of the Stow Law Department, it will reduce the exposure of crime victims to perpetrators through fewer Court appearances. I am confident our community and the Court district will see improved outcomes as a result of this partnership.”