

Shelburne man charged with murder scheduled for judicial pre-trial

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A judicial pre-trial has been scheduled to take place in September for a Shelburne man charged with first-degree murder.

Wazhir Gafoor, 32, appeared in Owen Sound court on Tuesday (July 11) alongside criminal defense lawyers Anthony Bryant and Stephanie Marcade. Bryant and Marcade have been assisting Gafoor with his Rowbotham application for state-funded counsel.

Bryant said on Tuesday that a formal application is being brought to the Superior Court of Justice. He suggested moving the matter to an accused present judicial pretrial in order to prepare for a date of a preliminary hearing.

The judicial pre-trial date was set for early September.

Justice of the Peace Stewart Taylor said the hope is that Gafoor will be able to obtain counsel by that date.

Crown prosecutors are ready to move forward with the case.

A pre-trial conference is a meeting between a judge of the Superior Court of Justice, a crown attorney, lawyers for the accused person or the person charged if they are not represented. The pre-trial conference is required under the Criminal Code and the Court's Criminal Proceedings Rules.

A pre-trial conference addresses how the trial will be conducted such as a judge and jury trial or judge alone as well as resolution discussion including the Crown's position on sentencing if the accused pleads guilty before trial and the sentencing they would ask for if convicted after a trial.

Gafoor was charged with first-degree murder in October of 2021 in connection to the death of 36-year-old Christina Yadram, a resident of North York.

Officers from the Grey Bruce OPP responded to a death near Scugog Lane of the Northern Bruce Peninsula on Oct. 10, where the body of Yadram was located in a wooded area. Gafoor was arrested and charged the following day.

Gafoor will return to court on Sept. 6.