

Michelle Hanson looking for new lawyer ahead of jury trial

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Michelle Hanson, an Amaranth mother facing charges in relation to the 2018 death of her three-year old son Kaden Young is now looking for a new lawyer.

Hanson made a virtual court appearance in Orangeville courts on Tuesday (June 8), where a new trial date was expected to be set. Instead Hanson's lawyer, Marco Forte, brought forward an application to remove himself as her counsel.

Justice Giselle Miller, asked Hanson her position on the removal, which Hanson replied, 'I don't know that there is much I can say.'

Hanson said she was not opposing Forte's request.

Forte's reasoning for the application was not addressed in the court room, although Hanson said she did not 'agree with some of the things that were written'.

Assistant Crown attorney Danielle Garbaty did not take a position on the application on Tuesday, but noted the Crown's 'real concerns' about delays.

'The Crown has been and remains ready to proceed to trial,' said Garbaty.

Justice Miller granted Forte's application to be removed.

During the appearance, Hanson indicated she had spoken with a few lawyers to take over her case and added that she expects to hear back sometime next week.

Jury trials, which have been delayed in Ontario due to the COVID-19 pandemic, are expected to be heard in Orangeville starting in September.

'In your situation with the change of venue, the regional senior justice had to make inquiries about a venue as well as the available of your counsel,' said Miller.

Hanson was remanded to make another court appearance on June 21 at 9:30 a.m.

On the early morning hours of Feb. 21, 2018, Hanson's vehicle was pulled into the Grand River following heavy flooding, which saw river water rise up onto the road. Hanson, police said, drove around a 'road closed' sign at the 10th Line of Amaranth.

Both Hanson and Kaden, who was in the vehicle with his mother, managed to escape but Kaden was pulled out of his mother's arms. Kaden's body was later recovered in Belwood Lake on April 21, two months to the day of the incident.

Hanson is being tried on charges of impaired driving causing death and criminal negligence causing death.