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WISCONSIN COURT OF APPEALS
110 EAST MAIN STREET, SUITE 215
P.O. BOX 1688
MADISON, WISCONSIN 53701-1688
Telephone (608) 266-1880
TTY: (800) 947-3529
Facsimile (608) 267-0640
Web Site: www.wicourts.gov

DISTRICT I

October 28, 2025

To:

Hon. Rebecca A. Kiefer
Circuit Court Judge
Electronic Notice

Anna Hodges
Clerk of Circuit Court
Milwaukee County Safety Building
Electronic Notice

John Blimling
Electronic Notice

Olivia Garman
Electronic Notice

Quinterrius LaDeldrick Jones 718339
Columbia Corr. Inst.
P.O. Box 900
Portage, WI 53901-0900

You are hereby notified that the Court has entered the following opinion and order:

2025AP748-CRNM State of Wisconsin v. Quinterrius LaDeldrick Jones
(L.C. # 2021CF1633)

Before White, C.J., Colón, P.J., and Donald, J.

Summary disposition orders may not be cited in any court of this state as precedent or authority, except for the limited purposes specified in WIS. STAT. RULE 809.23(3).

Quinterrius LaDeldrick Jones appeals from a judgment, entered following a trial to the court, convicting him of attempted first-degree intentional homicide (domestic abuse), first-degree reckless injury (domestic abuse), and attempted arson of a building. Jones' appellate counsel filed a no-merit report pursuant to WIS. STAT. RULE 809.32 (2023-24)[1] and ***Anders v.***

[1] All references to the Wisconsin Statutes are to the 2023-24 version.

California, 386 U.S. 738 (1967).[2] Jones received a copy of the report, was advised of his right to file a response, and has elected not to do so. We have independently reviewed the record and the no-merit report as mandated by ***Anders***. We conclude that there are no issues of arguable merit that could be pursued on appeal. We therefore summarily affirm. *See* WIS. STAT. RULE 809.21.

The charges against Jones arose from allegations that he had poured rubbing alcohol on Layla,[3] his girlfriend and the mother of his children, and then set her on fire inside their apartment. Following Jones' initial appearance, his appointed attorneys informed a court commissioner that they had reason to question Jones' competency. The court commissioner therefore ordered a competency examination. The examining psychologist subsequently concluded that Jones was not competent to proceed but was more likely than not to regain competency within the statutory timeframe. Based on the examiner's report, the circuit court determined that Jones was not competent and ordered him committed for treatment. After a period of treatment, an examiner concluded that Jones had been restored to competency. Neither Jones nor the State disputed the examiner's conclusion. The court therefore found Jones competent to proceed and scheduled a preliminary hearing, at which Jones was bound over for trial.

Jones' counsel later informed the circuit court that Jones wanted to enter pleas of not guilty by reason of mental disease or defect (NGI). The court therefore entered an order for an

[2] Attorney Marcella De Peters filed the no-merit report. Attorney Olivia Garman was later substituted as appellate counsel for Jones.

[3] Pursuant to the policy underlying WIS. STAT. RULE 809.86(4), we refer to the victim in this matter using a pseudonym.

examination under WIS. STAT. § 971.16 to determine whether there was support for Jones' NGI pleas. However, Dr. Deborah Collins, the psychologist who was appointed to evaluate Jones, subsequently wrote to the court raising concerns regarding Jones' competency. As a result, the court ordered another competency examination. The examiner found that Jones was competent to proceed, and neither Jones nor the State disputed that conclusion. The court therefore found Jones competent to proceed. Dr. Collins later submitted a report opining that there was no support for Jones' NGI pleas. Jones did not dispute that conclusion and abandoned his NGI pleas.

Thereafter, during a final pretrial hearing, Jones' counsel informed the circuit court that Jones wanted to waive his right to a jury trial and proceed with a trial to the court. The State did not object. Following a colloquy with Jones, supplemented by a signed waiver form, the court accepted Jones' waiver of his right to a jury trial.

At trial, Layla testified about Jones pouring rubbing alcohol on her while she was in the living room of their apartment and then lighting her shirt on fire, which caused her clothing to become engulfed in flames. Layla recounted that she began removing her burning clothing while making her way to the apartment's bathroom. On the way to the bathroom, Layla "begged" Jones to call 911, which Jones subsequently did. After Layla made it to the bathroom and got into the shower, Jones threw a candle into the shower and told her to tell the police that "it was the candle that lit [her] on fire."

The State also presented testimony from multiple police officers and firefighters who responded to Jones' 911 call. Those individuals testified regarding Layla's injuries, fire damage in the apartment, and burnt items of clothing that they observed in the apartment. The State also

introduced photographs of Layla's injuries, of the fire damage, and of the burnt clothing. Additionally, the State introduced evidence that five items of clothing were recovered from the apartment and submitted to the Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory for testing. An analyst determined that an ignitable liquid, isopropanol, was present on one of those items—a bra with "white burned fabric."

The circuit court also heard testimony from a physician who treated Layla for her injuries. The physician testified that Layla "sustained partial and full thickness burns" over approximately 38% percent of her body. He explained that burns covering more than 20% of the body can be life threatening without treatment because they can lead to renal failure and heart failure. The physician further testified that Layla was hospitalized for over one month as a result of her injuries and underwent three separate surgical procedures during that time.

Following a colloquy with the circuit court, Jones elected not to testify, and the defense rested without presenting any evidence. The court found Jones guilty of all three charges. The court later imposed concurrent sentences totaling 27 years of initial confinement and 15 years of extended supervision. The court initially awarded Jones 670 days of sentence credit. However, after the Department of Corrections questioned the court's sentence credit calculation, the court entered an amended judgment of conviction awarding Jones only 669 days of credit. This no-merit appeal follows.

The no-merit report first addresses the circuit court's competency determinations. We agree with appellate counsel that this issue lacks arguable merit. The court's competency determinations were based on the examining psychologists' reports. Two different examiners concluded that Jones was competent to proceed, and Jones did not dispute their conclusions. On

this record, there would be no arguable merit to a claim that the court's competency determinations were clearly erroneous. *See* ***State v. Garfoot***, 207 Wis. 2d 214, 225, 558 N.W.2d 626 (1997) (holding that the clearly erroneous standard of review applies to a circuit court's determination of whether a defendant is competent to proceed).

The no-merit report next addresses the sufficiency of the evidence to support Jones' convictions. Again, we agree with appellate counsel that this issue lacks arguable merit. A conviction will be reversed only if the evidence, "viewed most favorably to the [S]tate and the conviction, is so insufficient in probative value and force that it can be said as a matter of law that no trier of fact, acting reasonably, could have found guilt beyond a reasonable doubt." ***State v. Poellinger***, 153 Wis. 2d 493, 501, 451 N.W.2d 752 (1990). Here, the evidence at trial included Layla's testimony regarding Jones' actions; the testimony of police and firefighters regarding Layla's injuries and the fire damage observed in her apartment; photographs and physical evidence supporting Layla's version of events; and medical testimony regarding the extent of Layla's injuries. This evidence was easily sufficient for the circuit court, acting as factfinder, to find Jones guilty beyond a reasonable doubt as to each of the three charges.

Lastly, the no-merit report addresses the circuit court's exercise of sentencing discretion. As appellate counsel notes, the record reflects that the court considered appropriate sentencing factors and objectives—namely, the seriousness of the offenses, Jones' character, and the need to protect the public—and provided a reasoned explanation for the sentences imposed. *See* ***State v. Gallion***, 2004 WI 42, ¶¶39-46, 270 Wis. 2d 535, 678 N.W.2d 197; ***State v. Ziegler***, 2006 WI App 49, ¶23, 289 Wis. 2d 594, 712 N.W.2d 76. Moreover, Jones' concurrent sentences totaling 27 years of initial confinement and 15 years of extended supervision are not "so excessive and unusual and so disproportionate to the offense[s] committed as to shock public sentiment and

violate the judgment of reasonable people concerning what is right and proper under the circumstances." *See* ***Ocanas v. State***, 70 Wis. 2d 179, 185, 233 N.W.2d 457 (1975). We therefore agree with appellate counsel that any challenge to Jones' sentences would lack arguable merit.

Although not specifically addressed in the no-merit report, this court has also considered whether there are any issues of arguable merit regarding Jones' abandonment of his NGI pleas; Jones' waiver of his right to a jury trial; his waiver of his right to testify; the circuit court's rulings on objections at trial; the court's amendment of Jones' judgment of conviction to award him one less day of sentence credit; and the effectiveness of Jones' trial attorneys. Having independently reviewed the record, we conclude that none of these potential issues has arguable merit.

First, the record shows that Jones withdrew his NGI pleas, through counsel, after an examiner concluded they were unsupported. *See* ***State v. Francis***, 2005 WI App 161, ¶¶23-24, 285 Wis. 2d 451, 701 N.W.2d 632 (holding that "defendants can withdraw their NGI pleas through counsel rather than personally" and that "[i]n accepting counsel's withdrawal of an NGI plea, the circuit court need not personally address the defendant to ascertain his or her assent"). Second and third, Jones personally waived both his right to a jury trial and his right to testify following appropriate colloquies with the circuit court. *See* ***State v. Anderson***, 2002 WI 7, ¶24, 249 Wis. 2d 586, 638 N.W.2d 301 (right to a jury trial); ***State v. Weed***, 2003 WI 85, ¶43, 263 Wis. 2d 434, 666 N.W.2d 485 (right to testify). Fourth, the record shows that the court appropriately exercised its discretion when ruling on the parties' objections at trial. Fifth, the court properly amended Jones' judgment of conviction to award him one less day of sentence credit because Jones was not entitled to credit for the date of his sentencing. *See* ***State v.***

Kontny, 2020 WI App 30, ¶12, 392 Wis. 2d 311, 943 N.W.2d 923. Sixth, the record reveals no arguable basis to challenge the effectiveness of Jones' trial attorneys.

Our independent review of the record discloses no other potential issues for appeal.

Therefore,

IT IS ORDERED that the judgment of conviction is summarily affirmed. *See* WIS. STAT. RULE 809.21.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Attorney Olivia Garman is relieved of further representation of Quinterrius LaDeldrick Jones in this matter. *See* WIS. STAT. RULE 809.32(3).

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this summary disposition order will not be published.

Samuel A. Christensen
Clerk of Court of Appeals