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Review of text messages in stripper case could open up more probes, expert says

Mark Hicks / The Detroit News

A federal review of a trove of text messages from Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick and other city officials in a lawsuit resulting from the death of stripper Tamara Greene could potentially launch more investigations if any wrongdoing is uncovered, one law expert said.

On Friday, U.S. District Judge Gerald E. Rosen said federal magistrates will review more text messages and other requested evidence. Those materials are expected to be turned over to attorneys representing the son of Greene, 27, who was shot to death in 2003.

Rosen also is expected to order the city to produce a list of everyone who had a SkyTel pager during the time period in which attorney Norman Yatooma requested messages -- Aug. 1, 2002, to Oct. 31, 2007. Rosen ordered the city and SkyTel to preserve all text messages sent and received on the SkyTel pagers of Kilpatrick and 33 other current or former city officials.

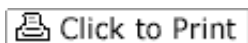
Greene's name has been linked to a long rumored party at the mayor's Manoogian Mansion in the fall of 2002. At least two former Detroit police officers who filed the whistle-blower lawsuits against the city claimed their investigation into the alleged party and/or Greene's murder were among the reasons for retaliation against them.

"With the large volume of text messages that are going to be examined by the magistrates," said Larry Dubin, a professor at the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law, "it is possible that if they came across information that involved the possible existence of other crimes having occurred, that information could be made known to federal authorities."

Dubin said additional investigations could possibly be launched based on review of other messages. "An examination of further text messages may provide evidence of whether or not additional crimes might have occurred," Dubin said.

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