

Unlicensed driver sentenced for distribution, DUI

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La Plata, MD - A Fort Washington man was sentenced to 120 days in jail after he pled guilty to possession of marijuana with intent to distribute Thursday, April 29 before Judge Steven G. Chappelle.

Tommy Delonte Bell pled guilty to three charges of distribution, driving while under the influence of alcohol and driving without a license.

As part of the agreement, Bell will forfeit \$716 in cash seized at the time of his arrest, Nov. 16, 2014.

According to Charles County Assistant State's Attorney Katrine H. Bakhtiary, a Maryland state trooper was called to the intersection of southbound Route 301 Nov. 16 at 1 a.m. to investigate the report of a disabled vehicle in the roadway.

When the officer arrived on the scene, he discovered a white Mazda sitting in the intersection with a subject identified as Bell passed out behind the wheel, the car in drive and his foot on the brake.

The officer observed a clear plastic cup with what appeared to be beer in it and a discarded Milwaukee's Best beer can on the floorboard.

Bakhtiary said the officer knocked on the window of the vehicle and when the defendant rolled down the window, he detected a strong odor of alcohol and the man's eyes appeared glassy and he had slurred speech. The officer said he also smelled a strong odor of raw marijuana.

"The trooper asked the man for his driver's license and he told the officer he didn't have his license with him," Bakhtiary noted.

When the officer asked him to step out of his vehicle, the man had trouble getting out of his seat belt, she said.

Based on his observations and the sobriety tests administered by the officer, Bakhtiary stated, the officer placed the defendant under arrest.

She said the officer found a white plastic bag behind the passenger seat in the car containing three bags various amounts of marijuana. The officer also found three cell phones in the defendants' car and two more on his person.

According to the Motor Vehicles Administration, Bell had only an identification card and no license. She added that \$716 in currency was found in Bell's possession.

Chappelle sentenced Bell to five years on the distribution charge, with all but 120 days suspended. He gave the defendant two days credit for time already served. He added another year for the driving under the influence charge—suspended in its entirety—and another 60 days for the driving without a license charge, also suspended.

He said Bell would be on five years of supervised probation upon his release and was ordered to complete the Prince George's County Drug Court program as part of his sentence.

When asked if he had anything to say, Bell responded, "I just want to get this over with so I can get back to being with my daughter."

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