

# R. Paul Frasier

## District Attorney for Coos County



### Office of the District Attorney

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November 17, 2022

### PRESS RELEASE

On Monday, November 14, 2022, the Coos County 911 Center received a 911 phone call from a person identified as Hayley Reanne Steele, who reported that an infant she was caring for was not breathing normally and that the child's eyes "were not responding in a normal manner." Coos County Sheriff Deputies and medical personnel from both Coquille and Myrtle Point responded to the residence which is located in an unincorporated part of the county off of Fairview Road.

Upon arrival law enforcement and medical personnel found a 10-month-old infant identified as Owen Nichols in critical condition requiring CPR. The child was immediately transported to Coquille Valley Hospital. At Coquille Valley Hospital the child was found to have a skull fracture and bleeding within the brain. He was then flown to Emmanuel Hospital in Portland.

Owen Nichols' condition continued to deteriorate. Medical personnel at the hospital determined that the injuries Owen had were not the result of an accident or natural causes but rather were the result of abusive head trauma.

Despite all the efforts of the medical professionals, Owen Nichols died last night (November 16, 2022) at 9:00 PM.

Due to the suspicious nature of the injuries discovered on Monday, the Coos County Sheriff's Office and the Oregon State Police immediately initiated an investigation. The investigation included a search of the residence where this occurred and the interviewing of multiple witnesses.

This morning (November 17, 2022), the Sheriff's Office arrested Myrtle Point resident Hayley Reanne Steele, age 27, on charges of Manslaughter in the First Degree, Assault in the First Degree and Criminal Mistreatment in the First Degree. She was transported to and lodged at the Coos County Jail. Ms. Steele had been hired by Owen's parents to provide day care for Owen in the home where Owen lived.

I anticipate that I will be filing with the court today a district attorney's information charging Ms. Steele with the above listed charges. I believe her first court appearance will be Friday, November 18, 2022.

Any person who has information about this matter is asked to contact the Coos County Sheriff's Office.



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