

How Jupiter detectives gathered evidence in prostitution sting

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BY: MERRIS BADCOCK

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JUPITER, Fla. - Police say 25 men, including New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft, walked into a massage parlor off U.S. 1 and paid for sex.

Now, they are facing charges for soliciting prostitution.

However, depending on how police and the State Attorney's Office handle it from here, it could mean none of the 'Johns' end up with mug shots.

Contact 5 learned if the men may not be booked into the Palm Beach County jail. No booking means no mug shot.

"These are misdemeanor crimes," Detective Andrew Sharp told reporters on Friday. If you live and reside in Palm Beach County you will receive a notice in the mail saying you have a summons to appear in court.

"If you are outside of Palm Beach County, if you are out of state, then you will have a warrant for your arrest here in Florida."

Officials at the State Attorney's Office and in law enforcement agencies across our area confirmed even an arrest warrant does not guarantee a booking photo in Palm Beach County if there is a misdemeanor charge on the table.

In Palm Beach County, officials tell us this is standard practice for crimes like this. However, we saw a different approach than other agencies along the Treasure Coast.

Martin county arrested their 'Johns' and booked them, posting each mug shot online.

Indian River County agencies posted photos of their 'Johns' even before they were arrested. The reason? To hold the end users of these sex trafficking rings accountable.

While New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft will have an arrest warrant issued, based on how the system works, he could get off without having to take a mug shot.

It's still unclear just exactly how detectives were able to get hidden cameras inside Orchids of Asia Day Spa, but as a result, they say all sex acts were caught on camera.

The investigation started with a tip from a Martin County Sheriff's Office investigator, back in October 2018. According to deputies, managers at Orchids of Asia Day Spa were trafficking women, forcing them to perform sex acts on anyone who walked through the front door.

"They were sleeping in the massage parlor, on the massage tables," Sheriff William Snyder said later, at a press conference.

The tip prompted an investigation by Jupiter police.

In November, arrest paperwork shows Jupiter detectives started watching the business from the parking lot. They "observed only males", a total of 97 men in six days.

Then, a trash pull led detectives to a spreadsheet of financial records.

By January, detectives had eyes on the inside, according to the same paperwork. Secret surveillance cameras planted by detectives captured exactly what was going on inside the massage parlor.

"We are as equally stunned as everybody else," Jupiter Police Chief Daniel Kerr told reporters on Friday.

According to detectives, one of the men caught on camera was New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft.

“Does the video contain Mr. Kraft inside receiving the alleged acts? The answer to that is yes,” said Detective Andrew Sharp, the lead investigator on the case.

Detectives say Kraft is listed in arrest paperwork as one of the “johns”, but it’s not clear which one he is. Contact 5 reached out to a Jupiter Police Dept. spokesperson, and are awaiting a response.

Kraft’s team released a statement denying his involvement.

Those same reports also show detectives put a tracking device on the car of the woman running the business, Hua Zhang, which helped lead to her arrest on Wednesday.

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