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**DEFENDANT IN FATAL CARVER BIRTHDAY PARTY SHOOTING
ARRAIGNED**

WAREHAM – The defendant in a fatal, Saturday shooting of two people at a Carver social club was arraigned today in Wareham District Court on murder and several firearm-related charges, Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz and Carver Police Chief Marc Duphily have announced.

Nicholas Meuse, 23, is facing 12 criminal charges related to the shooting including two counts each of Murder, Attempted Murder, and Armed Assault to Murder. Following today's arraignment, Meuse was held without bail pending a probable cause hearing scheduled for 9 a.m. on February 25.

On January 24 at about 7:21 pm, the Carver Police Department received reports that multiple people had been shot at 53 Silva Street, the Saint John the Baptist Club, where a child's birthday party was being held. Law enforcement personnel found four victims, two of which were pronounced dead. One victim was identified as Benjamin Cowart, 27, who was pronounced dead at the scene. Jalen Pina, 20, was taken to Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital in Plymouth where he succumbed to his injuries. A third, 28-year-old male victim was transported to Tufts Medical Center with non-life-threatening injuries. Another 32-year-old male victim was taken to South Shore Hospital for treatment.

Meuse was apprehended in the woods near where the shooting took place shortly after the incident and transported to the Carver Police Department. It was determined the defendant called 9-1-1 following the incident and told dispatchers he was the shooter. During interviews with law enforcement Meuse stated he had been invited to the party by a relative but had pre-existing conflicts with some of the attendees. Once he arrived, Meuse said tensions flared up and ultimately led to the shooting. While Meuse claimed to have seen one of the attendees reach for their waistband immediately before the incident, investigators only found a single gun — a 9-millimeter firearm with an obliterated serial number — at the scene.