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Another civil lawsuit stemming from an in-custody death at LaSalle-run lockup in Texarkana has settled

TEXARKANA, Texas -- Another civil lawsuit stemming from an inmate death in the Bowie County jail has settled. Texarkana lawyer David Carter filed suit in January on behalf of the daughter and estate of Franklin Brooks Greathouse in the Texarkana Division of the Eastern District of Texas against LaSalle Corrections, the City of Texarkana, Texas, Bowie County and individual LaSalle employees. The suit settled this month with the terms of the agreement to remain confidential, Carter said. "We were able to resolve this case to everyone's satisfaction with some help from the court," Carter said, referring to mediation which resulted in the settlement. LaSalle, a private jail management company, opted to pull out of Bowie County in February. The Bowie County Sheriff's Office is now managing the jail. Greathouse, 59, was arrested and booked into the Bowie County jail at around 10 p.m. March 10, 2019, on a warrant for forgery issued in Miller County, Arkansas. The following morning, Greathouse complained to jail staff that he suffered a seizure. A LaSalle-employed licensed vocational nurse allegedly spoke with Greathouse as he sat on the floor in a dayroom in the jail at about 11 a.m. the next day, but did not take his vital signs or complete any medical assessment. According to a custodial death report prepared by the Bowie County Sheriff's Office and submitted to the Texas Attorney General, jail staff may not have believed Greathouse was ill. "Greathouse was responsive and able to walk to his own cell within F-Pod; dispelling his claim of seizure," the report states. At around 7 p.m. that night, Greathouse was found unresponsive on the floor of his cell by another inmate. Lifesaving measures were unsuccessful. The suit alleges that correctional officers not only failed to conduct routine, state-mandated, cell checks on Greathouse but falsified records to show they had. Falsification of jail records is a felony under Texas state law though no LaSalle staff member has been charged with the offense. The Texas Commission on Jail Standards conducted an inspection following Greathouse's death that involved reviewing video footage to determine if staff conducted the face to face observations required by state law every 60 minutes. "It was determined that jail staff falsified their observation logs to reveal 8, 60-minute face to face observations that did not in fact occur," the complaint states. "LaSalle staff had done the same in the hours leading to the deaths of Michael Sabbie and Morgan Angerbauer." Sabbie, 35, who had been complaining of breathing problems, was thrown to the floor and pepper sprayed as five jailers piled on top of him in summer of 2015. In a video of the events preceding Sabbie's death hours later, Sabbie repeatedly exclaims, "I can't breathe, I can't breathe." Sabbie died in his cell the same night. The following year, 20-year-old Morgan Angerbauer died in a medical observation cell. She died of diabetic ketoacidosis after being denied medical treatment for hours. A LaSalle nurse pleaded guilty to misdemeanor negligent homicide in the death. A lawsuit involving a woman who died of meningitis less than a week after an ambulance took her from the Bi-State jail to a local hospital remains pending in federal court. Holly Barlow-Austin complained for months of a constant headache, a lump in her neck, dizziness, blurry vision, blindness and numbness in her legs, according to the complaint filed on behalf of her estate, her mother and her husband. Video surveillance obtained by the Gazette in Barlow-Austin's case shows she was unable to see food or water left in her medical observation cell. The case is scheduled for jury selection in January 2023 before U.S. District Judge Robert Schroeder III in Texarkana's downtown federal building.