Grant Smith Ellis Court Log

USA v. Matthew Farwell — October 23, 2026

Day 10 · Witness Testimony Summary

About this summary: A condensed reading aid drawn from the Day 10 court-day reconstruction, designed to preserve the principal testimony, material qualifications, and distinctions between direct and cross-examination. It is not an official transcript; the full reconstruction remains the more complete record.

Reporting source: Grant Smith Ellis (@GrantSmithEllis)

Lindsey Crean

Friend of Sandra Birchmore

Testimony focus

Direct	Friendship with Sandra; Sandra's disclosures about Matthew Farwell and the Police Explorers program; reported sexual relationship; encounters involving Farwell; pregnancy, paternity, Farwell's reported reaction, and Sandra's plans for motherhood.
Cross	Timing and basis of Crean's knowledge; distinctions involving Matthew and William Farwell; Sandra's prior self-harm and mental-health history; other relationships and life stressors; limits of Crean's personal observation.
Redirect / recross	Clarification of whom Sandra identified as the person involved in encounters Crean had described; May 2020 messages concerning the welfare check; Sandra's housing transition and later plans. Brief recross followed.

Friendship, Explorers, and disclosures about Farwell

Crean testified that she knew Sandra from school and became close with her in high school. Sandra discussed the Stoughton Police Explorers program and an instructor she initially referred to as Officer Farwell and later as Matt. During high school, Crean understood the relationship as tutoring; she testified that Sandra did not then tell her it was sexual.

> *"She told me he was tutoring her in history. She did not tell me about anything sexual at that time."*
>
> *— Crean testimony as reported by Ellis, 9:08:36 AM*

Crean testified that Sandra disclosed the sexual relationship after they were in college. According to Crean, Sandra said it had been sexual since she was 15, that she and Farwell had sex in his truck while he was on duty, and that he had a fixation with choking during sex. Crean testified that Sandra described the later rough sex she discussed with Crean as consensual.

Crean also described an occasion, while she and Sandra were preparing to go to an all-night gym, when Sandra said she was going to meet Matt. Crean testified that she saw a black pickup truck and identified the driver as Matthew Farwell based on photographs Sandra had shown her. Sandra returned a little over an hour later and described having sex with him.

Loss, self-harm, and recovery

Crean described Sandra as extremely distressed after the deaths of her mother and grandmother in 2016. She testified that Sandra told her during that period that she had been cutting her arms. Crean said Sandra did not tell her about cutting before or after that period, and testified that Sandra later began seeing a therapist.

This history remained part of the testimony rather than being displaced by Crean's later descriptions of Sandra as happy or future-oriented.

Pregnancy and Farwell's reported reaction

Messages shown during Crean's testimony documented Sandra discussing motherhood well before the pregnancy. A January 2020 exchange included Sandra saying that she and Matt were trying for a baby and that she had stopped birth control. Other messages reflected Sandra discussing having a child with him and her expectation that the relationship had continued despite his marriage.

Crean testified that Sandra called her in December 2020 and said she was pregnant. Crean described Sandra as ecstatic and testified that Sandra identified Matthew Farwell as the father.

> *"Who did Ms. Birchmore tell you was the father of her child? — Mathew Farwell."*
> *— Ellis reporting, 9:34:02 AM*

Crean testified that Sandra said Farwell became angry after the pregnancy. According to Crean, Sandra offered that he did not have to be listed on the birth certificate or attend the birth, but asked whether he could stop by on holidays. Crean testified that Sandra reported Farwell responding that she was asking too much and expressing concern that his wife and children would learn about the pregnancy.

Messages introduced through Crean also reflected Sandra discussing the possibility of using the courts if necessary and describing Farwell as regretting both the pregnancy and his friendship with her.

> *"Not really sure what he thought would happen fucking me unprotected."*
> *— Sandra Birchmore message reported by Ellis, 9:40:01 AM*

Plans for motherhood

Crean testified that Sandra remained excited about becoming a mother despite the conflict she described with Farwell. Sandra discussed raising the child as a single mother, asked Crean to help plan a Disney-themed baby shower, and discussed obtaining baby supplies.

> *"She had umm confidence that she can do this like she was still very very excited about becoming a mother."*
> *— Crean testimony as reported by Ellis, 9:42:17 AM*

Cross-examination and clarification

The defense emphasized that Sandra did not tell Crean about a sexual relationship with Farwell while the two were in high school; Crean testified that disclosure came when they were adults. Cross also tested whether Crean's account of a pickup-truck encounter could have involved William Farwell. Crean maintained that the truck she remembered was black. On redirect, when asked who Sandra had identified as the person involved in the encounter from the Park Street address, Crean answered Matthew Farwell.

Cross explored other aspects of Sandra's history and relationships, including the 2016 period of grief and self-harm, antidepressant use, financial issues, other men in Sandra's life, and what Crean did and did not

personally see. Crean acknowledged that many of the matters concerning Farwell came from what Sandra told her rather than events Crean witnessed herself.

The May 2020 welfare-check episode was also developed through messages. On redirect, a message attributed to Sandra said her aunt had told police Sandra was going to kill herself, while Sandra wrote that she had only been worried about her wallet and money and that police told the aunt she was fine. Additional messages described Sandra's plan to leave her aunt's home; Crean testified that Sandra later stayed in a hotel and then moved into her own apartment, where Crean said Sandra was very happy and felt things were looking up.

Brief recross established that Crean had no additional information from Sandra about the May 2020 incident and confirmed that Sandra was applying to Massasoit in February 2021.

Diala Alkhalil, LMHC

Sandra Birchmore's longtime mental-health counselor

Testimony focus

Direct	Treatment history and diagnoses; suicide-risk assessment; Sandra's disclosures about a police officer named Matt; pregnancy and future planning; conflict concerning the pregnancy; Zoloft treatment and monitoring; January 31, 2021 presentation; contact with State Police after Sandra's death.
Cross	Day 10 cross began shortly before the jury was released and focused on SSRI-related symptom changes, self-harm risk, depressive symptoms, and Sandra's reports of visits from her deceased mother. Cross-examination was not completed on Day 10 and continued on Day 11.

Treatment history and mental-health assessment

Alkhalil testified that she first treated Sandra as a child, from approximately 2007 to 2011, and resumed treating her in 2016 after Sandra reached out following the deaths of her mother and grandmother. She continued treating Sandra through January 31, 2021.

Alkhalil recalled childhood treatment focusing primarily on ADHD. After treatment resumed in 2016, she described grief, panic attacks, crying, sleep difficulty, and periods of depressed mood. She testified that Sandra's diagnoses over time included ADHD, anxiety disorder, panic disorder, and adjustment disorder with anxiety and depressed mood. Alkhalil said there was a period around 2016 or 2017 when Sandra would have met criteria for a major depressive episode, but that she often did not see the required cluster of symptoms persist for two weeks.

Alkhalil described assessing mood, affect, weekly symptoms, intrusive thoughts, and thoughts of self-harm during treatment. She testified that Sandra did not show or report suicidal ideation during their sessions.

> *"Did Sandra ever show signs of suicidal ideation in your sessions? — No. Did she indicate suicidal thoughts at any time? — No."*
>
> *— Alkhalil testimony as reported by Ellis*

Her testimony also addressed earlier self-harm history and distinguished risk factors or nonsuicidal self-harm from current suicidal ideation. Those distinctions were part of her clinical testimony rather than a claim that Sandra had no mental-health history.

Relationship disclosures concerning “Matt”

Alkhalil testified that Sandra told her she was seeing someone named Matt, whom Sandra described as a police officer with two children. Alkhalil initially did not know his last name or the full circumstances of the relationship. Sandra later disclosed that he was married.

Based on Sandra’s descriptions, Alkhalil said Sandra called Matt her boyfriend, but Alkhalil perceived the relationship differently.

> *“From my impressions, she called him her boyfriend, but it seemed very transactional.”*
>
> *— Alkhalil testimony as reported by Ellis*

Alkhalil testified that Sandra described brief late-night sexual visits as well as other contact. Sandra also told her that Matt had taken her virginity. These portions of Alkhalil’s testimony concerned Sandra’s disclosures in therapy; Alkhalil did not testify as a personal witness to the underlying events.

Pregnancy, future planning, and conflict

Alkhalil described Sandra as highly excited about the pregnancy and engaged in future planning. Sandra discussed a baby shower, books and toys, teaching the child Spanish, and practical plans for supporting herself as a single mother. Alkhalil testified that Sandra had identified resources such as housing and childcare assistance and considered the pregnancy a protective factor because of Sandra’s excitement and planning.

At the same time, Alkhalil testified that Sandra experienced anxiety about the pregnancy, grief that her mother and grandmother would not be present, fear of miscarriage, and increasing conflict with Matt. According to Alkhalil, Sandra consistently identified Matt as the father and did not identify another person to her.

> *“She reported Matt stating it wasn't me, I won't have anything to do with this baby...there was an increase in fighting with Matt, especially after pregnancy.”*
>
> *— Alkhalil testimony as reported by Ellis, 12:22:42 PM*

Alkhalil testified that Sandra reported an argument with Matt in January 2021 over the birth certificate and his involvement with the child. Sandra told Alkhalil that he pushed her. Alkhalil also testified that Sandra later reported that Matt asked for a key to the apartment; Sandra had previously told her he did not have one. Again, these were presented as Sandra’s reports to her therapist, not events Alkhalil personally observed.

Zoloft and the January 31 session

Alkhalil testified that Sandra had historically resisted psychiatric medication but began taking Zoloft during the pregnancy after it was prescribed by her medical provider. She said Sandra was willing to try medication in 2021 to protect the pregnancy and baby.

Alkhalil acknowledged that SSRIs can increase symptoms and carry a risk of self-harm ideation. She testified that she discussed side effects and warning signs with Sandra. Sandra initially reported jitteriness at 50 mg, reduced the dose to 25 mg, and later increased it. Alkhalil testified that by January 31 Sandra reported doing well on Zoloft and no longer reported side effects.

> *“She presented as her bubbly, vibrant self. She talked about the baby, plans. She asked about if an epidural is painful.”*
>
> *— Alkhalil testimony as reported by Ellis, 12:36:33 PM*

During that January 31 session, Sandra also reported fear that something might happen to her or the pregnancy while she was alone in the apartment. Alkhalil testified that Sandra described visits from her deceased mother and, on one occasion, perceived her mother carrying the baby. Alkhalil understood Sandra as fearing that this signaled something bad might happen to the pregnancy. When asked on direct whether Sandra hallucinated or saw or heard things that were not there, Alkhalil answered no.

Missed appointment, death, and State Police contact

Sandra's next appointment was scheduled for February 4. Alkhalil testified that Sandra did not appear and that missing the appointment was highly unusual. She learned later that day that Sandra had died.

Asked why she was surprised when she later learned that some people had concluded Sandra's death was a suicide, Alkhalil testified:

> *"I had just seen her on the 31st of Jan of 2021 and there was no indication of suicidal ideation. She had no plans to do so. She seemed to be doing okay, actually."*
>
> *— Alkhalil testimony as reported by Ellis, 12:47:55 PM*

Alkhalil testified that after Sandra's death she contacted the Massachusetts State Police; the State Police did not first contact her. She said she wanted to share information. When the government asked whether that included information about Matt, the defense objected and the objection was sustained. The Day 10 testimony therefore supports that Alkhalil affirmatively contacted State Police and wanted to provide information, but the sustained objection limits what can be said from this exchange about the specific information she intended to provide.

Cross-examination begun on Day 10

Cross-examination began shortly before the 1:00 PM release and was not completed. The defense asked about "activation syndrome" and symptom changes after starting an SSRI. Alkhalil initially said she did not know the term, but agreed more generally that starting medication can produce an uptick or change in symptoms. She identified poor sleep, agitation, increased symptoms, and increased self-harm ideation as matters to watch for, while saying she did not know the exact statistic concerning risk in young adults.

The defense also examined the distinction between depressed mood and a major depressive episode. Alkhalil testified that a progress note could record depressed mood without meaning Sandra was depressed throughout the week and said Sandra had depressive symptoms at points but did not meet criteria for a major depressive episode at the end of her life.

Finally, cross returned to Sandra's reports of visits from her deceased mother. Alkhalil testified that Sandra was awake during the experience discussed in the final session, that Sandra believed her mother's spirit was visiting her, and that Alkhalil did not endorse the belief but treated it respectfully. She continued to distinguish Sandra's description from a hallucination. The court released the jury during this line of questioning; Alkhalil's cross-examination continued on Day 11.

Editorial note

This testimony summary is a condensed reading aid derived from the full Day 10 court-day reconstruction of Grant Smith Ellis's contemporaneous courtroom reporting. It is intended to reduce repetition and routine procedure while retaining the principal testimony, material qualifications, uncertainty, and the distinction between what a witness personally observed, what a witness recalled or was told, what documents or messages were presented, and what was developed on direct or cross-examination.

Governing rule: Summarization may compress repetition and procedure; it may not compress uncertainty or evidentiary posture.

Selection is necessarily editorial. Inclusion in this summary reflects what is useful for understanding the substance and structure of the testimony; it is not an assessment of evidentiary weight, credibility, or which side a point favors. Quotations are used selectively where the reported wording materially improves fidelity or comprehension.

This document is not an official transcript and should not be treated as a substitute for the complete Day 10 reconstruction. Where the summary and the complete reconstruction differ in level of detail, the complete reconstruction should be consulted. Day 10 ended while Diala Alkhalil's cross-examination was still underway; her testimony continued on Day 11.

Source: Grant Smith Ellis's contemporaneous October 23, 2026 courtroom reporting, as preserved in the archive's Day 10 reconstruction.