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## Inmate Awarded \$16M Over Videotaped Beating

2 Ex-Jefferson County Jailers Must Pay

POSTED: Thursday, January 13, 2011

**BEAUMONT, Texas** -- A former Jefferson County Correctional Facility inmate has been awarded \$16 million over his 2007 videotaped beating while being booked into jail.

The civil jury decision in the excessive force lawsuit was returned Wednesday in Beaumont for 24-year-old Joseph Christopher Roberts of Port Arthur.

Roberts testified he was stopped for making an illegal turn and was arrested for unpaid traffic tickets.

Jurors on Wednesday ordered Rodney George Cole II and Johnny Lynn Vickery Jr. to each pay \$8 million in damages over the April 2007 beating while Roberts was being processed. Both now-former guards claimed it was self defense.

The pair resigned after being convicted in 2008 of misdemeanor official oppression. Vickery was fined \$4,000 fine. Cole was sentenced to a year of probation and fined \$4,000.

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