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Private investigator provides testimony

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Herald Staff Writer

Bradenton private investigator Chuck Chambers and one of his staff members met Tuesday in Sarasota with prosecutor Charles Roberts and two detectives investigating the murder of Sheila Bellush.

Chambers gave three hours of sworn testimony in what he described as "intense interviews" about information he was asked to gather about Bellush days before she was killed Nov. 7 in the presence of her quadruplets.

A judge recently gave authorities permission to interview Chambers about the person who hired him to find Bellush. Chambers said he can't talk about that publicly without permission from his client, whose identity likely will remain confidential until authorities choose to reveal it.

Chambers said investigators also want to talk to two other employees in his office in connection with his client, who he said is from Texas. Three Texas men have been charged in connection with her murder.

Roberts was not immediately available for comment Wednesday.

Mystery client focus of Sarasota court hearing

EYDIE CUBARRUBIA

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A mystery client who hired a private investigator to investigate Sheila Bellush before she was murdered will be represented by an attorney during a Wednesday court hearing.

A judge ruled Monday that Bradenton lawyer Mark Lipinski can represent the client in the hearing that will determine whether information, gathered by Bradenton private investigator Chuck Chambers, should be released to prosecu-



Bellush

tor. A judge turned down Lipinski's request Monday to review the information before Wednesday's hearing.

Under Florida law the information turned over by Chambers is protected under client confidentiality. Prosecutors say their right to investigate the murder outweighs

the state's client confidentiality laws. Chambers had been hired days before the Nov. 7 murder of Bellush, whose toddler quadruplets were found crawling around in her blood at their Sarasota home.

Authorities have arrested three Texans — Jose Luis Del Toro, accused of killing Bellush, and Samuel Gonzales and Daniel Rocha, accused of conspiring with Del Toro.

Larry Byrd, Chambers' attorney, said he and his client were satisfied with the ruling.

"We handed it over to authorities. . . . As long as they didn't give it (the

file) back to us, since Chambers doesn't want it back, that was fine," Byrd said.

Lipinski wanted to see the original file to make sure it matched the copy he had previously reviewed. He said the judge's decision did not bother him. "It's not a setback at all," Lipinski said.

Lipinski added he would be at Wednesday's hearing in Sarasota, representing his client, whom he is not naming to protect his identity.

When asked if his client would be at the hearing as well, Lipinski said: "I'm not at liberty to say."