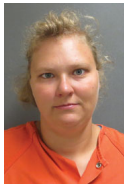


By LARRY PHILLIPS

• Leader & Times

A Liberal woman accused of alleged sexual misconduct with a child under 14 had a scheduling hearing in Seward County District Court Monday. Despite no officials attending the hearing, after one hour of behind-door meetings, a family member of Nichole Volden, 31, confirmed Volden's defense attorney, Russell Hasenbank, reported Volden's preliminary hearing was set for 1:30 p.m. Oct. 31.



That time and date is 15 minutes after the arraignment date set for her partner, Billy Brown, who faces 11 similar counts in two separate cases, one of which Volden, aka Nichole Brown, is also allegedly involved with.

A local attorney who has practiced in Liberal for 40 years said it's often common for two or more defendants to have their prelims scheduled at the same time if they are allegedly involved with the same crime.

Volden is charged with four counts of sexual exploitation of a child under 14, three counts of

aggravated endangerment of a child and two counts of lewd and lascivious behavior.

Brown, who reportedly lived with Volden, is charged with five counts of aggravated indecent liberties with a child, one indecent solicitation of a child, one count of aggravated criminal sodomy, one count of lewd and lascivious behavior, one count of sexual exploitation of a child under 14 and two counts of aggravated intimidation of a victim or witness.

His arraignment is scheduled at 1:15 p.m. Oct. 31 in Seward County District Court.