



Posted on Sat, Jun. 06, 2009

Smithton officer not charged for alleged affair with 16-year-old Investigated by State Police for alleged relationship

BY BETH HUNSDORFER
News-Democrat

A Smithton officer investigated by Illinois State Police for allegedly engaging in a sexual relationship with a 16-year-old girl did not face criminal charges because the victim's father agreed to let the city discipline him, but that never happened.

The city did not discipline the officer because he wasn't charged.

The investigation report was recently released by the Illinois State Police to the Belleville News-Democrat under the Freedom of Information Act. The request was initially denied, but an appeal was later approved by ISP Director Jonathan Monken, a 29-year-old former Army captain and Iraq war veteran who took over the State Police in March.

Requests for these and other investigation reports were routinely denied under former director Larry Trent.

The investigation into the Smithton officer began in June 2007. The officer was placed on paid administrative leave while detectives conducted the investigation.

"We decided to wait until the investigation was completed, to wait for the outcome," said Carmen Durso, village attorney.

Illinois State Police Public Integrity Unit investigation revealed the 16-year-old's father would not allow her to be interviewed by investigators and did not want to press charges. During the interview, the girl's father told investigators that he believes what took place between his daughter and (the officer) is a private family matter, and that his daughter was a willing participant.

The father also told investigators that if the criminal investigation was stopped, he would call the Smithton police chief and make an appointment to file an administrative complaint.

Two months earlier, Investigators Jo Kasheimer and Kenneth Mahan interviewed the officer, who signed the Miranda form, then asked for his lawyer.

The interview lasted 25 minutes.

Smithton Police Chief Brian Vielweber also did not return calls for comment.

"The Illinois State Police were asked to conduct an investigation, but declined to issue charges," Durso said. "As far as we were concerned, that was the end of the issue."

The officer, who has a relative who is a village trustee, continues to work for the Smithton Police Department, Durso said. Contact reporter Beth Hunsdorfer at 239-2570 or at bhunsdorfer@bnd.com.

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