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San Diego News

Video Shows Officer Admitting To Soliciting Sexual Favors

Officer Allegedly Propositioned Women

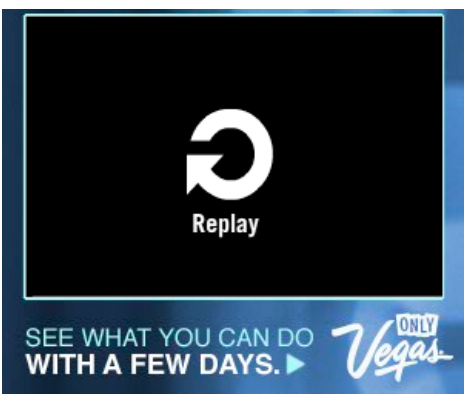
POSTED: 9:30 am PDT September 18, 2006
 UPDATED: 8:57 pm PDT September 18, 2006



EL CAJON, Calif. -- A woman who accused an El Cajon police officer of soliciting sexual favors testified Monday that he ordered her to strip and perform a sex act in the back seat of his patrol car in a dark parking lot.

The woman, an admitted methamphetamine user with two drug convictions, testified in the first day of a preliminary hearing for William Robert Taylor.

The three-year police veteran faces about 19 years in state prison if convicted of seven counts of soliciting bribes, three counts each of rape by a foreign object and sexual battery, and one count each of petty theft and attempting to dissuade a witness.



propositioned some of the women he detained by repeatedly asking them what they would do to avoid jail time.

Sgt. James Ferguson testified that he and a partner began investigating Taylor last October for allegedly forcing a petty theft suspect to disrobe and masturbate in the back of his patrol car while he stood outside and watched.

That woman testified that she was detained by security personnel for trying to sneak a sweater out of the El Cajon Target store around 8 p.m. on Sept. 12, 2005.

Since it was still undecided whether to book her for suspicion of petty theft or a far more serious burglary charge, she told Taylor several times at the police station that she didn't want to go to jail, she testified.

She was "crying or close to it," because she'd promised her son that she was "trying to clean up her act," she said.

Taylor, 27, led the woman out of the station and into a patrol car, then drove to the parking lot of an industrial building on Coogan Way.

"At that point he said, 'What can you do to convince me to not take you to jail, to not charge you with burglary?'" the woman testified.

She said she offered to wash his car or clean his house, but his response was to ask her a similar

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Prosecutor Robert Kearney said he won't pursue an eighth bribery count.

At the conclusion of the preliminary hearing -- which Kearney said could last two to four days -- Judge Laura Hammes will decide whether enough evidence has been presented to order Taylor to stand trial.

Over an 18-month period, Taylor allegedly propositioned some of the women he detained by repeatedly asking them what they would do to avoid jail time.

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question, replacing what could she do for him with what could she show him.

"I felt scared. I felt vulnerable," she testified.

Finally, Taylor asked, "Do you think it would be fair if you got naked and played with yourself? Would that be fair?" she testified.

She removed her shorts and tank top and tried to do what the officer told her, as he watched through a partially opened side window, the woman said.

Taylor then handed her what she described as a "billy club" and said "use this," according to the witness.

When they were done, Taylor had her sign a citation and drove her to a restaurant at Fletcher Parkway and Navajo Road, she said.

The woman was eventually convicted of petty theft. She said she had two prior convictions for possession of a controlled substance and a case that is still being investigated for possession of drugs and stolen property.

In a videotaped interview conducted Dec. 2 and played in court, Taylor denied giving her the club, but it took some time to even get him to concede that sexual activity had occurred.

Ferguson said he and his partner set up a sting operation on Dec. 2, and twice had the woman approach the officer and ask why her case had been upgraded from petty theft to burglary, in conversations that were recorded.

The woman also left Taylor a message to call her in an El Cajon motel room. When the defendant called back, the woman -- sounding panicked about her predicament -- again asked whether he could help her with the charge and offered to do again what she did in the patrol car.

Taylor, who said he might call her after work, reported the conversation to his supervisor, which led to the videotaped interview played in court.

In the interview, Taylor told Ferguson and his partner that the woman had been contacting him and propositioned him.

Taylor told the sergeants that when he arrested the woman four months earlier at the Target store on Broadway, he cited her, took her to the nearby El Cajon police station and then let her go.

Asked about a sex act, the officer stated, "I don't recall that."

Ferguson then told Taylor that his statements didn't match what he'd seen and heard that day.

Taylor then conceded to "inappropriate contact" which was prompted by the woman.

"She propositioned me," Taylor told the sergeants. "(She said), 'You can watch me. I'll do this.'"

Later, Taylor said the woman "offered up a thrill."

Taylor repeatedly asked the sergeants whether he would lose his job, but the supervisors said they didn't know what would happen to him.

A lieutenant appeared at one point and confiscated Taylor's gumbelt.

Taylor, who is married and has a daughter, was arrested Feb. 3 and placed on unpaid leave.

He told the sergeants in the interview that he'd been propositioned two other times -- once after a woman was in a fight behind a grocery store on West Main Street, and the other time by a woman who "would do anything" to have him file an auto theft report in connection with a domestic dispute.

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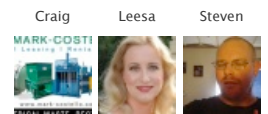
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