

City settles in CMPD sex case involving former officer Marcus Jackson

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PUBLISHED IN: TOP STORIES

The city of Charlotte has agreed to pay \$350,000 to the 17-year-old victim of a police officer who sexually assaulted women while on duty - the largest settlement involving disgraced former officer Marcus Jackson.

He pleaded guilty in December to sexually assaulting six women, and is serving a two-year prison sentence.

The city has spent more than \$617,000 so far to defend and settle four claims related to Jackson, including \$587,000 in payments to victims.

Jackson's case has also raised questions about the hiring practices of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, which failed during background checks to uncover a previous allegation of violence against women in Jackson's past.

Police say they've made "comprehensive" changes since Jackson was hired, after the department failed to catch a 2005 restraining order that accused Jackson of hitting and slapping his girlfriend - and likely would have disqualified him.

Jackson was arrested and fired in December 2009 after two victims - including the 17-year-old girl - told police that Jackson had assaulted them during traffic stops.

The girl's lawsuit says Jackson pulled her over just east of uptown, near Seigle Avenue and Piedmont Open Middle School.

He threatened to write her a traffic ticket if she wouldn't perform a sex act on him.

In a 911 recording released by police, Jackson explains the stop by telling a dispatcher that he is transporting someone "right around the corner" to the person's home, and gives the address of the 17-year-old girl. The Observer doesn't typically name the victims of sexual assaults.

"This has been a traumatic and difficult experience for her," the girl's attorney, Ed Hinson, told the Observer

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Thursday.

"She bravely cooperated with and assisted the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department and the district attorney in the investigation and prosecution of Mr. Jackson," he said. "And she is grateful that he is no longer a police officer and that he was prosecuted for his crimes."

The city has already paid \$151,550 to the girl and her lawyers, and will pay an additional \$198,450 in installments over the next 20 years.

Spokeswoman Kim McMillan said the city is self-insured by taxpayers and sets aside money for lawsuits.

In October, in the first Jackson settlement, the city agreed to pay \$225,000 to a woman and her boyfriend who were assaulted by Jackson.

Their claims accused Jackson and the city of violating the couple's constitutional rights, and detail what they say happened the night of Dec. 28, 2009, when Jackson pulled them over as they headed home from a nightclub.

The couple says Jackson instructed them to follow him to the Eastway Baptist Church parking lot. There, they say, he fondled the woman under the guise of searching her, then ordered her boyfriend to touch her while Jackson watched.

The city also agreed to pay Abel Moreno \$12,000. He claims Jackson arrested him illegally as he tried to intervene in Jackson's assault on his girlfriend.

The Jackson settlements may ultimately total the highest the city has paid to victims because of police misconduct. McMillan wouldn't say if other Jackson claims are pending, but said no other settlements had been reached.

The city in 2009 agreed to pay \$625,000 to the family of a 17-year-old grocery store worker who died after a police officer repeatedly shocked him with a Taser.

In 2000, the city paid \$785,000 to the family of a woman killed in a wreck involving a police officer who was speeding without using his lights and siren.



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